



Town of St. Marys

Municipal Cultural Plan

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Completed by Lord Cultural Resources



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1

Introduction

1.1 Why a Cultural Plan? Why Now?

Culture is a dynamic reflection of the spirit and energy of a community that holds the potential to inspire. Not only does culture challenge us to see the world in new ways, it supports lifelong learning and contributes to the vitality of our shared spaces.

St. Marys is a small town in southwestern Ontario with a vibrant cultural scene. For St. Marys, culture is intricately tied to the town's rich history and identity: for example, heritage architecture, access to nature, and warm and friendly people all characterize St. Marys and make it unique. With a civic history spanning more than a century and a half, the town possesses a vibrant community spirit that has led it through the many changes that occurred over this time period and that has helped it overcome many challenges along the way.

The arts and culture of St. Marys reflect this journey – historic limestone buildings dating to the middle of the 19th century, Canada's largest freshwater outdoor swimming pool, and an active and lively jazz and popular music scene with participation from many of the town's young people are some of the features contributing to the richness of life in this picturesque town. Municipal staff in St. Marys have also planned, organized and led more recent cultural activity. Festivals and events such as the Stonetown Heritage Festival, Canada Day Party, and Doors Open St. Marys add significant cultural value to the town. Further, the St. Marys Public Library and St. Marys Museum and Archives provide residents and visitors with ample opportunities to learn about the history of the town, while the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and the town's many trails and parks provide significant opportunities for sport and recreation enthusiasts.



Lucid Musings 2011 Heritage Festival Street Dance. Photo: Sean Camp

The town's spirit is still strong in the new millennium and the Town¹ government and its citizens have recognized and embraced arts and culture as vital components for successfully planning its future. The initiative to develop a Municipal Cultural Plan for the Town of St. Marys in 2012 is a clear indication of this embrace. The value of culture's impact is broad and wide reaching:

- **Economic Development:** Culture holds the potential to attract and retain a creative workforce and its employers, foster urban regeneration and improve property values, and establish far reaching appeal for cultural tourists.
- **Strong Neighbourhoods:** Culture provides a vehicle for meaningful community engagement. Culture can strengthen community bonds, foster inclusivity, and break down barriers associated with misunderstanding.
- **Innovation:** Creative thinking leads to new ideas. Culture can foster new uses for community spaces, new models for local businesses, and new uses for ordinary or obsolete objects.

¹ Throughout this report, "Town" is capitalized when referring to the Corporation of the Town of St. Marys, but not otherwise.



St. Marys Museum

- **Environmental Sustainability:** Culture provides a forum for addressing important environmental issues. Cultural districts encourage the reuse of empty spaces and support alternative modes of transportation. Culture can also support local and sustainable food sources.
- **Public Health:** Culture propels active discovery. Whether through visiting the local museum, participating in a heritage street festival or taking a dip in the outdoor swimming pool with some friends, culture promotes healthy movement and meaningful social interaction.
- **Lifelong Learning:** Culture promotes cognitive and emotional development and offers rich opportunities for continuous learning and challenging our assumptions.
- **Public Safety:** Culture establishes positive and safe community spaces, fostering neighbourly interaction and familiarity with the local community.
- **Well-Being and Quality of Life:** Culture shapes and inspires, it helps establish important and meaningful bonds, and it touches us in ways which are difficult to quantify. Culture is an essential component of human experience and engaging in it supports an increased quality of life.

1.2 What is a Cultural Plan

Vision meets strategy in a cultural plan. A cultural plan translates the cultural needs and identity of a community into a tool for implementing recommendations. These recommendations seek to address gaps in cultural service delivery; expand participation; broaden the impact of culture; identify new opportunities; and stake out civic identity through cultural expression.

A cultural plan is launched to address distinct objectives specific to the cultural sector of a town or city, including arts and heritage, creative industries, and resource providers. A cultural plan outlines a broad framework for the role of culture in civic life.

1.3 What Does this Plan Do?

This plan aims to strengthen and elevate culture in St. Marys. Developed with the collaboration and input of numerous community stakeholders, including residents, business owners, and Town officials, this plan is a strategic game plan to address current needs and to bring the community closer together in the process.

This plan strives to:

Unite and strengthen the arts and cultural community in St. Marys and build community and capacity among artists and arts and culture organizations to help “all boats rise together.” We note throughout this Plan the existence of a vibrant cultural life in the town; the goal of this Plan is to build on that excellent base and, through implementation of the Municipal Cultural Plan, improve, augment and better equip the Town government and the local arts and cultural organizations to succeed and ensure self-sufficiency. In no small measure, the plan strives to support culture as an integral part of economic development.

Enhance appreciation of the arts and inspire cultural participation. Increase access to quality arts and culture experiences within St. Marys to better serve all segments of the population.

