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**Thank you for deciding to host your own discussion group to better support and improve arts, culture and heritage in Mississauga.**

**What’s in this toolkit?**

1. About the project
2. Before you get started
3. Group Discussion and Activities
   1. Part 1: Set the Stage
   2. Part 2: What’s in the future?
   3. Part 3: Emerging Themes
   4. Part 4: Discussion Questions and Inside/Outside the Box Ideas
4. Report back and other ways to stay involved

**ABOUT THE PROJECT:**

**Future Directions: Culture Master Plan**

A Culture Master Plan will provide direction for investment in arts, culture and heritage in the City of Mississauga. The plan will recognize strengths and identify gaps and opportunities to enhance Mississauga’s quality of life and quality of public places. We want your input and ideas to help shape the vision for arts and culture in Mississauga.

Great cities are known for their architecture, busy public spaces, walkable neighbourhoods, public art, great shopping and good food. Having an exciting arts, culture and heritage scene brings people together to share unforgettable experiences.

The creative sector was the fastest developing sector in Ontario in 2015 and annually contributes $12.2 billion to Ontario’s economy. Active participation in the arts and culture scene can lead to significant positive impacts on individuals and communities. The City of Mississauga is committed to growing and supporting arts and culture, making Mississauga a place where culture and creativity can thrive. To realize this vision, the City is developing a new Culture Master Plan that will be informed by discussions with residents, artists and cultural organizations, to name a few.

**Why host your own discussion?**

To build a vision and action plan for how we want to support arts, culture and heritage in Mississauga, we want to hear from you. We want you to be active members in helping shape a collective vision and supporting the ongoing conversation.

**What is a ‘host your own discussion’?**

Hosting your own group discussion can be as simple has having a small or large gathering of friends, peers, colleagues, neighbours, or strangers to answer questions and discuss ideas. We’ve made a simple step-by-step process that you can follow. There are some key questions to discuss in your group, record your feedback and email it back to us. That’s it!

The key to hosting your own group discussion is to have a comfortable space for everyone to meet and to facilitate a fun and open discussion. The toolkit will help you organize your discussion with a simple outline, discussion questions and instructions on how to report back.

Ultimately, our goal is to gather feedback about how we want to improve arts, culture and heritage in the city. We want to establish a strong future for Mississauga that we can all enjoy and be proud of!

**Tell me more about the Culture Master Plan**

A Master Plan is a high level document that outlines a vision, mission, goals and purpose. It provides recommendations for how an organization should move forward and the work it should do.

In 2009, the City of Mississauga adopted its first Culture Master Plan. This Master Plan defined the essential foundation for the Culture Department and how we support the arts, culture and heritage community.

The Plan outlined 44 recommendations for the Culture Division. Many of these recommendations have been addressed and incorporated into the Division. For a full list of the 44 recommendations and the2009 Culture Master Plan visit the Document Library at [www.misssissaugaculture.ca/](http://www.misssissaugaculture.ca/masterplan)masterplan

The new Culture Master Plan will be a leading strategy document that will set direction for the next 10 years for how we can collectively elevate arts and culture in Mississauga. It will highlight a vision for what we want to be as a city and how we want to move forward alongside arts, culture and heritage community partners.

Since 2014, we have completed a cultural policy and a series of strategic plans and studies, which will help inform the new Culture Master Plan. This work was completed following extensive community engagement and includes:

* Cultural Policy (2015)
* Meadowvale Theatre Strategic Plan (2014)
* Mississauga Celebration Square Strategy (2015)
* Heritage Management Strategy (2016)
* Creative Industries Strategy (2016)
* Public Art Master Plan (2016)
* Grants Review Study (2016)
* Cultural Infrastructure and Creative Spaces Study (2016)

**How do we define arts, culture and heritage?**

**Art** means the inventive use of talent, creativity and technique to produce an original expression of an idea with an aesthetic quality. This includes but is not limited to, literature, dance, theatre, visual arts, crafts, performance, media arts, music and film.

