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MUNICIPAL ARTS POLICY

Vision to Reality

D. Paul Schafer

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Dedicated to women everywhere in the world in view of their indispensable contribution to the development of the arts at the community level. Without this contribution, municipal arts policy would not exist.

## PREFACE

Few subjects are more important than the subject of urban development. With more than half the world's population living in towns and cities, and with complex economic, social, environmental and political problems threatening to escalate out of control, who among us is not seriously concerned about the present and prospective state of municipal living in all parts of the world?

Despite the importance of this subject to the world of the present and the future, there is still very little literature available on it. While I do not believe the arts provide a panacea for all the problems of urban existence, I do believe they provide a means of alleviating or reversing many of the adverse trends which are looming up on the global horizon. Indeed, if urban life is to prove pleasant rather than painful, the arts will have to play a key role in municipal development in the future.

To execute this role, a powerful force is needed. This force must be so compelling that it proves capable of harnessing many energies and resources, capitalizing on humankind's finest historical and contemporary accomplishments, and bridging the destructive gap between theory and practice. Such a force is municipal arts policy - surely one of the most evocative and ebullient rays of hope to appear on the municipal scene in decades.

D. Paul Schafer,  
Markham, 1985.

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## MUNICIPAL ARTS POLICY

When the city ceases to be a symbol of art and order, it acts in a negative fashion: it expresses and helps to make more universal the fact of disintegration.

Lewis Mumford  
The Culture of Cities

The arts are on the march in towns and cities all over the world. Not only are municipalities becoming the new spawning grounds for innovative arts activity, but also municipal arts development is rapidly becoming the new frontier in total arts development. As this happens, pressure builds to execute exciting new programs and policies - programs and policies capable of having a sustained and systematic impact on the whole character of local life.

### THE STATE OF MUNICIPAL ARTS DEVELOPMENT

One of the most difficult tasks today is to compose the balance sheet on municipal arts development. There is no doubt that impressive gains have been recorded in most municipalities in recent years. However, given the ominous ecological, industrial, and demographic changes that are taking place at the present time, it is clear that many improvements and advances will be necessary in the years ahead if towns and cities throughout the world are to aspire to and achieve greatness. Clearly, the challenge of municipal arts development lies in the future, not the past.

It is not difficult to pinpoint the principal reason for the impressive gains that have been recorded in recent years. People all over the world are demanding more and better amenities for the communities in which they are resident. As a result, towns and cities

everywhere are being brought to life with the sights and sounds of aesthetic activity. Here a theatrical presentation, there a festival program, elsewhere a concert, an exhibition, or a poetry reading. It seems like everywhere the ear turns or the eye settles, there is another manifestation of the way in which municipalities are dancing to the tunes of artistic drummers. These manifestations span the whole gamut of possibilities, from projects to restore the traditional dignity of the arts through ancient rituals and community celebrations, to programs designed to open up new vistas and frontiers for future exploration.

These gains are causing a sustained swelling in municipal artistic resources. The evidence, which is compounding in many quarters of the globe, is pervasive and persuasive.

It is no longer just the major cities like London, Paris, New York, Toronto, Tokoyo, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro and Peking that can lay claim to rapidly-expanding constellations of writers, painters, poets, playwrights, composers, theatre and dance companies, art galleries, museums, orchestras, and choirs. More and more smaller communities can lay claim to similar constellations, even if they are smaller in size, less established in nature, and more recreational in character. There is scarcely an urban environment anywhere in the world today that can not be justifiably proud of its arsenal of artistic accomplishments.

This dramatic swelling in the ranks of artists and arts organizations is being matched by a corresponding expansion in all of the ancillary resources which are required to present the arts to best advantage. Witness, for example, the proliferation of capital facilities. Arts centres, museums, galleries, theatres and concert halls are springing up like mushrooms all over the world. While many of these have resulted from the construction of new premises, others have resulted from the renovation of existing premises. In the last few decades, it is amazing how many neighbourhood buildings - abandoned schools, old railroad stations, deserted factories and dilapidated industrial complexes - have succumbed to artistic purposes, much to

the delight of artists and audiences alike. Likewise, witness the proliferation of service organizations, especially protective associations, media agencies, funding institutions, educational and research groups, and community arts councils. These organizations are providing a battery of valuable services in such fields as reporting, publicity, promotion, training, marketing, financial support and coordination. The services of community arts councils are particularly important here, given the key role they play as catalysts, animateurs, lobbyists, initiators, and change agents. Without their active involvement in promoting the cause, arts development at the local level would not be what it is today. Finally, witness the proliferation of suppliers of materials and equipment. Included here would be all the commercial stores selling art supplies, musical instruments, audio-visual equipment and special products. While statistics vary very much from municipality to municipality, there is scarcely a municipality anywhere in the world that has not experienced a dramatic increase in all of the resources needed to create, distribute and enjoy the arts.

None of the evidence on the recent flourishing in municipal arts activity is more impressive than the evidence on attitudinal changes. The same evidence that documents the rapid growth in artistic resources also reveals that demonstrable changes are taking place in public attitudes towards the arts. Whereas it was once commonplace for people to assume that the arts had little importance to the community, nowadays, more and more people believe the arts are essential for community well-being. As this happens, a larger and larger percentage is anxious to see its tax dollars spent on artistic amenities.

While much has been accomplished in recent years, it would be a mistake to conclude that the conquest of municipal arts development has been concluded. Actually, it has barely begun. Profound improvements will be required on the artistic front in the years ahead if municipal living is not to turn into a nightmare. All the signs indicate a progressive deterioration in community well-being if the most imaginative and forceful actions are not taken to prevent it.

In demographic terms, all the indicators point to a continuous swelling in urban populations. One consequence of this will be greater and greater concentrations and congestions of people, products and problems. As more and more people vacate the countryside and flock to the towns and cities in search of work, population densities are destined to increase dramatically. Unfortunately, this is occurring at the very time when municipalities are experiencing the utmost difficulty sustaining existing populations, due largely to small and declining tax bases and recessionary conditions.

As threatening as these demographic changes are, the economic, social and environmental changes are even more threatening. In economic terms, there has been a marked slowdown in residential and industrial growth in many parts of the world as a result of slumping consumption and investment activity. In social terms, apathy and alienation, if not violence and terrorism, threaten to undermine urban societies characterized by massive amounts of structural and technological unemployment. Add to this the constant menace of environmental erosion - through air, noise and water pollution, traffic congestion, deterioration of downtown cores, overcrowding and lack of proper sanitation - and it is clear that municipal living could easily turn sour if the proper precautions are not taken, and taken quickly.

It would be foolhardy to contend that the arts are capable of overcoming all these problems. Nevertheless, it is amazing how many of them can be ameliorated substantially, if not eradicated entirely, through sensitive and stimulating artistic programming and planning. Recent research has demonstrated, for example, that the arts are capable of generating a considerable volume of economic growth and industrial activity and, on more than one occasion, have provided the impetus that was needed to reverse a plummeting trend in urban commercial fortunes. Moreover, it is a well-known fact that the arts ease social pressures and tensions by providing people with creative and constructive outlets for their idle time, which, needless to say, is imperative in periods of high unemployment. Finally, there is no doubt that the arts offer the most effective means of dealing



with environmental deterioration, visual and aural pollution, and downtown decay. There is simply no substitute for the sense of satisfaction that comes from aesthetic pride of place.

There is one overriding conclusion that emerges from this brief assessment of the present and prospective state of municipal arts development. If towns and cities all over the world are to weather the impending storm and realize their full potential as havens of human health and happiness, the arts must be firmly fastened to the masthead of municipal development. Rather than being loosely lodged at the periphery of urban society, they must be securely anchored to its centre. This is the real challenge confronting the arts and municipalities at the present time.

#### THE NEED FOR MUNICIPAL ARTS POLICY

A visionary and vigorous vehicle is needed to meet this challenge. This vehicle is municipal arts policy, one of the most potent and promising developments to emerge in decades. With an enlightened arts policy, municipalities are able to soar to their zenith. Without one, they are certain to languish.

Municipal arts policy is emerging at a propitious moment. Not only is arts activity at the local level needed more badly than ever, but also the time is ripe for municipalities to step to the forefront of arts development. There are many reasons for this, but two in particular tend to predominate.

The more obvious reason has to do with the fact that opportunities are drying up at other levels of activity. As bureaucratic structures harden and it becomes more and more difficult to develop new programs at the provincial, national and international level, the focus of attention shifts to the municipal level. As a result, it is possible to detect the same spirit of pioneering excitement and adventure that characterized provincial, national and international arts development two decades ago invading municipal arts development

today. This is where the action is, and is going to be, for some time in the future. Here is where the innovative structures are going to be created, programs devised, and funding sources uncovered that are needed to carry the arts forward to higher and higher levels of accomplishment.

The more substantive reason has to do with the fact that municipal arts development is the bottom line in total arts development. Regardless of how effectively the arts are developed at the provincial, national or international level, the job will not be done until all municipalities are dancing with artistic activity. This is because the arts are, and always have been, a grass roots affair. Irrespective of how well-known artists and arts organizations are on the national or international scene, the fact remains that they learned the secrets of their trade and sharpened their skills in local surroundings. As the original spawning grounds of artistic activity, municipalities are seminal springs for the discovery and nourishment of creative talent. As Northrop Frye, the celebrated Canadian critic recently put it, "painters and writers are not acts of God; they come out of specific communities and are the individual points where those communities have become articulate." And what is true for painters and writers is equally true for composers, choreographers, curators, architects, and many other types of creative people.

It follows from this that what is needed at this juncture are well-conceived and well-executed policies that can capitalize on the countless opportunities that exist. Such policies must be capable of exploiting opportunities to the full, while simultaneously preventing the arts from flying off in all directions or running out of control. For while the time is ripe for municipal artistic expansion, every precaution must be taken to ensure that the end result is order and not chaos.