Improve attractiveness of St. Marys for residents and tourists. Enhance quality of life so that residents want to stay and so that tourist visitors, new residents, and new enterprises will be attracted to the Town. In the case of St. Marys, an improved quality of life was articulated by residents and stakeholders as providing increased opportunities for residents to contribute to and engage with cultural activities, benefit economically from tourist activity, and attract more young people and families.

The plan launches a multi-year initiative to bolster arts and culture engagement and participation in St. Marys. It also gives stakeholders in all sectors clear goals and objectives – developed by them, and for them – to benefit the community for which they care so deeply.

2

Methodology



Stonetown Heritage Festival

The Town of St. Marys remains dedicated to fostering an active, accessible, and vibrant cultural scene. In order to best direct and nurture the growth of St. Marys' cultural assets, the Town has initiated the task of developing a Municipal Cultural Plan, embracing inclusive community processes and diverse town constituencies. Following on a series of pre-existing planning efforts, and subsequent to a competitive RFP process, Lord Cultural Resources was selected by the Town of St. Marys to develop the Municipal Cultural Plan with a long-term strategy to provide clarity and direction for cultural development throughout the Town.



Left: Happy Hands made of wax at the 2012 Stonetown Heritage Festival. Right: Photo by Marianne De Bresser-Ferguson

2.1 Planning Context

This Plan is an outgrowth of several Town and regional initiatives, plans and policies. Some of the most relevant of these include:

- **Official Plan of the Town of St. Marys (October 1987, Consolidated October 2007)**, which noted that the central business area of the Town will continue as the primary retail, commercial, civic and cultural focus of the Town and that a “Central Commercial” district is to be promoted as a focus for community festivals, celebrations, and gatherings. In addition, recreational land use designations are intended to promote community festivals, celebrations, and gatherings in these areas. Each of these has a bearing on this process.
- **Town of St. Marys Community-Based Strategic Plan (2010)**, which pointed to cultural and creative development and the tourism industry as key opportunities, and culture and tourism run through many of the key strategic themes and goals.
- **The County of Perth, Town of St. Marys and City of Stratford Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2010-14** which identified arts, culture and tourism as “very strong” future economic drivers.
- And the **Municipal Cultural Mapping Project** for the Town of St. Marys (2010-11) which is extensively cited in Chapter 4 of this report.

2.2 Process: Three Phases

Based on the pre-existing work cited above and the recommendations therein, Town Council initiated this cultural planning process for the Town of St. Marys, which has unfolded in three phases:

- Phase 1, Internal Review;

- Phase 2, Community Consultation;
- Phase 3, Development of the Municipal Cultural Plan and Implementation Strategy.

The components of each phase are illustrated in the diagram below.

Phase 1, Internal Review, laid the foundation for the planning process with a 360° review of the cultural environment in which the Town of St. Marys operates. This phase focused on identifying gaps and opportunities for future cultural development.

Phase 2, Community Consultation, constituted a crucial component of the planning process by engaging the St. Marys community – its citizens, artists, cultural organizations, civic leaders, and broad-based stakeholders – in a dialogue about the future of arts and culture in their town. The team solicited public feedback through:

- A well-attended Community Open House held in the summer of 2012;
- Two focus group workshops;
- Several one-on-one stakeholder interviews;
- A widely accessed online community survey;
- A public “Ground-Truthing,” to gauge recommended plan directions, held at the end of October 2012.

Phase 3, Development of the Municipal Cultural Plan and Implementation Strategy, integrated findings from the previous phases of the project with community input and comparative analysis to relevant municipalities throughout Canada. During this phase, the team conducted a thorough analysis regarding governance issues, explored models for collaboration, developed key performance indicators, and recommended methods for implementation.





Consultant Orit Sarfaty facilitating a Town Hall Meeting with St. Marys residents.

2.3 Engaging the St. Marys Community: A Closer Look at the Community Consultation Phase

An extensive public engagement process was undertaken by the consultant team to ensure all segments of St. Marys' population had the opportunity to participate and be heard. Below is a closer look at Phase 2 and the public engagement process.

A **Community Open House** was held on July 23rd, 2012 at St. Marys Town Hall. Extensive community outreach for this session was conducted to guarantee participation from a diverse constituency of stakeholders. The meeting was attended by more than 40 members of the St. Marys community, including Mayor Steve Grose, members of Town Council, town staff, local business owners, and St. Marys residents. With an aim to hear from a broad spectrum of community members, forum attendees were invited through a variety of outreach methods, including targeted invitations and a general notice. The forum's goals included:

- Gaining an understanding about what constitutes art and culture in the St. Marys community. Obtaining an understanding of community identity, treasured assets, and cultural events was targeted in this forum.
- Solicit feedback about community needs and aspirations as they relate to art and culture, and evaluate potential avenues for implementing the suggestions proposed by members of the community.

Focus group workshops were also conducted on July 23rd, 2012, at St. Marys Town Hall. The objectives of these sessions echoed those of the Community Open House.