**Culture** means the ideas, customs, language, beliefs, history, traditions and social behaviour of a particular people or society, including artistic expression and natural and human heritage. Culture comprises Cultural Industries and Cultural Resources.

**Heritage** means social, cultural and ethnic elements which produce a layering of Culture from the past and into the future. Cultural Heritage Resources are structures, sites, environments, artifacts and traditions that are of cultural, historical, architectural or archaeological value, significance or interest.

For a comprehensive list of definitions please refer to the Cultural Policy (2015) <http://www7.mississauga.ca/documents/culture/main/culture_policy_web.pdf>

**BEFORE YOU GET STARTED**

* Read this toolkit in full. The toolkit is organized as a step-by-step guide to help you host an easy and effective discussion. For each activity you will see instructions listed for the FACILITATOR and/or NOTE TAKER. *(The facilitator and note taker can be anyone from your group. If you have a small group, you can take on both of these roles.)*
* Find a comfortable location to host your workshop. The activities will take you approximately 2 hours to complete but you may want to take longer.
* Invite your friends, family, community to be part of a lively conversation
* Confirm you’ve got the necessary supplies (see below)
* If you have any questions before you get started, email us at [culture.masterplan@mississauga.ca](mailto:culture.masterplan@mississauga.ca)

**What you will need:**

* Space to accommodate your group
* A minimum of 5 participants for your group
* A copy of this toolkit for your reference (have a few copies on hand for your group)
* A volunteer to help take detailed notes
* Markers, pens and scrap paper
* Masking tape
* Large sheets of paper (if needed for group discussions)
* Post-it notes (to help you brainstorm)
* Camera or smartphone to take photos of any paper or notes (If you have a computer it’ll be easier to have someone type up notes during the discussions; if you don’t, you can take notes on paper and type them up later).

**During your discussion:**

* Pick a facilitator to help guide the discussion and keep everyone on track and on time (this could be you)
* Ask for a volunteer note-taker to make sure everyone’s great ideas are captured. The spaces provided in the document are prompts; use as much or as little space as you need for your notes.
* Take photos of your workshop and share them online using #saugaculture (on Twitter or Instagram: @SaugaCulture)

**After your discussion:**

* Gather all your notes from your group discussions
* If they haven’t been typed up, type them up and organize them according to activity (remember to be as detailed as possible so we can make sure that we understand your feedback accurately)
* Email your notes to [culture.masterplan@mississauga.ca](mailto:culture.masterplan@mississauga.ca) **by May 12th 2017**

**Thank you for participating in the Culture Master Plan and providing your feedback!**

**SIGN IN SHEET**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Organization/Group** | **Email Address** | **Do you want to be kept informed about the Culture Master Plan and other Culture activities?** |
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**GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND ACTIVITIES**

**PART 1: Set the Stage: (5-10min)**

*Facilitator:* Welcome and thank everyone for taking the time to join the conversation. Explain a bit about the project (see page 2 – 3 for background information).

**Land Acknowledgment: Welcome to the Culture Master Plan discussion meeting, this land is situated within the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation and previously to the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Wyndot and Huron people. We acknowledge that many Aboriginal, Inuit, Métis** **and global peoples who call Mississauga home. We welcome everyone.**

*Facilitator:* Go around the group and ask everyone to introduce themselves.

* Who are you?
* What is your interest in arts, culture and/or heritage?
* Are you a member of the creative community, a professional, hobbyist or audience/participant?

*Note taker:*

* How many attended and participated in your discussion group today? \_\_\_\_\_
* What is your group’s contact information? (use the **SIGN IN SHEET**)

*(Why are we collecting this information? We would like to invite people to upcoming meetings about the Culture Master Plan, inform them of the project as it progresses and share the final document when it’s ready.)*

* Please describe the general make-up of your group. Are you members of the arts and culture community, creative sector or general public? How do you participate in the arts (for example are you a creator or do you like attending shows)?
* Why was the group interested in joining the discussion on the future of arts and culture in Mississauga?