If municipal arts policy is needed to exploit the opportunities, it is also needed to solve the problems. In the arts, these problems, which are compounding daily in number, complexity and severity, tend to be of two principal types. First, there are the symptomatic problems. Included here are: increasing public and

private funding for the arts; meeting the capital and operating needs of artists and arts organizations; developing suitable cost-sharing arrangements with the various levels of government; acquiring suitable facilities and storage space; evolving more effective administrative structures and training programs; improving the quality of support services; and reconciling the professional and recreational dimensions of arts development. Then there are the generic problems. Included here are: creating a value system that is conducive to a flourishing artistic life; winning respect for the arts in the hearts, minds and actions of political, corporate and educational leaders; getting authorities at the regional, national and international level to take arts development at the municipal level seriously; broadening the base of community commitment; converting the arts community into a more cohesive and coercive force; and planning properly for the future.

What municipal arts policy promises here is a way of tackling and solving these problems that is methodical and deliberate. It does so in two ways. First, it provides a coherent and comprehensive framework for assessing, comparing and ordering problems. Without this, there is no overall context within which problems can be evaluated and priorities established, let alone effective methods for dealing with them devised. Second, it assures a rational, democratic and systematic attack on problems. In so doing, it brings to an end the haphazard, partisan and prejudicial method of problem-solving that has long plagued arts development at the local level.

The advantages of this are obvious. First, there is more efficient and equitable distribution of resources. While resources must be used prudently in all fields at all times, it is imperative in the arts at the present time. This is necessary to put a stop to the erroneous belief that artists are frivolous, irresponsible and wasteful of resources, especially when nothing could be farther from the truth. For the truth of the matter is that resources have always been so scarce in the arts that artists and arts organizations are more adept than anyone else in husbanding resources in the most frugal and careful way. Equally important, however, is the fact that it is necessary to conserve resources when they are needed the most. For given the existing and expected economic situation, especially as it

relates to tardy growth, keen competition for funds, inflation, mounting public deficits and high unemployment, it is crucial for people in the arts to ensure that duplication is avoided, wastage is eliminated, and funds are utilized in the most economical and effective manner. Municipal arts policy guarantees this.

If municipal arts policy is needed to economize on scarce resources, it is also needed to transform the overall approach to arts development.

Without doubt, one of the greatest obstacles to arts development has been the highly passive, fragmented and uncoordinated approach to it. Since the arts are often treated as an afterthought, it has become commonplace to view arts development as a consequence rather than as a cause of change. As a result, possibilities are patiently waited for, and when they arrive, they are often missed because the arts community is working at cross purposes or is ill-equipped to take advantage of them. By its very nature, municipal arts policy would change all this. Banished forever would be the passive and piecemeal approach to arts development. In its place would be substituted a highly active, aggressive, integrated and holistic approach, one which systematically and relentlessly makes things happen of aesthetic consequence to municipalities. Just how essential this approach is at the present time is revealed in the following passage by Stephen Mennell, one of the foremost authorities on policies for the arts and culture at the municipal level:

It became apparent in international discussion in the late 1960's that there was widespread dissatisfaction with the piecemeal nature of local policies. Ad hoc intervention in response to events was the rule: a museum taken over here, a building there, financial grants to local associations everywhere. There was a general desire for more coherent and planned policies, and for information which would help in deciding how to distribute resources of energy and money between various kinds of activity so as to promote the greatest public satisfaction.

There is one final justification for municipal arts policy. It has to do with the need for a common meeting ground and language of communication that is comprehensible to all the various individuals and institutions involved in arts development at the community level.

Without question, one of the greatest barriers to arts development in the past has been the inability of artists, politicians, businessmen, bureaucrats, educators and other professionals to communicate with each other. The result has been a debilitating situation: civic leaders feel uncomfortable and threatened by the arts because they don't really understand what the arts are all about or why they are of utmost importance to the community; artistic leaders feel frustrated and alienated because their efforts to make communities more civilized and exciting places in which to live are so often ignored or misunderstood. Obviously, what is needed here is a common meeting ground and language of communication which is acceptable to all participants. Municipal arts policy provides this, partly by recasting the artistic message in a style and format which politicians, businessmen, educators and other local leaders can readily understand, and partly by making it easier for the arts community to make its case known to the general public. This may well prove to be the greatest advantage of municipal arts policy of all, since it has contained within it the key that is needed to make the arts an integral part of community life.

#### THE PREREQUISITES OF MUNICIPAL ARTS POLICY

Suppose a municipality has been persuaded by irrefutable logic that it needs an arts policy. How does it proceed? How does it set in motion that sequence of events that translates noble aspirations into operational practices?

No sooner is the decision made to evolve a municipal arts policy than a complex question arises. What is the most suitable administrative entity to produce it? Here, a number of options present themselves. For example, a municipal official or existing committee could be charged with responsibility for preparing the policy.

Alternatively, a private consulting firm could be hired, or a special task force could be struck at the request of municipal council or the mayor. Whatever option is finally selected will depend on a number of factors, including the size and circumstances of the municipality, established practices, available resources, and community needs.

While each municipality must decide for itself which option is the most appropriate, a number of considerations should be borne in mind in making the final decision. In the first place, the administrative entity should be as independent as possible from special interest groups, since this is mandatory for objective policy analysis and impartial reporting. This is often why a structure is selected that is quite far removed from the political process, although it must be remembered that the farther removed the structure, the greater the risk of political indifference to the final results. In the second place, the entity should be representative of the whole community. Representation should be drawn from as broad a constituency as possible - the arts, politics, education, business, labour, youth, the trades and professions, and the general public. The goal should always be to evolve a structure that is a microcosm of the macrocosm, and this will only be achieved by methodically and persistently soliciting representation from all sectors of society. Obviously, policies emanating from structures dominated by a limited range of professions, or by a few individuals and special interest groups, seldom stand much chance of success. In fact, nothing condemns a policy to slow and painful death faster than claims of partisanship or parochialism. Finally, the structure should be as open, democratic and participatory as possible. Any individual or institution who has an idea to contribute or a criticism to make should be able to do so. There should be no room in the evolution of municipal arts policies for closed, authoritarian, or elitist structures.

Once the most appropriate administrative entity has been selected and set in place, the next prerequisite is to examine the prevailing situation as carefully as possible.

When people talk about the need for an arts policy, it is seldom realized that most municipalities already possess an arts

policy. It may be no policy, which, after all, can often be a deliberate policy; it may be a totally inadequate policy, which, more often than not, proves to be the case; or it may be an invisible policy. Whatever the situation, a little scratching beneath the surface usually reveals that there is a policy nonetheless- a policy which determines the direction of arts development and regulates the flow of funds.

It follows from this that one of the very first prerequisites is to make the existing policy explicit. Even if no improvements in it take place, this is most essential, since it provides artists, arts organizations, community groups, and the general public with something very specific to respond to or react against. The arts community may well have to take the lead here, if only because resistance may be encountered in making the invisible visible. The reason for this is that in the process of exposing the existing policy, it may be discovered that basic policy elements are missing: ideals may be lacking; principles may be unsound; objectives may be ill-conceived; priorities may be ill-defined; procedures may be ambiguous; or strategies may be ineffectual. While this process can prove painful, ultimately it yields a valuable service. Municipalities can ill-afford to have arts policies which are devoid of clarity, coherence and commonsense.

Once an implicit policy has been made explicit, a municipality may conclude that no change is required in the existing situation. This is fine, provided that periodic reviews are conducted to ensure that the policy continues to meet the demands which have been defined for it. More often than not, however, municipalities will discover that there are serious shortcomings in their arts policies. If so, they are advised to plunge into policy development in earnest.

Where this is the case, formulation of a critical action plan is the next logical prerequisite. Here, systematic consideration is given to all of the tasks which must be successfully completed to yield the policy. Each task should be assigned a definite commencement and completion date, as well as an individual or group to be responsible for it.

In the preparation of this plan, it is useful to bear in mind that arts policy involves four very specific steps or stages. First, there is the information collection - or input - stage. This includes all research studies, conferences, interviews, public forums, opinion polls, and attitudinal surveys. Second, there is the conversion stage. This is where policy input gets transformed into meaningful output. As we will discover momentarily, this is the most difficult part of the policy process. Third, there is the distribution stage. Here, the policy is distributed to a variety of individuals and institutions in the community. Finally, there is the implementation stage. This involves action on all recommendations and proposals contained in the policy.

An effective action plan should make allowance for the fact that it is necessary to constantly repeat these stages over time. For policies are not etched in stone. They need constant updating, revision and refinement. No sooner is one policy cycle complete than planning for a new policy cycle commences. Here, the old policy, suitably adjusted to take account of the public reaction to it, is used as the basis for the new policy. In this way, safeguards are provided which ensure that municipal arts policy remains fresh, vital, and in tune with the evolutionary and ever-changing nature of society.

There is one final prerequisite that demands our attention. It has to do with the scope of municipal arts policy. It would be foolish to attempt to develop a policy without delineating very carefully the territory it is designed to cover.

While many definitions of the arts are possible, it is proposed that the following activities be included whenever and wherever municipal arts policies are being created:

- the performing arts (music, theatre, opera, dance, mime, puppetry, etc.)
- the visual arts (painting, sculpting, etc.)
- the literary arts (prose, creative writing, poetry, etc.)



- the environmental arts (architecture, urban design, town planning, landscaping, etc.)
- the material arts or the crafts (pottery, weaving, enamelling, rug hooking, lapidary, etc.)
- the media arts (publishing, radio, film, video, photography, etc.)
- the multicultural arts (ethnic celebrations, festivals, fairs, etc.)
- the recreational arts (bands, barber shop quartets, square dancing, gourmet cooking, etc.)

While the first five of these categories are straight-forward and self-explanatory, the last three require a word of explanation.