Stakeholder interviews were also conducted throughout the public engagement process. They provided a platform to engage more deeply with key stakeholders in the St. Marys community. The objectives of these interviews echoed those of the Community Open House session and focus group workshops. The interviews were conducted with a diverse constituency from the St. Marys community, and confidentiality was guaranteed for all who participated.

An **online community survey** was also conducted between August 22nd and September 7th, 2012. The survey aimed to reach out to the broadest possible stakeholder groups to gain further insights about art and culture in St. Marys. The survey also aimed to obtain feedback about possible strategic directions for the St. Marys Municipal Cultural Plan, as shared by survey respondents. Out of 158 initiated surveys, we received 152 completed ones, establishing a completion rate of 96.2%. The survey was dispersed through multiple avenues, including social media, email, and municipal websites.



Stonetown Heritage Festival.

3

Current Trends in Culture Provision

This chapter sets the broad context for the St. Marys Cultural Plan by examining some national and international trends. While some of the case studies cited are drawn from the experience of much larger centres, it is the trends they represent that are important, and the goal here is to highlight the meaning of each with specific reference to the St. Marys context - to note the instances where the town is in line with current trends, and to point out the trends that might offer opportunities for the town in the context of this Municipal Cultural Plan.

3.1 Cultural Infrastructure

This section considers trends with regard to cultural buildings and facilities.

3.1.1 *Flexibility and Multi-Purpose Engagement*

Cultural facilities are accommodating multiple art forms, including film, dance, visual art, and performing arts to attract sustainable audiences and funding. They have the capacity to reconfigure staging, seating, and expand and contract walls according to the needs of specific cultural undertakings. Programming may be accommodated from multiple sources - community groups, touring partners, and educational institutions.

In St. Marys there are significant opportunities to embrace flexibility and multi-purpose engagement. The Town has a wealth of venues capable of supporting more flexible and diverse cultural programming. For example, the Pyramid Recreation Centre and numerous vacant storefronts can provide spaces for the town's active theatre and music groups, artists, as well as for temporary exhibitions. Further, the potential of Town parks, such as Cadzow Park and Lion's Park, should not be overlooked as cultural infrastructure capable of supporting multi-purpose cultural engagement.

Case Study: Lethbridge Community Arts Centre, Lethbridge, Alberta

In Canada, the new Lethbridge Community Arts Centre (CAC) is a manifestation of this multidisciplinary trend. Upon completion of construction in the spring of 2013, the new facility will create a multi-purpose gathering site for the arts community in Lethbridge. Although there will of course be registered programs, the CAC should be understood as a drop-in centre where people can come at any time to do arts activities. Unstructured artistic opportunities for youth will also be provided and this idea could be adopted in any number of spaces in St. Marys (Pyramid Centre, for example, or a school, among other areas). The facility will accommodate an exhibition gallery with preparation spaces, 2D and 3D classrooms and studios to support educational initiatives, fabrication facilities for artistic undertakings such as pottery programs, and music spaces.



Images: Lethbridge Community Arts Centre

3.1.2 Social Amenities

Social amenities respond to audience needs for socialization during cultural experiences. They serve as “community living rooms,” offering gathering places in support of cultural and non-cultural pursuits. Examples of space usage include members-only lounges, accommodating lobby areas, restaurants, cafés, and bars, meeting facilities, and outdoor public spaces.

Libraries, museums, and even less casual spaces like parks and public squares are now providing residents and visitors with rich opportunities to socialize. Given the value St. Marys residents place on their warm and welcoming small town environment, this trend might be well worth taking advantage of in order to transmit the “soul” of the Town to visitors – the message being “this is part of what makes St. Marys such a great place to live, work or visit.” Opportunities for visitors to interact with St. Marys residents should be encouraged.

While it is possible to provide such opportunities in various areas, cultural institutions in particular have embraced the incorporation of opportunities for socialization wholeheartedly. It is now rare, for example, for a cutting-edge new public library to be built without free Wi-Fi and a coffee bar. In fact, even outdoor spaces such as municipal parks are now starting to provide free internet service for residents and visitors. Planning for social amenities is particularly important for youth, but all age groups respond well to such amenities.

Case Study: Seattle Public Library, Seattle, Washington

The Seattle Public Library is recognized for taking a forward thinking and socially progressive approach to its library spaces. In fact, the design of the new library was inspired early during conception to embrace social engagement as a key objective of the institution. As a result, library visitors are welcomed to the space via a community living room; a free public space in which visitors can eat, play, and pretty much do as they please. This noteworthy space exemplifies and promotes the notion that libraries are the last vestige of public free space.



Images: Seattle Public Library

3.1.3 Designing and Programming for Maximum Accessibility

Many new facilities today are offering comfortable experiences, including meeting accessibility requirements and incorporating designs that can accommodate various body types. Programming is made as accessible as possible via “layering” to provide the broadest appeal possible to intellectual preferences.

