

Topic	Cultural Planning in Rural and Remote Areas		
Date	March 1, 2019	Location	Webinar
Host(s)	Mass Culture		
Participants	Felicity Buckell, Conseil des arts Temiskaming Arts Council and SPARC (Supporting Performing Arts in Rural and Remote Communities) Annalee Adair, Cultural Planner, Lead on Arts & Culture Master Plan for Town of Canmore		
Notetaker(s)	Erin Storus		
Facilitator(s)	Bridget MacIntosh		
Invitation	“Hello everyone and welcome to Mass Culture’s second Digital Gathering about cultural planning in rural and remote areas. My name is Bridget MacIntosh and I’ll be your facilitator today. I’d just like to take a moment to thank the Ontario Trillium Foundation for hosting us today, and to the Mass Culture staff for putting this event together.”		
Some of the themes and ideas that emerged from the Gathering	<p>The conversation centred around 5 key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is truly unique about developing cultural plans and initiatives outside of large cities? ● What is the place and role of arts in rural and remote communities? ● What challenges and opportunities are found in that rural and remote environment? ● What support and resources do artists and cultural workers need in rural and remote areas? ● What do you think makes working in the rural and remote cultural development field unique? <p>Small towns differ from cities in that they don’t have a department or division of culture--there’s actually no municipal staff responsible for cultural development. On top of that, the budget for developing arts and culture in these communities is very small. Personal and professional relationships overlap a lot in small communities--the same people wear many hats. In addition, a lot of people in the cultural development sector are aging. And, there’s usually only one space that can be used for cultural activities in these communities--usually a shared space like a school or gym.</p> <p>Some of the common challenges facing rural and remote communities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Population retention and aging ● Population attraction ● Youth engagement ● Youth migration ● Loss of traditional economic resources and industries ● Huge dependence on volunteers--often asked to accomplish tasks beyond their skill level 		
What social change needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local needs and priorities have to be considered before those of tourists. 		

<p>impacts your research?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been discussion about the idea of preparing a public education strategy advocating for the support of arts and culture. • There isn't one answer or method of assistance for all communities, they have to be tailor-made. • Locals worry about the divide between locals and tourists/part-time residents who only come for the summer. • How can cultural workers ensure the community identity remains authentic and vital? And how can this help the community as a whole?
<p>Perspectives and thoughts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remote communities are heavily impacted by mental and physical health challenges and engagement with arts and culture can be seen as a way to foster health and well-being. • One of the challenges with cultural planning and development in rural and remote communities is that it's sometimes used primarily as an economic development PR tool as opposed to using it to improve the quality of life, social well-being, etc. • How can we combat this? Partnering regionally, remote communities working together with the region to look at culture plans and strategies that really look at maintaining the uniqueness of a community as opposed to tourism or PR. • There are very few individuals in the community who are able to work full-time as artists and cultural workers because the jobs just aren't available. • Community surveys would be a good tool for cultural workers in rural and remote communities to harness. • A potentially useful resource is mentorships with larger and more established arts organizations. • It's important for people working in rural and remote areas to share the resources they have--rural cultural organizations rely a lot on the framework provided by cities but it's not really applicable to small communities.
<p>What research would be useful?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A useful tool would be a framework for advocacy that comprises both existing research and data about how arts and culture contributes to the value of the community, but also room to include data from an individual community which could then together form a public education strategy unique to a particular place.
<p>Whose voices are missing around the table?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those of the community members. What do they want to see from an arts and culture policy?
<p>Resources & links (mentioned during discussion or shared afterwards)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010 Creative Communities Prosperity Fund • Creative City Networks of Canada • International Movement Agenda 21 for Culture • Creative Industries North Bay • Culture Days Initiative
<p>What next steps were mentioned as</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving forward, it's important to learn from Indigenous cultural practitioners, especially concerning being one with the land.

a result of the Gathering?	
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