**PART 2: What’s in the future? (15 mins)**

*Facilitator: Answer these questions with your group. This activity is to help spark rapid discussion. Don’t worry you’ll have plenty of time to discuss in more detail later on.*

*Note taker: Record the answers for each question.*

*Materials: You can use post-it notes and put them up on an empty wall or write on large pieces of paper on your table. Whichever you decide, it’s a good way to see each other’s answers, to spark creativity and build the groups imagination when thinking about the future of arts, culture and heritage.*

Think about the future you would like to see in Mississauga. How can we put arts and culture on the map in Mississauga?

1. What makes Mississauga unique?
2. How would you make arts, culture and heritage better in the city? (share your ideas on how to make existing things better or propose new ideas)
3. In 10 years, what will arts, culture and heritage look like in Mississauga? (Imagine what the future can be in Mississauga. Be bold!)

**PART 3: Emerging Themes (5 mins)**

*Facilitator: introduce the section and share the information below. You will discuss each of the themes in more detail in the next activity but for now the group should familiarize themselves with the different themes****.***

To help organize the discussion moving forward, there are some themes that are related to how we can better the arts, culture and heritage scene in Mississauga. **In this document we will use the words arts or arts and culture interchangeably, simply for ease of reading. However when we use “arts” or “arts and culture” we are also including heritage and various forms and expressions of arts and culture. See DEFINITIONS for how we define arts, culture and heritage.**

Theme 1: Supporting the Arts – this theme focuses on ways to retain, develop and strengthen arts and culture in Mississauga. That could be through small or large things such as: events and programs, projects, shows, grants, heritage designation, policies, partnerships, or capacity development.

Theme 2: Attracting the Arts – this theme focuses on ways to attract talent to Mississauga, either within the city, outside the city or abroad. This could be through events and programs, commissioning artists, artist residency programs, developing and attracting creative industries and building partnerships.

Theme 3: Infrastructure and Creative Spaces – this theme is about how to maximize the use and potential of our current cultural spaces, build partnerships and increase access to creative spaces. Focus is on how we can better use the spaces we have; how we can collaborate on creating mixed use spaces or bring new uses to old or existing spaces; and how we can fill in the gaps – identify needs and find solutions for alternative creative spaces.

Theme 4: Culture in the Public – this theme is about how arts and culture connects to the public realm, meaning how can we bring culture outside of specific locations and let it spill out onto the streets, into communities and into gathering spaces. What can culture look like if it were *everywhere*?

Theme 5: Diversity and Accessibility – this theme is about expanding and supporting diversity and accessibility, which encompasses diversity of programming and cultural diversity, accessibility of programming (cost/location/etc.) and ability perspectives (supporting different physical and mental abilities, and equity seeking groups in participating in and accessing arts and culture).

Theme 6: Building and Discovering Cultural Identity – this theme focuses on ways to help build a collective cultural identify, building and strengthening our cultural communities. Identifying what makes us unique will also support and feed into building a collective identity.

In your group discussions, you will discuss each of these themes to identify how we can improve, support and strengthen each area. In combination to the recent strategies that have been completed since 2014 (see page 3 for details) we want to know what is missing from the discussion and direction for the new Culture Master Plan.

**PART 4: Discussion Questions and Inside/Outside the Box Ideas**: **(90 mins; 30 mins per topic area)**

*Facilitator: introduce the activity and guide the discussion and brainstorming for each topic area. Ask the note taker to record the group’s discussion and their ideas for each topic area. Help to ensure that the group stays on topic and encourage everyone to create a supportive environment for discussion and brainstorming.*

*Materials: post-it notes, large paper, markers, or any other creative materials if wanted.*

*Note taker: take notes for each theme around the discussion questions and ideas that your group comes up with. If you’re group uses post it notes or any other creative materials make sure to capture these notes as well.*

For this activity, as a group you are going to discuss each topic area, provide feedback and brainstorm out of the box ideas and/or new approaches for each area that are not typically done. Sometimes old ways of doing things are great too or they might just need a little brushing off and a fresh coat of paint! The point of this activity is to consider:

* Are there a variety of solutions?
* How can we build a stronger and better future for the arts?
* How do we want to collectively push arts, culture and heritage forward in Mississauga?