Accessibility is extremely important in an aging community such as St. Marys (see the potential market analysis in Chapter 4 for relevant data) – not only for users and participants, but also for the older volunteers that are so important in assisting Town staff to deliver programming. Meeting the needs of various user groups is also an important aspect of accessibility. Incorporating mobile technologies, rest spaces, child-friendly spaces, crafts areas, and educational multi-purpose rooms for classes and performances is quickly becoming standard practice. Accessibility guidelines set by governments, as well as an increased understanding of the needs of different types of visitors is fueling this trend. Technology is also being embraced as a modern communication tool useful for effectively sharing messages with younger, more technologically savvy audiences.

Case Study: Museum of Science, Boston, Massachusetts

The Museum of Science, located in Boston, Massachusetts, is a world leader in museum accessibility. In fact, Christine Reich, the museum's Director of Research and Evaluation, was recently honored at the White House as a leader providing access in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math for people with disabilities. The museum aims to provide maximum accessibility to its facilities by eliminating financial, cultural, language, education, and ability barriers. Information is readily available for museum visitors in French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.



Images: Museum of Science, Boston



3.1.4 Signature Architecture, Branding Strategy and Market Positioning

There are several components in play here. The use of signature architecture as a way to increase a building's status, visibility and presence is a worldwide trend. In some cases, architectural competitions are carefully managed to yield top-class designs.

Not everyone can afford to commission works by signature architects. But the trend extends to the use of lighting, signage, and strategic location and in fact is very much about *signature branding* – a way to strategically and consistently reflect and reinforce brand image throughout facilities, programming materials, and online interfaces. This is something that St. Marys should certainly consider as it seeks to strengthen its position as a vibrant cultural hub on the border between Perth and Middlesex Counties – a heritage town, a place to come and relax and enjoy the warmth of small-town Ontario, an alternative stop for the cultural tourists who come to the region for major events such as the Stratford Festival. St. Marys might consider building on the Heritage Festival to further reinforce a St. Marys' heritage-based brand and its uniqueness – in other words, consciously positioning the Festival as a cultural tourism product aimed as much at visitors as at residents.

Many cultural institutions have embarked on prominent building campaigns and embraced edgy rebranding of their institutions in hopes of appealing to wider audience groups. "Edgy" is not necessarily applicable in every case, but branding consistency is, and this is the main lesson for St. Marys. These initiatives hold much promise for collaborative work between cultural institutions and municipalities, particularly in regards to asserting a renewed civic identity or tourism strategy.

Case Study: Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario

Upon embarking on its expansion, the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) in Toronto developed the "Transformation AGO" brand. This encompassed promoting the new building's signature design and telling the story of how architect Frank Gehry, a Toronto native who grew up not too far from the AGO, used his childhood memories to inspire the design. The new AGO is now a Toronto landmark, proudly promoting its new building and brand with a grand facade on Dundas Street West. Not only is the exterior recognizable, but prominent signage reinforces the new AGO brand, as well as exhibitions and events at the gallery.



Images: Art Gallery of Ontario

3.1.5 "Green-Thinking" and Sustainable Practices

More and more, cultural organizations are taking up the challenge to demonstrate their roles in developing responsible and environmentally sustainable practices for the work they do. The Town of St. Marys is certainly in this camp. Not only is content about environmentally pressing issues making its way into exhibition spaces of science centres, art galleries and similar institutions, but the concept of environmental sustainability is also being built into facilities of every kind.

In a way this is also a branding issue. The natural endowment of the St. Marys area is part of that which residents are most proud (see Points of Pride in Chapter 4). Woven into the character of the town is not only its heritage stories and assets or its small-town warmth and charm – it is also its natural endowment and respect for that endowment that makes life in the town so pleasant and which is one of residents' core values. If our buildings and facilities are a reflection of our values and beliefs, an increasing embrace of environmental and green thinking should be considered as a vital component of culture. Younger people are now born into a time where discourse on environmental responsibility is at least as important as that on diversity. As such, and like diversity, green thinking is a shaping force in the development of contemporary perspectives on culture. This can point out that nurturing culture can also provide the benefit of nurturing our environment and provide progressive leadership on green issues.

3.1.6 Cultural Districts

Cultural districts are another trend that is taking hold on a worldwide basis. In some cases they evolve organically, such as with San Francisco's Yerba Buena district, while in others they are master planned, which is most often the case in other parts of the world.

St. Marys too is embracing this trend towards establishing cultural districts. For example, the newly established Heritage Conservation District demonstrates the Town's commitment to culture and particularly its historic structures. The Heritage Conservation District will provide the necessary infrastructure and tools to manage future change in the Town while celebrating the Town's rich architectural history - the next step will be to generate related tourism and cultural products from the heritage endowment. Cultural districts can help fill gaps in necessary infrastructure to help support increased tourism.