By including the media arts within the scope of municipal arts policy, it is not intended to imply that all of the media are art forms. Obviously they are not, since there are large segments of them, such as information dissemination, news reporting, and sale of products, that have little or nothing to do with the arts. Nevertheless, all of the media deal with the arts to a certain extent, whether it is in the design and layout of books, the presentation of plays on television, or the use of video for artistic purposes. Moreover, certain media are treated as art forms in their own right, particularly film and photography. Interestingly, pressure is constantly being exerted on all of the others to function more effectively in this way.

The multicultural arts are included for a very different reason. While they might be subsumed under other categories, they have been singled out here as a category in their own right in order to highlight their unique and growing importance to arts development. Not only have various ethnic groups raised certain practices to the level of art forms, such as Ukrainian egg painting, Japanese tree dwarfing and flower arranging, and Chinese calligraphy, but also many community activities and celebrations depend on large injections of multicultural activity.

Then there are the recreational arts. They are included here and given separate status in recognition of the fact that they are often treated as art forms at the community or local level, even if they are not commonly regarded so at the provincial, regional, national or international level. While these differences exist largely for funding reasons, they have important policy implications nonetheless. In fact, they affect the whole purpose, character, and direction of municipal arts development. At this level, it is the totality of artistic activity that is important, ranging, as it does, all the way from the popular to the classical, the amateur to the professional, the novice to the exceptional. Clearly, one of the most crucial challenges facing arts policy at the municipal level is to stimulate development of all of the arts at all levels of activity.

There is one final area where clarity is required in order to avoid misunderstanding over the scope of municipal arts policy. It has to do with the difference between an arts policy for a municipal government, and an arts policy for a municipality. Inability to distinguish clearly between the two could have the most disastrous consequences.

The large majority of municipal arts policies which have been developed to date are arts policies for municipal governments. As such, they are confined to laying out the roles and responsibilities of municipal governments in the artistic domain. While this represents a promising step in the right direction, what must be emphasized is the fact that municipal governments are only one of the participants in community arts development. Although their involvement is often of crucial importance, sight should never be lost of the fact that municipal arts development is an all-embracing activity, requiring the active involvement of countless different individuals and institutions. A far more effective policy, and one that is advocated here, involves defining the roles and responsibilities of all of the participants in arts development at the local level. For only then can it be claimed that municipal arts policy is addressing the needs and concerns of all facets and segments of society.

With these four prerequisites in place - the establishment of a suitable administrative entity, the making of implicit policies explicit, the creation of a critical action plan, and delineation of the proper scope of the policy - it is possible for a municipality to plunge into policy formulation in earnest. To do this effectively, it must have a very clear understanding of exactly what an arts policy is. Without this, little headway can be made towards the ultimate goal.

### THE MEANING OF MUNICIPAL ARTS POLICY

Despite the growing interest in municipal arts policy which is evident throughout the world, there is still a great deal of confusion and misunderstanding about what arts policy actually is. This makes clarification of the meaning of municipal arts policy one of the most pressing requirements in the field today.

Whether it is at the municipal level or at any other level, arts policy is a compound term. It derives its meaning from the juxtaposition of two terms which appear at first blush to be diametrically opposed, namely "policy" and "the arts." This has caused many to resist the idea of arts policy, contending that it is a contradiction in terms. To ascertain whether there is any validity in this, it is necessary to delve deeply into the nature of policy and the arts.

Augustin Girard, the noted international authority on policies for the arts and culture, defines policy as:

A system of ultimate aims, practical objectives and means, pursued by a group and applied by an authority (such as) a trade union, a party, an educational movement, an institution, an enterprise, a town, or a government. But regardless of the agent concerned, a policy implies the existence of ultimate purposes (long-term), objectives (medium-term and measurable) and means (men, money and legislation), combined in an explicit, coherent system.

It is clear from this that policy is something that is logical, systematic, comprehensive and deliberate. As a technique

developed primarily in business, government, and science, it seeks to take advantage of many well-established traditions and time-tested methods, particularly as they relate to rational analysis, orderly progression and planned progress. These are the very qualities, however, which cause many to contend that policy is antithetical to the arts. Whereas policy depends on rationality, linearity and logistics, they argue, the arts depend on irrationality, spontaneity and creativity.

Upon closer inspection, it is evident that this argument is based on an inability to distinguish between the nature of artistic activity on the one hand, and the way in which artistic activity is produced on the other hand. It is true that artistic activity can be highly irrational, spontaneous and disorderly. Often these very qualities account for its electric excitement. Nevertheless, this should not be taken to mean that the process that is followed to produce arts activity is equally irrational, spontaneous and disorderly. For although the original idea for a work of art may occur in a flash, usually a very systematic, deliberate and rational method is executed to carry the original idea forward to concrete execution. Almost invariably the visual artist sketches out an entire painting before committing brush to canvas ; the writer methodically develops an overall outline before commencing a single chapter; the composer plots out a total composition before penning a solitary note. The image of the artist jumping out of bed in the middle of the night to frantically create a work of art is much more the figment of romantic imagination than it is the product of everyday experience. While the odd work of art may be produced in a random way or in an unplanned fashion, such as a happening or a piece of improvisational theatre, the large majority of works of art are produced in a very meticulous and methodical manner.

It follows from this that artists and arts organizations are in a perfect position to pick up on the notion of policy. Far from being novices at the game, they have a long and distinguished tradition in utilizing the very qualities that are inherent in the concept of policy. As a result, contrary to popular belief, they are finely attuned to the intricacies of policy, especially as they relate to diligently plotting out possibilities and systematically and deliberately

realizing them. This is an extremely important point, because it means that the arts community already possesses many of the skills that are necessary for effective arts policy development.

If artists know much more about the intricacies of policy than is commonly assumed, businessmen, politicians, educators and other professionals know much more about the nature of artistic activity than is everywhere recognized. Just as it is a fallacy to assume that artists don't know anything about rationality, logistics and planning, so it is equally a fallacy to assume that leaders in other fields don't know anything about creativity and the artistic process. Business, politics, science and education depend equally on these qualities, as people in these fields are frequently called upon to act spontaneously, intuitively and imaginatively.

What is steadily emerging here is the realization that policy and the arts are not really contradictory or irreconcilable. On the contrary, they are compatible and complementary, fitting together so neatly that there is virtually no inconsistency between them. This makes arts policy a highly harmonious affair, one which draws fully on skills and techniques which have proven successful in a variety of fields over long periods of historical time.

Having dealt with the concepts and qualities underlying municipal arts policy, it remains to deal with its essence.

Stated simply, municipal arts policy is a holistic statement of ideals, principles, objectives, priorities, procedures and strategies governing municipal arts development. It is holistic in the sense that it embraces the entire gamut of possibilities, from lofty ideals to specific strategies. Moreover, it engages the whole community, from government, business, and labour to education, science and the arts. And it is a statement in the sense that it is a printed document, a tape, a film, a recording, or some other type of audio-visual device.

As a holistic statement, municipal arts policy is both a product and a process. It is a product in the sense that it can be circulated and shared by large numbers of people, and preferably, the

entire community. It is a process in the sense that it is evolved and refined over time through the collective collaboration of countless individuals and institutions. While its nature as a product is extremely important, it is its nature as a process that is of greatest concern here.

### THE PROCESS OF MUNICIPAL ARTS POLICY

The process of municipal arts policy is extremely rigorous and demanding. It commences with the creation of a vision, continues with the relentless refinement of the vision in the light of reality, and concludes with the practical implementation of the final results. Once it has been set in motion, each step in the process is slightly more tangible and specific than the step immediately preceding it, thereby yielding a process that moves progressively from general inspiration to affirmative action. It is to the execution of this process that we can now turn our attention.

#### The Ideals of Municipal Arts Development

Without doubt, formulating the ideals of municipal arts development is the most uplifting part of the policy process. Without ideals, there is nothing to excite and inspire people. While it is easy to talk about ideals, it is amazing how difficult it is to articulate them. The moment hopes and dreams, which are the original source of all ideals, start coming out on the table, especially in the arts, there are always plenty of people around to squash them. This is because there is often so little hope of implementing them that it seems pointless to even discuss them. Usually after a few moments discussion about the ideal situation, cries of "unrealistic", "irresponsible" and "impractical" will be heard, and the conversation moves off in more tangible and less demanding directions.

Despite these difficulties, it is crucial to persevere with the task of articulating a set of acceptable ideals. Effective policy development demands it. For effective policy development involves selecting from a broad range of alternatives, and this is only possible when all of the alternatives are up on the table. Regardless of how unrealistic ideals may appear on the surface, or how little chance

there may be of implementing them, it is imperative that every conceivable possibility be explored at this stage in the policy process. The crucial factor should not be whether an ideal is feasible or not, but rather whether it possesses the potential to contribute to community improvement.

There are two additional reasons why even the most utopian possibilities must be included at this stage in the policy process. Firstly, it is amazing how much gets accomplished that appears to be utterly impossible on the surface. Communities all over the world are strewn with examples of this, particularly in the arts where it is possible to find evocative attractions, innovative organizations, fabulous facilities and splendid festivals in the smallest and most remote places. Secondly, as indicated earlier, any policy that is worth its salt needs ideals to stir the imagination and stimulate action, even if they may take years to realize. Without this, policies will go nowhere, regardless of how meticulously they have been prepared.

But what are the ideals of municipal arts development? Despite thousands of years of arts activity, there is still very little available on the ideals of municipal arts development. Doubtless, there are fragments scattered here and there throughout the literature. However, what continues to elude us is a portrait of the ideal situation. This makes crystalization of a set of ideals one of the most crucial challenges confronting municipalities today.

While this is not the place to take up this challenge, it is possible to take a step in the right direction by sketching out some of the more obvious ideals which comprise the perfect situation. Included here would be: a value system that is conducive to a flourishing artistic life; a ubiquity of aesthetic encounters in the environment; a balanced pattern of activity; a distinctive identity; a central place for the arts in planning and decision-making; and last but far from least, a willingness to treat municipalities as works of art. A moment spent in reflection on each of these is richly rewarded.