With each of the themes, there will be guiding questions to help your group; consider a quick discussion around the questions and use them as a prompt for discussion. Remember to take detail notes around the discussions and capture your inside/outside the box thinking for each theme. For each other themes consider:

* How has this theme been approached historically either by governments or by arts organizations?
* What is the status quo for how this work happens? How is this work currently happening?
* How can things be done or approached “non-traditionally”?
* Are there any “inside the box” ideas that can be tweaked, updated or improved?

The goal for these activities is to start thinking about new and alternative ways we can collectively approach each of the theme areas.

The goal isn’t a perfect idea, it’s lots of ideas, collaboration, and openness to creative solutions. The last thing you want in a brainstorm is someone who, instead of coming up with ideas, only talks about why the ones already mentioned won’t work. Not only does that kill creativity but it shifts the group’s mindset from a generative one to a critical one. The only way to get to good ideas is to have lots to choose from.

**Brainstorming Rules**[[1]](#footnote-1)

* **Defer judgement.** You never know where a good idea is going to come from. The key is to make everyone feel like they can say the idea on their mind and allow others to build on it.
* **Encourage wild ideas.** Wild ideas can often give rise to creative leaps. In thinking about ideas that are wacky or out there we tend to think about what we really want without the constraints of technology or materials.
* **Build on the ideas of others.** Being positive and building on the ideas of others takes some skill. In conversation, we try to use “and” instead of “but.”
* **Stay focused on the topic.** Try to keep the discussion on target otherwise you can diverge beyond the scope of what you're trying to design for.
* **One conversation at a time.** Your team is far more likely to build on an idea and make a creative leap if everyone is paying full attention to whoever is sharing a new idea.
* **Be creative.** Write down on post-its, draw it out, and make a mind map. Nothing gets an idea across faster than drawing it. Doesn't matter if you're not Rembrandt!
* **Go for quantity.** Aim for as many new ideas as possible. In a good session, up to 100 ideas are generated in 60 minutes. Crank the ideas out quickly and build on the best ones.

*Facilitator: Repeat this activity for each of the themes. Spend 30 mins on each area. After going through all of them, if your group has more time and wants to continue brainstorming, you may do so. Encourage people to think of challenges they may face as either members of the creative community or as participants. Encourage people to think of possible solutions to those challenges. What do we need to build upon and strengthen arts, culture and heritage in Mississauga?*

*Note-taker: capture everyone’s ideas and feedback related to each section. Use the worksheets provided below and extra pages as required. Be as detailed as possible. We want to make sure that your ideas are fully captured and we can follow the flow of conversation.*

*Don’t forget to take pictures of your group in action and share it with us online @SaugaCulture #saugaculture.*

**TOPIC 1: SUPPORTING AND ATTRACTING THE ARTS (30 mins total)**

**Discussion Questions (15 mins):**

Some ways to support and attract the arts is through organized events, shows, programs and exhibitions, an artist in residency program, grant support and heritage designation protection.

* What could the City do to better support and attract the arts?
* What could other arts organizations/institutions/groups do to better support and attract the arts?
* What do you want to see in Mississauga that will make our “mark on the map”?
* How do you hear about events or discover arts, culture and heritage in Mississauga?
* Are you aware of festivals, events and programs run by arts and culture organizations? (Not ones that are run by the City)
* What could be done to improve communication and outreach about cultural activities?