3.1.7 Other Infrastructure Trends

There are several other trends in infrastructure that are pertinent. These include **public art**. Many communities are enhancing their public spaces by including cultural and heritage elements. This may be accomplished through the installation of sculptures in park spaces or through murals on highly visible buildings. Often these elements of art reflect the theme of the community. This can be manifested in benches, bicycle racks, and even signage. Extensions of this public art practice can be seen in signage on trails providing interpretation of the community's history.

Community gardens are becoming more commonplace. These "facilities" provide small garden plots for residents to use in a collective way or through individual assignment. This can be a means for a municipality to utilize vacant lot space. Community gardens help build a sense of community by bringing people together. Both of these trends, if not already underway in St. Marys, might be considered as ways to strengthen the town's position as a regional cultural hub and reinforce its brand identity, particularly if they are understood as heritage gardens.

3.2 Cultural Participation

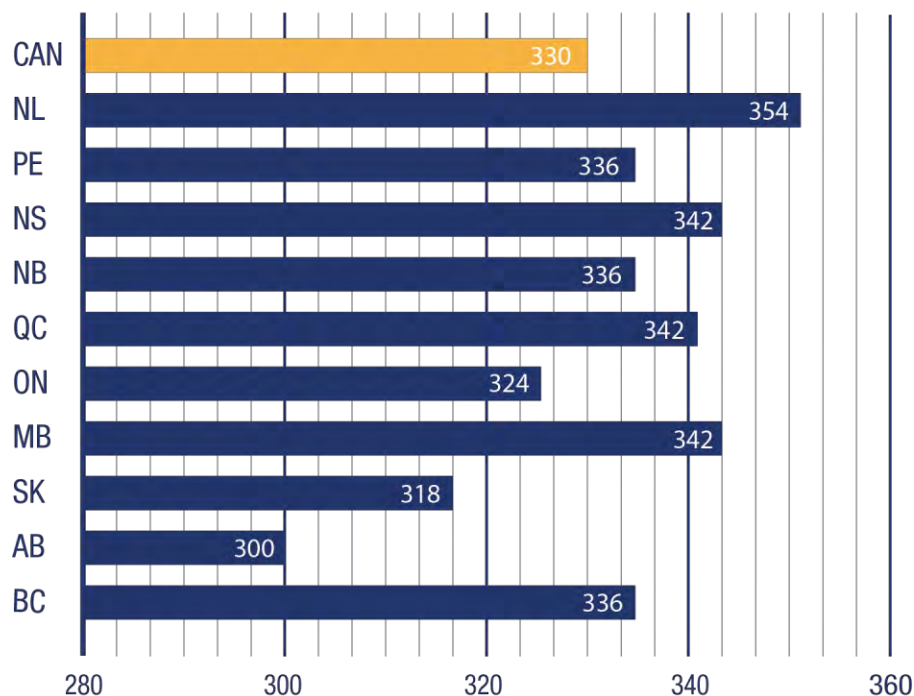
A number of macro-trends have been shaping demand for cultural programming in recent years. Describing these trends provides important context as the future of culture in St. Marys is considered.

Generally, the cultural participant:

Has limited leisure time.

- A study published by Statistics Canada in 2011 reported a decrease in leisure time among Canadians from 2005 to 2010². In fact, the same study indicated Ontario ranked below the national average in leisure time of all Canadian provinces in 2005. With leisure time decreasing, culture will need to be increasingly convenient and attractive to remain competitive. This suggests a strong focus on those regional residents who live close by (especially Waterloo Region and Middlesex County) and cultural tourists who are already coming into the region.
- Short-term volunteering activities with distinct objectives are increasingly offered over organizational responsibilities lacking a distinct end date.
- Operational strategies such as individual ticket-buying and customized season subscriptions for optimal flexibility.

**Average Total Leisure Time, by Region, 2005
(minutes per day)**



² *General Social Survey 2010. Overview of the Time Use of Canadians.* Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2011 (Cat. No. 89-647-X, see Table 1.1) and *General Social Survey on Time Use. Overview of the Time Use of Canadians.* Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 2006 (Cat. No. 12F0080-XIE, see Table 1.1).

Case Study: Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Kimmel Center for Performing Arts in Philadelphia offers a wide array of performances and concerts for all tastes and interests. To complement its program, it has developed an innovative ticketing system that enables audience members to create their own packages without committing to buying a seasons pass, according to the following structure: choose 3 shows and save 10% off single ticket prices; choose 4 shows and save 15% off single ticket prices; and, choose 5 or more shows and save 20% off single ticket prices.



Images: Kimmel Center for Performing Arts

Is aging.