A value system conducive to a flourishing artistic life is the well-spring from which all other ideals originate. Such a value system must be capable of stimulating rather than stifling innovation

and creativity, largely by bringing to an end the constant struggle for bare-bones survival which has long plagued arts development at the municipal level the world over. In tangible terms, this means placing the arts at the fulcrum of municipal development - making the arts essential, basic services, rather than insignificant, supplementary services. The arts must be to municipal development what yeast is to dough: the catalyst that is needed to raise municipal aspirations to higher and higher levels of accomplishment. Needless to say, this will only happen when civic leaders start treating the arts on the same plane as industry, education, and public utilities.

With this value system in place, a ubiquity of aesthetic encounters in the environment is sure to follow. The term "encounters" is chosen carefully here to suggest a panorama of planned and spontaneous opportunities for citizens to enjoy the arts in a variety of settings. There is always much to see: plays in parks, concerts in factories, sculptures in schools, paintings in offices, tapestries in buildings, and architectural delights everywhere. At the same time, there is always much to do: making costumes and sets, dancing in streets, sketching in malls, and weaving in homes. Opportunities abound everywhere, making it possible for all people to enjoy the arts as both spectators and participants.

What is unfolding here is a portrait of the ideal municipality as one in which the arts permeate every nook and cranny of the physical and man-made environment. This is not to say that they are commonplace; they must always be sought out and worked at to be appreciated. Rather it is to say that they are so ubiquitous that they cannot be ignored. They may be rejected, for everyone must retain the right to reject activities which they don't really enjoy. Or they may be criticized, as everyone must be able to assess undertakings for themselves. But they cannot be glossed over; they are so conspicuous and compelling that they simply must be dealt with.

If a ubiquity of encounters is an ideal, so also is a balanced pattern of activity. It is not sufficient to have communities percolating with artistic activities. They must also provide citizens with opportunities to experience many different types of artistic attractions.



The key to a balanced pattern of activity lies in the judicious blending of many diverse styles, traditions, periods, and practices. The object should always be to acquaint citizens with artistic works from the different centuries, countries, and continents. As a result, there is Verdi and Villa Lobos, Solzynytsyn and Shakespeare, Tagore and Tennyson, and Orosco and Achebe. The result is always an exquisitely-blended diet, one which masterfully combines the classical and the popular, the traditional and the experimental, the occidental and the oriental.

Strenuous efforts must be made to break down the walls which separate and segregate the different types of aesthetic experience if this is to happen. Highly experimental and untried works must be placed alongside established and proven works; lighter and more comic works must be given equal billing with ponderous and serious works; touring activities must be placed on the same footing as residential activities. Whether it is through live performances or media projections, the goal should always be to diversify programming, thereby extending the dimensions of our knowledge and expanding our awareness of the treasure-trove of artistic achievements that exists in all parts of the world.

A distinctive identity is also part of the ideal situation. It comes about through weaving the many strands of the artistic experience together in such a way that they form a magnificent tapestry.

The environmental arts have a monumental role to play here. More than any of the other arts, it is architecture, town planning, urban design and landscape decoration that create the strongest and most lasting impression. These are the forms which convey grandeur, making it possible to instantly recognize Peking, Paris, Tokoyo, Toronto, New Delhi or New York. They are also the forms which create ambiance, making it possible to differentiate between Charleston, Tabriz, Mostar, Carcasonne, Benares and Baghdad. While grandeur creates the strongest impression, due to the vastness of its scale and the height of its structures, ambiance creates the most lasting impression, thanks to its enchanting canals, hidden lanes, back allies and secluded squares. This makes it possible for the smallest community

to exude a distinctive feel and flavour that is every bit as captivating as the colossal city, if not more so. Witness, for example, the way in which Isfahan, Fez, Dinkelsbuhl, Samarkand and Kyoto exercise a call on the collective imagination that is out of all proportion to the brazenness of their boulevards or the boldness of their buildings.

While the environmental arts contribute much to the uniqueness of a community's character, in the ideal situation, all art forms make a similar contribution. The same kind of loving attention that is lavished on the environmental arts is also lavished on the performing, literary, material, visual, media, multicultural and recreational arts. Thus, the community is known not only for its sights, impressive as these may be, but equally for its sounds, smells, textures, and tastes. The preoccupation everywhere is with weaving the arts into the fabric of local life so totally that the result is unequalled or unparalleled excellence. Originality and inventiveness are everywhere, thereby instilling pride in residents and conferring status on the community.

If the arts are to fulfill the mandate that is visualized for them here, they will have to play an exemplary role in municipal affairs. Far from being cordoned off or set apart from the mainstream of municipal life, they will have to be incorporated into every single aspect of community existence. In short, they must be revered for what they really are: rich sources of innovation, rejuvenation and revelation.

More than anything else, what the arts possess, and possess in abundance, is the ability to inspire greatness. At the individual level, this inspiration comes from listening to a Brandenburg concerto, watching a kabuki theatre, or gazing at a medieval cathedral. Here, the arts manifest themselves in the constant striving for perfection and the search for the unknown. At the community level, it comes from building an art centre, creating an orchestra, or establishing a theatre company. Here, the arts manifest themselves in achieving the unattainable and the quest for the sublime.

It does not take this sense of inspiration long to spill over into other areas. Everything that stands in its path is infected by it - politics, religion, education, research, science and commerce. Eventually, the whole community falls prey to its seductive power, making it possible for towns and cities everywhere in the world to reap the munificent harvest which is inherent in all the arts. For while the arts have a great deal to offer in and of themselves, they have much more to offer to the community.

It follows from this that the arts must be fully integrated into municipal planning and decision-making. Before any development takes place, it is commonplace to ask: what effect will this have on the aesthetic character of the community? If the effect is deemed to be negative, the development is blocked, regardless of how particular parties profit or special interest groups benefit. In the ideal situation, there is no room for developments which fail to enhance the overall appearance of the community, regardless of the pay-offs. Herein lies the real litmus test for any municipality serious about the arts, the ultimate measure of the extent to which the arts have moved from the margin to the mainstream of municipal existence.

What is slowly but steadily emerging here is an entirely new notion in the annals of community development - the notion of municipalities as works of art. While there are many examples of boulevards, squares and special districts that have been treated as works of art, such as Haussmann's promenades in Paris, the Ring in Vienna and the Piazza San Marco in Venice, it is hard to think of a single example where an entire municipality has been tackled in this way. Nevertheless, this is what we must learn to do if we want municipalities in all parts of the world to be sources of joy and inspiration rather than receptacles for congestion, pollution, alienation, violence and vandalism. We must learn to treat them as art forms in their own right, capable of being designed, developed and perpetuated in accordance with the highest aesthetic principles and practices.

The key to this lies not so much in making the arts more ubiquitous and conspicuous, important as this may be, but rather in getting civic leaders and everyday citizens to view their municipalities as artistic masterpieces. Everything that is undertaken, from

the revitalization of downtown cores and suburban areas to the re-arranging of street furnishings and mending of fences, is undertaken with this end in mind. Each task is carefully and caringly planned to achieve the maximum aesthetic effect, not only in itself, but also in relation to the whole. For it will only be when politicians, businessmen, educators, housewives and laymen cultivate pride of place, and give it the priority and resources it deserves, that the ultimate ideal of all municipal development will be realized.

While it is important to specify the general ideals which symbolize the perfect situation, in the final analysis, it is up to each municipality to decide on its own ideals. In the process of doing this, it will probably discover that it has secured for itself not only a worthy set of ideals, but also the convictions and commitments necessary to translate these ideals into reality.

#### The Principles of Municipal Arts Development

If it is essential to lay out the overall ideals that municipalities should be striving to achieve, regardless of how utopian these might be, it is equally essential to pin down the specific principles on which all municipal arts development is based. Whereas the former exist in the intellectual imagination, the latter exist in historical experience.

What stands out most vividly in the history of municipal arts development is the vitality of creativity. History is replete with examples of towns and cities where artistic creativity proved to be the spark that was needed to ignite action and fuel progress. Athens, Venice, Vienna, Florence, Machu Picchu, Palenque, Angkor and Cathay all spring rapidly to mind in this regard. As fortune would have it, artists and arts organizations are seldom content to accept a situation the way they find it. More often than not, they are anxious to enrich and embellish it, thereby emitting a kind of compulsive energy which activates other economic, educational, social and political activities.

Communities that are sensitive to this fact will be quick to open up a commanding place for creative people at the core of the developmental process, thereby providing them with numerous opportunities to move across the various frontiers of municipal experience. No sooner are a few composers, playwrights, artistic directors, curators, painters or poets injected into a community than things start to happen. Demands are made; funds are commandeered; obstacles are overcome; and projects are initiated. Such initiatives tend to attract other talents, consequently reaffirming the clanish character of creative activity and reconfirming its cumulative impact over time.

If history has a great deal to pass on about the vitality of creativity, it also has a great deal to pass on about the necessity of excellence. For just as artists and arts organizations are constantly searching for new ways of doing things, so they are continuously striving for better ways of doing things. Thus, the vitality of creativity creates the compulsion for change, and the necessity of excellence steers it in a positive direction.

There should be no room for inferior standards in the life of any municipality. Regardless of the actual status of artists and arts organizations, whether they are amateur, semi-professional or professional, every precaution should be taken to ensure that the highest standards of excellence are achieved in all endeavours. Nothing is as cancerous, or blights a community faster, than mediocre standards of creation, exhibition or performance. Poorly-presented theatre pieces, slovenly-produced paintings, badly-rehearsed orchestral works and grotesquely-designed buildings kill off citizen and visitor commitment faster than anything else. Where such circumstances prevail, communities become the kinds of places people are propelled from rather than catapulted toward.

While artists and arts organizations benefit from the pursuit of perfection, largely by knowing that they have presented their works to the very best of their ability, the real benefactor is the public. It is provided with enumerable opportunities to savour the arts: memorable plays by Pirandello and Pinter; tune-filled musicals by Gilbert and Sullivan and Rogers and Hammerstein; fabled exhibitions by Van Gogh and Picasso; and enchanting arias by Domingo and Forrester.