**Notes:**

**Inside and Outside the Box Ideas (15 mins):**

Brainstorm your ideas on how the City or arts organizations/institutions/groups can better support and attract the arts.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Inside the Box ideas: | Outside the Box ideas: |

**TOPIC 2: INFRASTRUCTURE, CREATIVE SPACES AND CULTURE IN THE PUBLIC (30 min total)**

**Discussion Questions (15 mins):**

Some ways to support the theme of infrastructure and creative spaces is to manage and operate cultural spaces such as museums and theatres, have public art installations, develop partnerships with creative industries, and provide heritage grants for infrastructure maintenance to better use and build creative spaces.

* What spaces do you access for arts and culture programming? Do you face any challenges?
* What have you done to address these challenges?
* What could the City do to improve creative spaces?
* How can we bring culture outside of specific locations and let it spill out onto the streets, into communities and into gathering spaces?
* What else do you want to see in the city?

**Notes:**

**Inside and Outside the Box Ideas (15 mins):**

Brainstorm your ideas on how the City or arts organizations/institutions/groups can better support and strengthen cultural spaces and infrastructure.

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| Inside the Box ideas: | Outside the Box ideas: |

**TOPIC 3: DIVERSITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND COLLECTIVE CULTURAL IDENTITY (30 mins total)**

**Discussion Questions (15 mins):**

Some ways to support diversity and accessibility includes organizing diverse events, programs and exhibitions, work closely with First Nations and Indigenous communities and have sensory friendly and multilingual theatre and performance shows to make arts and culture more accessible, reflect more diversity and support building cultural identity.

**Please note: when we use the word diverse, it encompasses: ethnic diversity, social-economic diversity, different age groups, different abilities and equity seeking groups (race, gender, sexuality, ability, etc.)**

* What is your experience right now, as it relates to diversity and accessibility in the arts?
* How is the arts scene (arts institutions/organizations/the City) connecting with diverse communities?
* Are there challenges and opportunities for diverse artists to participate in the arts?
* How welcome do diverse communities feel at/with/within the arts and culture scene in Mississauga?
* How can we better support accessibility needs? What challenges do you face today and what might you face in the future?

**Notes:**

**Inside and Outside the Box Ideas (15 mins):**

Brainstorm your ideas on how the City or arts organizations/institutions/groups can better support and strengthen diversity and accessibility. Consider the following questions:

What are ways that arts and culture can support diversity and accessibility, specifically for

1. Physical spaces
2. Arts programming, exhibits, events
3. Outreach and communication
4. Supporting and attracting diverse artists
5. Policies, organizational strategies, partnerships

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Inside the Box ideas: | Outside the Box ideas: |

**REPORT BACK:**

Thank you for participating and hosting your own discussion about the Culture Master Plan!

*Facilitator:*

* *Gather all your notes from your workshop today. Make sure everything is typed up and organized*
* *Make sure everyone signs the SIGN IN SHEET so we can keep them informed about the project*
* *Gather photos from your workshop and share them online using #saugaculture (on Twitter or Instagram @SaugaCulture)*
* *Email your notes to* [*culture.masterplan@mississauga.ca*](mailto:culture.masterplan@mississauga.ca) *before May 12th 2017*
* *Share the information below about next steps, upcoming meetings and how to stay connected to the project and the Culture Division*

**What’s next?**

Notes and ideas from your workshop will go to City of Mississauga Culture Staff. We will look through all the ideas and feedback gathered from across our public consultation (including focus group meetings, public meetings, online survey and the Host Your Own Toolkit), summarize them, analyze them and look for opportunities on how they may be incorporated into or influence the Culture Master Plan.

We will keep you informed of the project as it progresses, let you know about upcoming meetings and further opportunities to be involved. (Make sure to sign the **SIGN IN SHEET** with a valid email address to be kept in the loop)

Visit [www.mississaugaculture.ca/masterplan](http://www.mississaugaculture.ca/masterplan) to find information about upcoming meetings, other documents, etc.

Email [culture.masterplan@mississauga.ca](mailto:culture.masterplan@mississauga.ca) if you have any questions.

1. Brainstorm Rules adapted from IDEO.org (<http://www.designkit.org/methods/28>) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)