- A 2005 study published by Statistics Canada reported that on average, people in the above 50 years of age demographic are more likely to participate in cultural activities.³ This is good news for citizen cultural participation in St. Marys, given its aging population, but it also means that cultural institutions in St. Marys should develop targeted programming for older adults – not only residents, but also potential cultural tourists, while remaining relevant to various other age groups.
- Individuals aged 35 to 44 of both sexes had the least leisure time of all age groups, due to work commitments and caring for children and the elderly.⁴

³ Ewoudou, Jacques. *Understanding Culture Consumption in Canada*. Statistics Canada, 2005, p.14. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-595-m/81-595-m2008066-eng.pdf>

⁴ *General Social Survey 2010. Overview of the Time Use of Canadians*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2011 (Cat. No. 89-647-X, see Table 1.1) and *General Social Survey on Time Use. Overview of the Time Use of Canadians*. Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 2006 (Cat. No. 12F0080-XIE, see Table 1.1).

Case Study: Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Ontario

The Royal Ontario Museum is one of many museums and art galleries starting to offer yoga to visitors. Such an approach, emphasizing health and wellness through low impact physical activity, creates interest amongst visitors of diverse age groups. This is related to the facility use trend regarding multiple uses of available spaces, but goes one step beyond in that it points to particular types of programming that mesh with participation trends and the need to give visitors another reason to visit, given intense competition for leisure time.



Images: Royal Ontario Museum

Has an abundance of leisure activities to choose from.

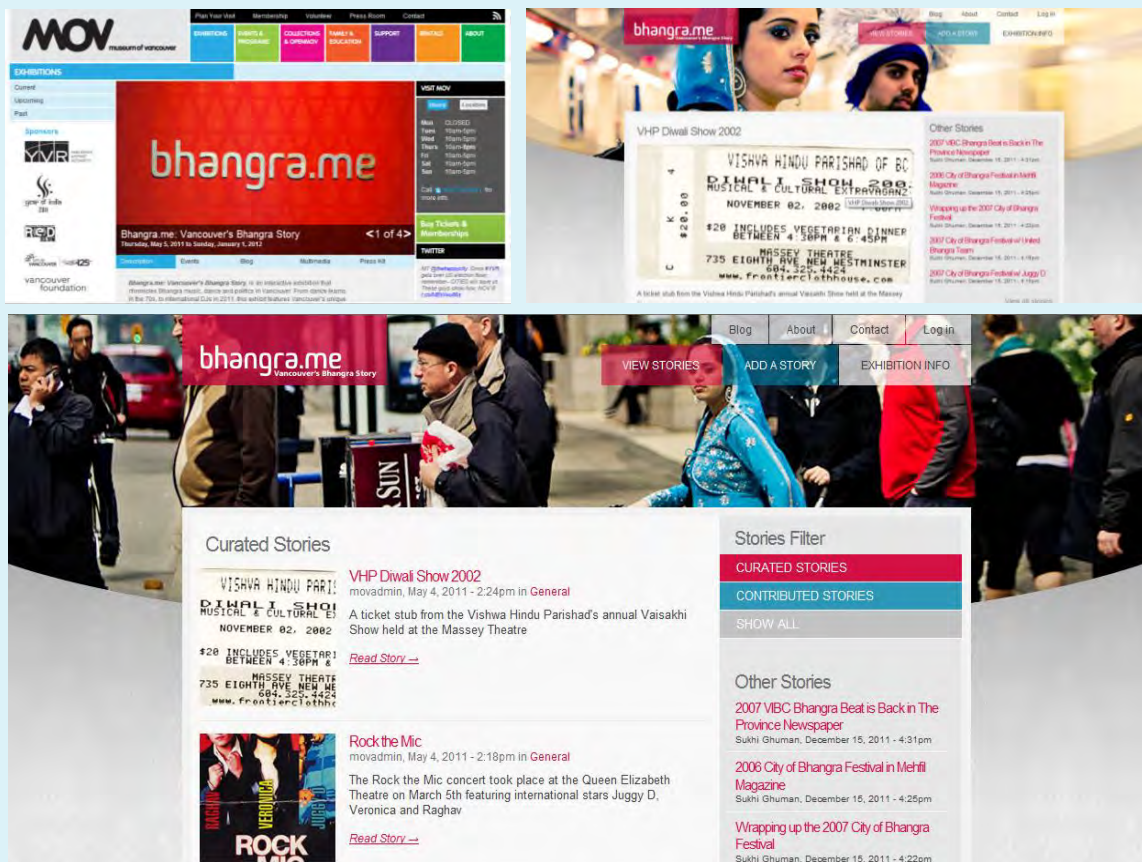
- The desire for hands-on experiences and increased information on sustainability, culinary arts, and home improvement have translated into greater time spent on cooking, gardening, home décor, and art collecting, among many others.
- Particularly among younger people, new technology offers multi-sensory engagement through video games, DVDs, the internet, and other sources, all of which compete for limited leisure time.

Identifies with increasingly niche cultural tastes and seeks to actively contribute content.

- Internet sites and the advent of social networking have accommodated the creation of subgroups connecting over shared interests. Cultural organizations have responded by establishing an active presence on Facebook and Youtube to reach distinct audiences and they on their own websites are now directly soliciting people to contribute their stories.
- Cultural institutions seek cross-marketing opportunities to capture increasingly distinct subgroups by partnering with diverse entities.