While each of these presentations represents a gem in its own right, together they constitute a program package that is nothing short of sublime.

Although care must be taken never to shortchange the new and the innovative, historical experience proves that outstanding works of art can withstand the test of time. There is a magnificent heritage available for public approbation here - a heritage that brings to the present and the future the most cherished accomplishments of the past. These accomplishments not only provide insights into the creative outpourings of countless generations of artists, from the dawn of civilization right up to the present day, but also they provide the critical standards which are necessary to evaluate contemporary creativity. However much artists resist or resent it, historical benchmarks and landmarks are needed to ensure that the quality of artistic activity is always headed in an ascending direction. It is at the community level that these benchmarks and landmarks are best preserved and perpetuated.

Citizens in communities all over the world must be guaranteed access to this precious heritage, not as a secondary duty but as a fundamental right. Whether they are living in a remote hamlet in Africa or a teeming metropolis in Latin America, they have the right to be exposed to humankind's incredible legacy of ancestral accomplishments. Wherever possible, this exposure should be provided in live form; there is simply no substitute for the electric excitement that comes from seeing an opera on stage or standing face to face with a painting. Failing this, however, exposure should be provided through the media. Indeed, given the remarkable strides that have been recorded in technical production and reproduction in recent years, especially in book publishing, radio and television broadcasting, film and video presentation, and sound recording, no citizen should be denied access to this colossal latticework of artistic achievements, regardless of his or her geographical location in the world.

There is one final principle that emanates from the past but demands our attention in the present and the future. It has to do with the fact that arts development is a collective responsibility.

While all art originates in the hearts and minds of individual creators, thereby securing for such people a pivotal place at the masthead of arts development, ultimately countless people are required to bring works of art before a broader public. In order to show objects and artefacts properly, galleries and museums are needed which necessitate the participation of patrons and politicians. In order to produce plays and concerts effectively, theatres, concert halls, dramatic companies and symphonic orchestras are needed which require the cooperative energies of businessmen and publicly-minded citizens. Whatever the art form, the efforts and energies of a profusion of individuals and institutions are required. Without a great deal of teamwork and involvement from all segments and sectors of society, arts development is quickly aborted, as has been proven time and again throughout the long history of artistic accomplishment.

These four principles then - the vitality of creativity, the necessity of excellence, access to the universal heritage of humankind, and collective responsibility for arts development - provide the underpinings for municipal arts development. With these broad principles in place, it is possible to proceed to the next step in the policy process.

### The Objectives of Municipal Arts Development

Those who feel uncomfortable with the vagueness of ideals or the abstractness of principles are bound to have a sigh of relief when we progress to the point of defining objectives. For it is at this point that the policy process starts to shed its ethereal quality and begins to take on concrete form.

Defining the objectives of municipal arts development is an extremely important part of the policy process. It is here that targets are established which provide municipalities with something very specific at which to aim. If they are set too high, frustration will set in; if they are set too low, less will be accomplished than is desirable. But if objectives are targets, they are also benchmarks. They provide a tangible way of comparing accomplishments against

aspirations, thereby constituting one of the best measures of policy effectiveness once a policy has been in operation for a period of time.

While specific policy objectives will vary from municipality to municipality, it is clear from the ideals and principles that there are a number of objectives which all municipalities share in common. Among the most essential of these "universal objectives" of municipal arts development are:

- to ensure that all citizens have sufficient exposure and access to the arts, regardless of colour, race, creed, age, or sex;
- to provide all citizens with opportunities to participate actively in the development of the arts and the formulation and execution of arts policies;
- to build a large and discriminating audience for the arts;
- to evolve a viable arts community and ensure that it has sufficient economic, social, and cultural resources to do creative work;
- to provide excellent educational and training opportunities for citizens in general and artists and audiences in particular;
- to provide a comprehensive grid of facilities;
- to provide an adequate supply of support services;
- to develop a broad base of community and financial support; and
- to improve the organization and administration of artistic resources.

While every citizen must have the right to accept or reject the arts, it is essential to ensure that no citizen is deprived of exposure or access to them due to social, economic, educational, religious or political barriers. To prevent this, every effort should be made to remove the obstacles which impede citizens from coming into intimate contact with music, theatre, opera, dance and song on a regular basis whenever and wherever it is their desire to do so. Citizens should be encouraged to become actively involved in the arts and arts policies even if they ultimately decide that such activities are not for them.



If it is necessary to provide citizens with opportunities to enjoy the arts and participate fully in the formulation and execution of arts policies, it is equally essential to build a large and committed audience for the arts. Without such an audience, the arts will never be able to sustain themselves, for it is the audience that provides the motivation, income, revenue and employment which are needed to keep creative people working effectively. While a large audience is necessary, however, it is not sufficient. Equally, it must also be a discriminating audience, one well-schooled in the arts, since without this, the arts community will not be challenged to reach above and beyond itself.

Insufficient attention to the size and character of arts audiences can have the most devastating effects. Nothing is more capable of having a debilitating and demoralizing effect on artists and arts organizations than half-filled houses or an apathetic public. In the past, the arts community may have been guilty of paying lip service to this, largely by believing that it did not really matter if people came to see performances or ignoring their preparation for these performances. Nevertheless, in recent years, this same community has been extremely active in building large, enthusiastic and discerning audiences for the arts. This has yielded more strenuous efforts to expand, diversify and educate the public, primarily through a variety of audience development techniques and marketing, publicity and ticket-selling schemes.

If developing a large and discriminating audience is one of the central objectives of municipal arts development, developing a viable arts community is another. A viable arts community is indispensable to artistic progress. There is simply no substitute for it.

To be viable, the arts community must be composed of many different types of individuals and institutions: artists, animators, administrators, educators, technicians, impresarios, volunteers, theatre and dance companies, galleries, museums, craft associations, and the like. Like any other profession, it must also have the economic, social, political and cultural resources to create to the very best of its ability. In practical terms, this means adequate income and employment opportunities, well developed markets, reasonable

social security, sufficient possibilities for social interaction and creative stimulation, freedom from political oppression, and recognition as constructive contributors to society. Without these, the problem of survival will be so acute that creative work will be impossible.

At the municipal level, it is imperative that the arts community be composed of a spectrum of people, including professionals, semi-professionals, amateurs, students, occasional dabblers, novices and laymen. The object should be to have all art forms and all facets of the arts community duly represented, thereby providing the public with first-hand opportunities to interact with people who are involved in making art on a full-time, part-time and leisure-time basis. In this way, people from all walks of life are able to gain on-the-spot exposure to what it is really like to create, produce and distribute art at every stage of activity.

It is easy to see why it is so essential to provide excellent educational and training opportunities for citizens in general and artists and audiences in particular. The prerequisites for an effective arts educational system are well known and are everywhere much the same. Among the most important must be included: placement of the arts at the core of the curriculum; highly qualified and dedicated teachers; suitable rehearsal, exhibition, and performance facilities; adequate materials and equipment; periodic tours to artistic resources in the community; and frequent presentations by artists and arts organizations in the schools. With these prerequisites in place, municipalities everywhere will be able to claim that a solid foundation has been laid for generations to come.

Just as educators need suitable facilities to teach properly, so artists and arts organizations need decent facilities to perform and exhibit effectively. While multipurpose facilities like community halls, gymnasiums and cafeteriums can often be used to advantage, every municipality, regardless of its size or location, should possess enough specialized arts facilities to present concerts, plays, dance performances, art shows, craft exhibitions and poetry readings to best advantage. These facilities should possess all the

prerequisites for proper presentation: good acoustics and sight lines; large storage and rehearsal spaces; suitable back stage areas; comfortable seating; spacious foyers; adequate lighting; and well-established conservation measures. Whether they are built from scratch, or renovated from existing premises, every effort should be made to ensure that they incorporate all of the accoutrements that are needed for memorable performances and exhibitions. One of the best ways of ensuring this is to involve artists, arts organizations, architects, technicians and audiences - that is to say the users of the facilities - in the design and development stages. For then, and only then, will the purposes for which they are intended really be served.

An adequate supply of support services is also a fundamental objective of municipal arts development. A whole host of services is visualized here: leadership and training courses for arts administrators and board members; expert advice on publicity, promotion and marketing; seminars for animators and impresarios; booking and touring activities; master classes for aspiring professionals; and fundraising workshops for everyone. All of these services help to expand the quantity and elevate the quality of municipal arts activity, so much so, in fact, that they tend to make the difference between a flourishing and floundering artistic life.

The development of a broad base of community and financial support is next on the slate of objectives. More than anything else it should be a diversified and pluralistic base, one involving business, labour, education, government, foundations, and the professions. In financial terms, this reduces the dependency of artists and arts organizations on a limited range of sources, thereby lessening the danger of the piper calling the tune and easing the strain on any single funding source. As important as this is, no municipality has ever accomplished anything significant in the arts without a broad base of social and human support, particularly from powerful people in the community. The reason for this is obvious: these people are judiciously placed in positions of strategic importance to influence the decision-making process. Without such people - the modern day counterparts of Lorenzo d' Medici, Ludwig II or Count

Eszterhazy - there is little hope of potent opportunities being opened up, regardless of how well they might be thought out in advance. Sight should never be lost of the fact that an army of dedicated citizens and committed volunteers is also needed once these opportunities present themselves. From time immemorial, municipalities have depended on such people to provide the impetus that is required to sustain high and dynamic levels of arts activity. Without a battery of highly-motivated and altruistically-minded citizens, the arts will quickly sink into oblivion in any community.

Improvements in the organization and administration of resources is the last on our list of salient objectives. In the past, this objective has often been treated as an appendage to the arts. As a result, resources have not always been managed in the most careful and prudent way, thereby producing deficiencies in the use of scarce financial, capital and human capabilities. Given the present economic situation and prospects for the future, however, it is clear that every precaution must now be taken to ensure that arts resources are organized and administered in the most efficient, productive and effective manner.

This completes the slate of universal objectives of municipal arts development. Obviously, there are degrees of refinement of these objectives. Some municipalities may want to formulate them more precisely than they have been formulated here. Others may want to define a set of sub-objectives for each major objective. Still others may want to make a distinction between objectives and goals: objectives being broader and more general; goals being narrower and more specific. Here again, however, it is for each municipality to decide on its own particular slate of objectives in accordance with its own unique circumstances and requirements.

Regardless of what slate of objectives is preferred, a strong and inexorable distinction must be made between the artistic and non-artistic objectives of municipal arts policy. Like most activities, the arts are ends in themselves, as well as means to other ends, be they environmental, social, economic, political, or educational in nature. While these non-artistic ends may be extremely important, they must always be subsidiary or subordinate in a well-

designed municipal arts policy. Regardless of how much governments or corporations may like it to be otherwise, the ultimate ends of all municipal arts development must always be artistic.

### The Priorities of Municipal Arts Development

Since it is highly unlikely that all of the resources required to meet the objectives of municipal arts development will be available, priorities will have to be set. Since these priorities are likely to affect the municipality for decades to come, care must be taken to ensure that they are the right ones. We have now entered the crucible part of the policy process - the part that demands the greatest attention and is by far the most difficult because it necessitates tough choices and hard decisions.

Given the critical importance of this stage in the overall policy process, it may be helpful to provide an example. Suppose a community has hammered out an acceptable slate of ideals, principles and objectives. Since resources have different uses - and this is the important thing to bear in mind for effective policy development - it must then identify all of the alternative uses to which these resources can be put. In total, twenty alternative uses may be identified, ranging all the way from refurbishing the arts centre or starting a training program for administrators, to marketing the works of local artists or expanding the activities of the local arts council. Each alternative, or option, must be carefully weighed in terms of its potential impact on the designated ideals, principles and objectives. The alternatives are then ranked in order of priority. When they are compared against actual and anticipated resources, it may well be that only two alternatives are possible. Each alternative is then reviewed to ensure that resources cannot be used more fruitfully in other ways. If so, the necessary adjustments are made. If not, the final priorities are established, and the appropriate procedures and strategies are devised to translate these priorities into practice.

Many may think that this is an unduly complicated process to go through in order to ascertain policy priorities. The process is described here in some detail not to make it appear more convoluted

than it actually is, but rather to illustrate that a very systematic, rigorous and deliberate method must be followed if policy development is to be effective. The good policy maker, whether it is in the arts or anywhere else, is constantly asking if the priorities are the right ones; if existing and expected resources are being utilized in the most productive way; if there are better uses to which resources might be put; and if policy ideals, principles and objectives are being served properly. After a while, this "policy mentality" becomes as polished as any other skill, with the result that more and more time and energy can be conserved in its application. However, what must never be lost sight of is the fact that there is a well-defined method which must be followed if successful arts policy development is to be achieved.

Since every municipality is different, it is impossible to determine in advance what the priorities of municipal arts development should be. A need that might receive a high priority in one municipality might receive a low priority in another. For example, one municipality may have an underdeveloped grid of facilities, whereas another may not. In the former case, facilities may receive a very high priority; in the latter case, they may receive a very low priority. As it is for facilities, so it is for each of the elements which comprise municipal arts development. Clearly, it all depends on specific circumstances that obtain in the community at a particular point in time.

While each municipality must decide for itself what its priorities should be, there are some general guidelines which should be taken into account in determining the priorities of municipal arts development.

All priorities should be viewed as investments rather than as expenditures. Moreover, they should be ranked according to their cost-benefit ratio and rate of return. While it is not always possible to determine with exact scientific precision what this ratio or rate of return will be, it is usually possible to get a good general idea of what each will be. This should prove extremely helpful, not only in developing a suitable slate of priorities, but also in selecting the priorities which have the greatest impact on the community.

In the act of ascertaining these priorities, sight should never be lost of the fact that some investments yield simple, one-time only returns, while others yield multiple, sustaining returns. This is extremely important in calculating the overall rate of return on different types of investments. It may be better, for instance, to place a higher priority on investments which produce multiple, sustaining returns and trigger other possibilities, even if their initial returns are not as great. Indeed, given the severe shortage of funds, investments which fail to activate other types of activities should be scrutinized carefully, regardless of how great their immediate yield may be.

As a rule, investments in people tend to yield a higher rate of return than investments in things. While this may appear to be a trite point, it has essential policy implications nonetheless. If all the priorities of municipal arts development were depicted as a pyramid, investments in artists, audiences, animators and administrators would stand at the very pinnacle of the pyramid. In the final analysis, there is simply no substitute for people in the arts, especially well-trained and highly-skilled people. The reason for this is now readily apparent. Without artists, there is no art; without animators and administrators, there is no one to organize, market, and distribute art; and without audiences, there is no one to enjoy art. This makes investments in the education, training and nurturing of artists, animators, administrators and audiences the key to a dynamic and vital arts development. Where municipalities are sensitive to this, the arts have progressed. Where they are not, the arts have regressed.

Investments in programs come next to investments in people on the pyramid of priorities. This places programs - concerts, plays, exhibitions, festivals, poetry readings and the like - extremely high on the priorities' list. This is as it should be. Whether it is composers working alone in their studios or theatre companies actively rehearsing plays, the object of every artistic exercise is to yield a program of some sort. Unfortunately, however, sight is often lost of this fact in the modern world. Often, there is a tendency to get carried away with other preoccupations, such as the creation of

elaborate facilities, complex funding mechanisms, or sophisticated bureaucratic structures. As essential as these are, and it is not the intention to diminish their importance here, sight should never be lost of the truth that progress in the arts will never be achieved without an adequate stock of high-quality programs.

Many may be surprised to find investments in capital facilities and equipment lower down on the pyramid of priorities than investments in people and programs. In many municipalities, it is commonplace to contend that deficiencies in facilities and equipment constitute the number one problem in arts development. In such cases, doubtless investments in "houses for the arts" should receive the highest priority, higher even than investments in people and programs. However, considerable care should be exercised not to overstate the case. In many communities, these shortages are not as severe as is contended. People have a tendency to blame lack of progress on inadequate facilities, whereas the real shortcomings may lie elsewhere. To make matters worse, there can often be an appalling lack of knowledge of the facilities that do exist in the community - facilities that might be utilized effectively with a little imagination. The very fact that facilities are not utilized as fully as they should be once they are constructed suggests that funds can usually be employed elsewhere in more productive ways, despite the political or artistic lure of newly-constructed or sumptuously-renovated premises. Unless sufficient provision is made for utilizing existing premises on a sustained basis, it would be wise to establish priorities elsewhere.

A final guideline concerns the problem of deciding whether resources should be diffused broadly, thereby achieving a kind of shotgun effect, or focused narrowly, thereby achieving a kind of rifle effect. While each municipality is in the best position to decide this for itself, what must be stressed is the need to base this decision on what is in the best interests of arts development. While it may be advantageous to diffuse resources broadly for political reasons, if this does not advance artistic interests, these pressures should be resisted, regardless of how effectively they satisfy non-artistic ends. There are occasions, for example, where arts development demands massive concentrations of funds in a few areas. If these funds are not forthcoming, progress can be severely thwarted for decades.



If sight should not be lost of the fact that decisions regarding the distribution of resources should be made according to artistic needs, sight should also not be lost of the fact that arts development is a multi-faceted and integrated activity. Just as it is important to caution against getting carried away with the creation of elaborate facilities, complex funding mechanisms, and sophisticated bureaucratic structures, so it is important to warn against ignoring some of the more essential requirements of arts development. Training effective arts administrators, educating board members, providing basic accounting and marketing services, maintaining on-going records and controls, and utilizing sound managerial and fiscal practices are every bit as important in the final analysis as other priorities. A breakdown in any one of these areas can easily negate what has taken decades to accomplish.

#### The Procedures of Municipal Arts Development

Once the priorities of municipal arts development have been determined, it is possible to proceed to the procedures. Here, it is necessary to set down, with as much clarity and precision as possible, exactly who is responsible for what, and how development is to proceed. Without this, confusion and chaos will reign supreme.

Suppose a municipality has concluded that it needs a creative art centre as a result of working its way through the priority process. Exactly how is this to be accomplished? Is a feasibility study to be conducted? If so, who is to undertake it; how much is it to cost; and who is to pay for it? More importantly, who is to assume responsibility for it once it has been completed - the business community, the municipal government, or a special committee? Answers to these questions, and indeed to all questions relevant to each priority, should be set out in the procedural section of the policy. This section should provide a kind of tableau of procedures for all priorities and policy agents. From this it should be clear what is expected - artistically, financially and administratively - from artists, arts organizations, corporations, school boards, the various levels of government, the general public, and all other institutions and agencies affected by the artistic development of the community.

Of all the procedural matters requiring clarification, none may be more essential than the administrative and financial ones. If development is to evolve satisfactorily, it is crucial for everyone to know exactly what the administrative mandates, roles and responsibilities of key institutions and agencies are, as well as exactly how funding is to be provided. It is not necessary that everyone agree with the procedures; indeed, there will probably be a great deal of debate on this. Nevertheless, it is necessary for everyone to know what they are. A great disservice is done to municipal arts development if people don't know who is responsible for what and why.

The first step in establishing proper administrative procedures involves working out the most appropriate structure to foster municipal arts development. While many structures are possible, the one advocated here is the one where responsibility is divided between a department of municipal government, presumably a department of artistic or cultural affairs; and an autonomous agency, preferably an arts council. The advantages of this type of structure are immediately apparent. On the one hand, there is adequate political representation, since responsibility for the arts is lodged directly in a government department. Without this, there will be insufficient political commitment to make arts development a dynamic force in the community. On the other hand, there is sufficient autonomy, since certain responsibilities are lodged in the hands of the community arts council. Without this, there will not be enough independence from the political process to guarantee artistic freedom and prevent the arts from being manipulated for non-artistic purposes.