Case Study: Museum of Vancouver, Vancouver, British Columbia

The Museum of Vancouver (MOV) is a forward thinking institution that aims to foster cross-cultural understanding and dialogue about Vancouver's past, present, and future. A recent interactive exhibition at the museum, *Bhangra.me: Vancouver's Bhangra Story*, utilized an online microsite to support the efforts of its onsite exhibition. Microsites are useful for creating a targeted web presence while utilizing the credibility and trust associated with an existing website. Through the microsite, visitors could listen to music, utilize an online Storymap to share memories and photos, as well as read about the history of Bhangra music in Vancouver and internationally. A mobile version of the microsite was also created. This is an excellent example of how museums and cultural organizations can utilize social media and the internet in strategic and targeted ways to support their aims.



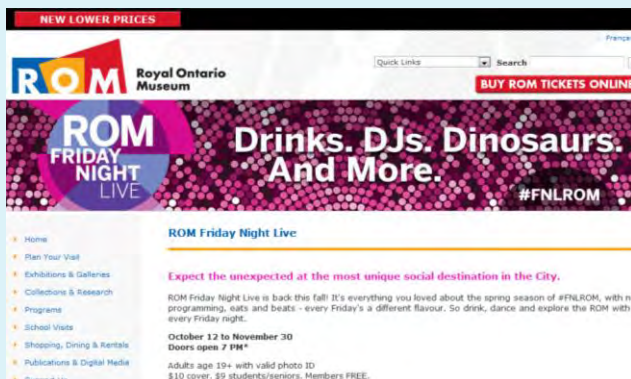
Images: Museum of Vancouver

Seeks a meaningful and multi-tiered cultural experience.

- Because greater value is placed on leisure time, the participant's cultural experience is sought for reinforcement of values and overall enrichment. As such, volunteering opportunities, public programs, and cultural programs are marketed as meaningful experiences. Older people in particular seek meaning in leisure experiences and, for that reason, they make up the bulk of cultural tourists.

Case Study: Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Ontario

The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) in Toronto organizes a series of themed Friday night events for young people known as Friday Night Live. The events are social venues complete with live music spun by DJ's, food, and opportunities to visit the galleries in a relaxed social setting. The ROM is following suit in a movement to open museum and gallery spaces to the public at more convenient hours, in diverse and exciting ways in support of social and cultural engagement.



Images: Royal Ontario Museum

- Students and young professionals seek volunteering opportunities for real-world experiences and a way of fortifying their career credentials.
- We have noted the importance in St. Marys of ensuring that the needs of older people in this and other regards are provided for, but youth in the town are seeking less structured, more spontaneous opportunities to exercise creativity and this should not be ignored.

Pursues social opportunities through culture.

We have noted the trend toward provision for social interaction in cultural facilities above. This trend is related but is more operational and programmatic.

- Social amenities and flexible scheduling are increasingly offered in a cultural experience to accommodate socializing.
- Diverse social groups are being constructed around cultural attendance, such as alumni, church groups, and corporate departments.
- The need to cultivate the next generation of audiences has inspired cultural organizations to offer late-night events, happy hour evenings, and young professional memberships. Youth in St. Marys noted that this was very important to them. It can be done by established institutions (such as with the case study below) or it can be done in less formalized ways.

This concludes our review of key facility- and participatory trends. The next chapter sets out the specific context for St. Marys as further support to the priorities and initiatives to come in Chapter 5.

4

Contextual and Market Analysis



Grand Trunk Trail, Winter 2007. Photo: Sean Camp

This chapter sets out some key parameters around the St. Marys context and provides demographic and market information, by way of supporting the recommendations to come in subsequent chapters.



The chapter points out that St. Marys has a wealth of cultural *assets*, but relatively few of these have been developed into cultural *products*. It goes on to note that there is a large regional resident market that could be attracted to St. Marys given a certain positioning and product base, as well as a large pool of cultural tourists who come to the region for events such as the Stratford Festival and which may be attracted to St. Marys given a strong enough reason to come.

4.1 Context

In our public consultation report, we noted a number of assets held by the Town of St. Marys that included a number of “points of pride” as well as an inventory of cultural assets. We re-present that information here, with additional context, in order to provide support to the recommendations to come in Chapters 5 and 6.

4.1.1 St. Marys’ Points of Pride

The public consultation process helped assert the necessity of maintaining several key Points of Pride while developing a Municipal Cultural Plan for the Town of St. Marys. These include:

- **People** – St. Marys is very much about its people: warm, friendly, family oriented, civically involved, and patriotic.
- **Small Town Charm** – St. Marys values its small town identity, a safe, pedestrian-friendly, inviting place that values local businesses and local cultural events.
- **Nature** – St. Marys prides itself on a respectful relationship with the natural beauty that surrounds the town, providing myriad opportunities for discovery and relaxation.
- **Architecture** – St. Marys is proud of its beautiful historic buildings and the fairytale like setting they help evoke.
- **Sports and Recreation** – St. Marys prides itself on a vibrant culture of sports and recreation, its Baseball Hall of Fame, and aquatic activities.