The division of powers between these two administrative agencies will vary greatly from municipality to municipality. In general, however, the government department of artistic or cultural affairs should be responsible for setting and monitoring policies, providing facilities, supplying support services, funding programs, coordinating activities with other levels of government, and creating a climate conducive to accelerated activity. The community arts council should be responsible for coordinating the activities of local groups, initiating new ventures, animating key developments,

educating the public, broadening the base of public and private support, and acting as an umbrella and advocate agency for all the arts.

A possible area of friction between these two agencies may be over the distribution of funds. While some favour direct distribution by a government department, others favour indirect distribution by a community arts council. The arguments on both sides are compelling. Those in favour of distribution by a government department point to the need to have maximum control over public funds, and proper fiscal accountability. Those in favour of distribution by an arts council point to the need to have adjudication by peers. The solution to this dilemma would seem to lie in the creation of a municipal grants committee. While it would be located in government, it would have representation from the arts community in general and the arts council in particular. In this way, political control and accountability could be assured, as could assessment by peers and reasonable representation from knowledgeable authorities in the field.

It is impossible to raise the matter of the most effective means for dispensing funds without simultaneously raising the matter of the most effective means for generating funds. At the municipal level, a variety of procedural possibilities exist.

As far as overall funding is concerned, some municipalities prefer to use a per capita formula, or percentage of the mill rate, to generate funds. Under this system, a specified amount - say one half of one percent of the mill rate or \$5 per capita - is available for arts development each year. Since this amount is known in advance, it does facilitate a great deal of planning. Its major shortcoming, however, is that it may be set too low, or too difficult to change, to be really effective.

The type of system where funds are fixed can also be used to advantage to stimulate funding from developers and the business community. It involves requiring developers and business firms to set aside a certain percentage of total building costs or operating revenues for artistic purposes. These funds can then be used to purchase works of art, beautify newly-constructed buildings, enhance

newly-established residential neighbourhoods, commission new works, supply office space and equipment, provide facilities, or subsidize programs. Despite the difficulties involved in this type of system, it has proven extremely effective in a number of municipalities as a means of bringing the arts community, developers and the business community closer together.

Many municipalities prefer procedural arrangements involving support in kind rather than support in money. Under this system, artists and arts groups are provided with a number of services free of charge, or at very nominal rates. Included here might be the use of municipal facilities for performance, rehearsal, storage or administration; periodic secretarial assistance; help with postage and mailings; and utilization of professional instructors. The provision of services in this way often makes it difficult to determine the actual contribution of municipalities to arts development. What is needed here is a method of cost accounting which properly ascribes monetary values to each of these contributions, so that the true value of the municipal contribution can be ascertained. This is particularly important when comparisons are being made among municipalities, or with other levels of government. Too often, municipalities come off badly because a higher percentage of their contribution is made in kind, whereas the comparisons are conducted solely on the basis of money.

If there is need for utmost clarity and precision with respect to what municipalities are providing, especially as it relates to contributions in money and contributions in kind, there is also need for utmost clarity and precision with respect to how it is provided. Is it provided outright, or with certain conditions? In recent years, much has been accomplished through the matching grant principle, whereby artists and arts organizations are required to match municipal or corporate contributions with equivalent or greater amounts raised through their own initiatives. This can be an extremely effective procedure for leveraging funds from other sources, broadening the base of community support, and cooperative sharing. It is strongly advocated here as a method of expanding the funding base for municipal arts development, provided the matching conditions

are not too onerous and there is a very clear understanding about who is responsible for what conditions.

While the focus here has been on defining and clarifying financial and administrative procedures, it goes without saying that procedural arrangements must be defined and clarified for each and every aspect of municipal arts development. Everyone should have a clear understanding of procedural arrangements as they relate to programs, facilities, services, and supplies. Too often, arrangements are vague and ill-defined, thereby causing a great deal of frustration and mistrust because no one is quite sure what is available, who is eligible to apply for and receive it, and how it is to be used to best advantage. While the arts community and the general public must always have the right to react against procedural arrangements they do not agree with, it is obvious that municipalities would be well advised to make these arrangements as clear, simple, and straightforward as possible. In the process, it may be discovered that the municipal contribution to arts development is many times larger than is commonly assumed.

Thus far, we have been concerned with clarifying procedural arrangements within municipalities. However, the same clarity that is required within municipalities is also required between municipalities, as well as with the other levels of government. Since municipalities interact constantly with their regional, provincial and federal counterparts on many matters related to arts development, procedures affecting these arrangements should also be clarified as fully as possible. Indeed, there may be no greater need at the present time than the need to work out the respective roles, responsibilities and relationships of the various levels of government with regard to funding, facilities, programs, services, training and personnel. What may be at stake here may be the future quality of community arts development, not to mention considerable savings in time and money and the elimination of a great deal of wastage and duplication.

The Strategies of Municipal Arts Development

Now that various procedural questions have been dealt with, it is possible to progress to the evolution of effective strategies. Ultimately, this may prove to be the most significant area of all, since without carefully-devised and skilfully-executed strategies, even the most profound and penetrating policies can flounder hopelessly.

The main problem with strategies is that they are almost always treated as an afterthought. Usually so much time and energy goes into developing a policy that little or no thought is given to its implementation. Then one of two things happens. Either there is a frantic scurrying around to devise strategies at the very last moment; or implementation of the policy is turned over to an agency that has not been involved in its creation. In either case, the end result leaves much to be desired.

To prevent this, a great deal of thought and attention should be given to the utilization and implementation of the policy at the outset of the policy process. To whom does the policy have to be presented upon completion? How is it to be presented? What preparations should be undertaken in advance? Once the policy has been adopted, what follow-up measures are necessary? How is it to be used, and who is to monitor implementation of its recommendations? Seeking answers to these questions at the outset of the process usually helps to ensure effective execution once the policy has been completed.

In all likelihood, the policy will require the approval of many different groups and decision-makers in the community. As a result, it is crucial that they be included in the preparation of the policy. Artistic, labour, educational, political and business groups in particular have knowledge and expertise that should be tapped fully as policy development proceeds. Without the active involvement of artists and arts organizations, for example, it is highly unlikely that the policy will present a true picture of the artistic needs of the community, thereby condemning it to oblivion before it even gets

off the ground. However, without the active participation of the labour, educational, political and business communities, it is highly unlikely that there will be support for the policy once it comes time to present it to the appropriate authorities.

If involving a diversity of community groups and decision-makers in the policy process is one strategy, tailoring the policy to realistically meet the real situation is another. This is particularly important in the arts, given the reputation the arts have for unrealistic demands and high expectations. There is the constant danger that the policy may be rejected out of hand before it is given serious consideration if it is perceived to be unreasonable. This being the case, policy requirements and recommendations should be carefully formulated to bear a reasonable relationship to available and anticipated resources. It may be better, for example, to request fewer resources and prove that these resources can be used wisely, than to request too many resources and risk receiving nothing. The aim should always be to strike a judicious balance between what is ambitious and challenging on the one hand, and what is credible and feasible on the other hand. More often than not, the requests that are successful are the ones that bear some commonsense connection to the prevailing situation. This is not to say that the prevailing situation should always be accepted. Rather it is to say that patience and prudence today can often pay handsome dividends tomorrow.

Presentation of the policy to the appropriate authorities also requires a carefully-constructed strategy. Regardless of whether the policy is presented to a committee of government, board of control, full Council, or a spectrum of associations and agencies, detailed consideration should be given to all of the tactical manoeuvres which are required to guarantee endorsement of the policy. Contact should be made with all key individuals and institutions prior to the actual presentation of the policy to ensure that they are fully familiar with the policy and don't have any concerns about it that are best addressed prior to actual presentation. The presentation itself should be well rehearsed in advance, and if possible, simulated in order to polish it and anticipate reactions to it during the

official deliberations. Nothing should be left to chance that can be foreseen in advance. Indeed, given the importance of this occasion, every effort should be made to see to it that the presentation is as forceful and flawless as possible.

Once the policy has been presented and receives official approval, it is ready for distribution. Here again, a well-devised strategy is needed to ensure that it is distributed to a diversity of individuals and groups in the community. A comprehensive mailing list should be drawn up well in advance - a mailing list that includes the names of all prominent civic authorities and organizations. A follow-up system should be set in motion soon after distribution has been accomplished. This should ensure that the policy has been received, and more importantly has been read, by all people who have an interest or influence on arts development in the community.

There is one final strategy that demands our attention. It concerns the need to build a monitoring device and action plan into the implementation process.

Whether it is in the arts or anywhere else, most policies fail to achieve the desired result because too little consideration is given to the best means of monitoring and implementing them once they are adopted. In consequence, a well-devised and carefully-conceived strategy should be drafted to guarantee that the policy is executed following its endorsement by the proper municipal authorities. The artistic community has a vital role to play here by actively utilizing the policy and turning it to its advantage. Without constant pressure and lobbying by the group that has the most to gain from it, the policy will prove ineffectual.

This last strategy is extremely important. Often, policy-makers are so relieved when the policy is finally finished that they heave a huge sigh of relief and conclude that the job has been done. The reason why so many policies are relegated to the shelf, however, is not because they are bad policies, but rather because insufficient attention was given to their execution and use at the very outset of the policy process. To protect against this, an implementation committee should be established to aggressively pursue action on all



the various recommendations contained in the policy. This committee should be a sub-committee of the committee responsible for preparing the policy. The reason for this is that it will have the greatest commitment to seeing to it that the policy is put into practice. Only as a last resort should responsibility for implementation of the policy be turned over to a group that was not involved in its formulation. To divorce one from the other could have disastrous results for both.

This completes the process of municipal arts policy development. As indicated at the beginning, it is a process that commences with the articulation of a group of lofty ideals and concludes with the execution of a set of specific strategies. Each step in the process is slightly more concrete and pragmatic than the step immediately preceding it, thereby bridging the gap between theory and practice and yielding a cornucopia of tangible results.

#### THE DANGERS OF MUNICIPAL ARTS POLICY

Thus far, little has been said about the dangers of municipal arts policy. Nevertheless, there are pitfalls involved in the formulation and implementation of municipal arts policy - pitfalls that must be avoided if the policy is to function effectively.

As far as the formulation of municipal arts policy is concerned, the greatest danger is that the policy will be parochial and partisan, rather than comprehensive and egalitarian. The best way to prevent this, as has already been noted, is to engage maximum public, private, and professional participation in the process. In this regard, the active involvement of artists, arts organizations, media agencies, ethnic groups, service associations, and educational institutions is imperative, given the key role they play in the actual creation and dissemination of works of art. However, the active involvement of politicians, civil servants, businessmen, and citizens is equally imperative, given the fact that they constitute the actual and potential audience for artistic works. If contributions

from any of these groups are absent, especially in the progressive refinement of the policy over time, the impact of the policy will be severely restricted.

Lack of awareness of, or sensitivity to, the broader social, environmental, economic and political milieu within which the policy is located is another potential danger. While this may be true for any policy, it is particularly true for arts policy in view of the persistent isolation of the arts from the rest of society. To counteract this, municipal arts policy should be fully and forcefully linked with policies dealing with housing, office and commercial development, urban renewal, utilities, transportation and communications, and job creation. This means ensuring that an intimate bond is forged between arts policy on the one hand and residential, industrial, environmental, educational, and economic policy on the other hand. Too often, arts policy is prepared in a vacuum, with insufficient consideration being given to the basic linkages that are needed with all other sectors of society.

If there are dangers to be avoided with respect to the formulation of municipal arts policy, there are also dangers to be avoided with respect to the implementation of municipal arts policy. These dangers are best elucidated by examining the different types of policies which have been devised to promote development of the arts at the municipal level. Included here are incremental, prescriptive and redistributive policies.

Incremental policies are by far the easiest to implement. This is because they involve nothing more than quantitative increases or decreases in the sums allocated to municipal arts development. For example, if the municipal budget increases by a certain percentage, support for the arts goes up by a certain percentage. Conversely, if the municipal budget decreases by a certain percentage, support for the arts decreases by a certain percentage. No other change takes place, be it in the types of activities supported, or in the manner in which they are supported.

The dangers of the incremental approach are readily apparent. While it may be convenient for political or bureaucratic purposes to increase or decrease support for the arts in accordance with the increase or decrease in municipal funds, such actions seldom deal effectively with the real needs, issues or problems of arts development. For one thing, needs, issues and problems are not judged on their own merit, but rather on the basis of an established formula. For another thing, many activities worthy of support receive no support at all, since the incremental approach merely perpetuates the existing situation or the status quo.

Unlike incremental policies, prescriptive policies involve changes in direction and kind as well as in amount. This makes them qualitative as well as quantitative. The problem here is that these policies can often be authoritarian, sudden, or erratic, thereby making them the most feared in the arts community. This can happen whenever developments are deliberately controlled, manipulated, or directed down a predetermined path. Experience proves that the best way of preventing this is to place responsibility for policy implementation in the hands of many individuals and institutions, rather than concentrating it in the hands of a few.

Finally, there are redistributive policies. These also involve changes that are qualitative as well as quantitative. The difference, however, is that these policies are finely tuned to changes that are taking place in the broader environment. Although these policies tend to minimize the dangers, care should still be taken to assure that they do not become inflexible or bureaucratic. Two safeguards are needed here. First, policy ideals, principles and objectives should be treated as flexible guidelines, rather than cast-iron dogmas. Second, policy procedures should be kept to an absolute minimum and applied with a sensitive and sympathetic hand.

There is one final danger which must be addressed. It concerns the dangers inherent in planning. Whenever municipal arts policy employs planning, care must be taken to see to it that rigid adherence to a plan does not conflict with new needs and altered circumstances. While there may be times when it is best to persevere

with a plan, there may be other times when it may be best to abandon or revise it. Too much clinging to a plan, or to the time period over which the plan extends, can deflect attention from many of the more spontaneous requirements which are constantly surfacing in all communities. Here again, impending danger suggests the need for caution, surveillance, and sensitivity.

#### THE BENEFITS OF MUNICIPAL ARTS POLICY

It is fitting that the benefits of municipal arts policy should follow the dangers. For if there are risks involved in the formulation and implementation of municipal arts policy, there are also rewards. In fact, the rewards outweigh the risks many times over.

In keeping with the line of argument promulgated throughout the text, the primary benefits are artistic. The moment the arts are placed in the vanguard of municipal development, things start to happen. Industrial and residential areas are laid out in accordance with the most exhalted principles and practices; promenades, parks, streets, shopping centres and squares are designed to pulsate with musical, dramatic, and poetic activity; and festivals, fairs and community celebrations are used to inspire and illuminate. Under these circumstances, urban living becomes an absolute joy rather than a tedious responsibility. With the arts constantly flowing in their veins, municipalities really do become art forms in their own right - art forms capable of achieving immortality in time and distinctiveness in space.

One consequence of this is the vastly improved physical state of the community and elevated status of artists and arts organizations. Not only is the community far more appealing to eyes, ears, and nose, but also artists and arts organizations are much more understood and respected. Rather than being treated as outcasts and misfits, fit only for the occasional performance or exhibition, they are treated as consistent and compulsory contributors to urban development. Thus, a key class steps to the forefront of municipal existence - a class

committed first and foremost to making the community a more captivating and compelling place in which to grow and develop.

Countless human benefits follow closely on the heels of these artistic benefits. For people are the real beneficiaries of the myriad artistic advancements which punctuate the community. Rather than wanting to escape towns and cities like the plague, they are anxious to delve into every nook and cranny of their existence. One advantage of this is that municipalities become people places, capable of providing visitors and residents alike with a great deal of personal satisfaction and spiritual fulfillment. Where there were once boarded-up storefronts and squalour-ridden slums, there are now tastefully-designed statues and exquisitely-decorated squares. And seats. Seats here, seats there, seats everywhere, making it possible for people to relax, soak up the sun, and luxurate in the most refined and enthralling surroundings.

Transformed by the artist's eye, the composer's ear and the artisan's touch, municipalities become ennobling and invigorating places. Such places are capable of replacing human apathy, anxiety and alienation with excitement, ambition and revitalization. Under these circumstances, urban living becomes an adventuresome and exhilarating experience, one which helps people face the future with optimism, hope and vitality rather than pessimism, nihilism and despair.

It is this ability to uplift people individually which makes it possible to join them together collectively. The result is incalculable social benefits - benefits ranging all the way from collective solidarity to community pride. Unlike many other types of activities, the arts are not divisive or devicive. On the contrary, they are collective and communal. Their function is, and always will be, to strengthen the social bonds of the community, to make it possible for people to work cooperatively and collaboratively for the common good of all. In so doing, they reduce racial tension and social unrest, thereby providing people with constructive outlets for their ideas, emotions and frustrations. Communities that are alive with the sights and sounds of artistic activity - children

singing, adults painting, and senior citizens dancing - seldom have to worry about the kinds of tensions and hostilities which can easily rip neighbourhoods apart.

Artistic, human and social benefits are not the only benefits to be derived from municipal arts policy. There are profuse economic and political benefits to be enjoyed as well.

Municipalities that have the arts active in their arteries immediately become powerful economic engines. They attract industries - industries anxious to take advantage of their considerable consumption and investment possibilities. They attract executives - executives excited about their enticing atmosphere and dynamic energy. They attract developers - developers ready to reap the rich harvest that emanates from their prolific commercial and industrial activities. They attract tourists - tourists keen to derive pleasure from their stimulating surroundings and scintillating nightlife. And most of all, they attract residents - residents anxious to profit from their exhilarating ambiance and creative cultural milieu.

What results is a vigorous and vital municipal economy. There is a great deal of consumer and investor confidence, as people come to appreciate the lucrative income, expenditure and employment opportunities. There is high job satisfaction, as people feel enthusiastic about their work and optimistic about their future. There is consistent economic growth, as the community is never overloaded with unused capacity or bogged down with financial problems. And there is low unemployment, due to the fact that the arts are highly labour intensive and are less vulnerable to technological change. Thus, it is far from coincidental that the great artistic capitals of the world also turn out upon closer inspection to be the major economic capitals of the world. For the arts and the economy fit together as neatly as hand in glove.

With economic benefits like these, it is little wonder that there are copious political benefits as well. Heading the list of these are increased order and stability. As previously noted, what municipal arts policy offers is a systematic and sequential way of

going about the business of building the artistic infrastructure of the community - a way that delivers concrete results while simultaneously minimizing conflict and unrest. What results is a community that is more committed to getting on with the job, more mindful of wastages and inefficiencies, and less embroiled in pointless personality disputes and needless institutional controversies.

Increased order and stability are not the only political benefits municipalities can derive from an arts policy. Far from it. Many other types of rewards are forthcoming. Most prominent among these are greater visibility, credibility, status and identity. The long term gains here for municipalities may be incalculable. Towns and cities that have become known and emulated for their enlightened arts policies are far more likely to be treated as prototypes for future development, thereby affirming the validity of their political institutions, the viability of their bureaucratic practices, and the vitality of their civic sensibilities.

There is only one inexorable conclusion that can be drawn from all this. As a fresh entry in the annals of history, clearly municipal arts policy is a force to be reckoned with in the future. Not only does it promise to make community living a far more fulfilling affair than it is at present, especially at a time when severe storm clouds are gathering on the horizon, but also it possesses the potential to achieve this in an extremely sensible and sensitive way. By pressing music, drama, dance, painting, literature and the crafts into every chink and fissure of urban existence, it opens the gateway to a whole new era in municipal development. We have only ourselves to blame if we do not pass through this gateway.

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