4.1.2 Cultural Assets, Products and Experiences

The objective of this section is to identify what cultural inventories already exist in the area, and how St. Marys fits into this overall context. Throughout this section we distinguish cultural *assets* (those assets which may or may not exist as market-ready products) from cultural *products* (those assets that are already marketable products). (All products are assets; but not all assets are necessarily products.) **This is an important distinction; as we will see, St. Marys has more assets than market-ready products.** The goal of this plan is not necessarily to tell the Town whether more of the assets should be developed into products, or which ones, but to lay the groundwork for strengthening the existing cultural product base and to give the Town the tools for developing new products if so desired.

4.1.3 St. Marys' Cultural Inventories: An Introduction

The Town of St. Marys developed a cultural inventory as part of the 2009/2010 Cultural Mapping Initiative and the 2010 Community Based Strategic Plan. The cultural inventory was produced in 2011 and documented in the report, "Municipal Cultural Mapping Project for the Town of St. Marys." The public engagement process helped confirm the significance of many of the 300-plus cultural assets, including those that fall into the following categories:

- **Cultural Heritage Assets:** These assets highlight the historical, cultural, and educational significance of objects and sites in the St. Marys community. They include such things as heritage buildings like St. Marys Town Hall and Junction Station, public art, archival collections, and cemeteries. All of these building have stories, and these stories should be brought out and leveraged as new cultural products, or components of cultural products.

- **Cultural Spaces and Facilities:** These assets are already products: the buildings and sites that are engaged for cultural activities or have a particular cultural significance. The St. Marys Museum, the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, and art galleries or artist studios are assets included in this category. As well as being an important product in its own right, the St. Marys Museum is a valuable support for other existing or new products, because it is the repository of stories and information about the town and its heritage.
- **Natural Heritage Assets:** These assets are the natural spaces with significance to natural heritage or the environment, including such spaces as conservation areas, municipal parks, and botanical gardens. They improve quality of life for residents but can also be better positioned as market-ready products and experiences for cultural tourists.
- **Festivals and Events:** Usually occurring at annual intervals, these assets are the cultural festivals and happenings that occur in the St. Marys community. Kinfest and the Teddy Bear Reunion are vibrant examples of festivals in St. Marys.
- **Creative Cultural Industries:** Assets in this category relate to the significance of industry in the production and distribution of cultural goods. They include such things as design services, commercial art galleries, and information services. Some are not necessarily cultural experiences for residents or tourists (design services, for ex.) but are rather supports for the town's cultural scene.
- **Creative Cultural Occupations:** Closely related to the creative cultural industries, these assets relate specifically to the labour force, or the individuals that carry out creative cultural work. Photographers, visual artists, and musicians are vibrant examples of creative cultural occupations in St. Marys. They develop the content that may be converted to experiences or products.
- **Related Assets:** These assets, as identified in the 2011 report, include such things as educational facilities, community facilities, and agricultural resources such as farmers' markets.

4.1.4 Creating Inventories: Regional, Provincial and Federal Factors

By way of background, and to understand how the Town has typically mapped its cultural assets, it is useful to re-examine the way that cultural assets are defined at the local, regional, provincial, and federal levels. These differing methods all have ramifications in how information is organized and how that information is disseminated and used for policy or promotional purposes.

At present, St. Marys has some cultural assets listed on the Perth County Visitors' Association (PCVA) website <http://www.visitperth.ca/artist-search.php>, which is the official link provided by the Government of Ontario's official visitor site for travel, <http://www.ontariotravel.net>. The PCVA currently organizes "arts and culture" on its website according to the following (19) categories:

- Arts Education
- Arts Management
- Craft
- Culinary Arts
- Cultural Organizations

- Cultural Spaces and Facilities
- Design Arts
- Festivals and Events
- Heritage
- Integrated Arts
- Literary Arts
- Media Arts
- Music
- Performing Arts
- Photography
- Production Arts
- Supplier
- Theatre
- Visual Arts

This set of categories was determined based on discussions between Perth Arts Connect and local artists. But the categories are inconsistent with those recommended by the Municipal Cultural Planning Incorporated (MCPI) Cultural Resource Framework (CRF), supported by the Government of Ontario.⁵ The CRF recommends the following framework for organizing cultural resources:

- Cultural Industries
- Cultural Occupations
- Community Cultural Organizations
- Cultural Facilities & Spaces
- Natural Heritage
- Cultural Heritage
- Cultural Events & Festivals
- Intangible Heritage
- Additional Resources

Of the 9 categories that the MCPI framework recommends for categorizing cultural assets, two are defined directly through the Statistics Canada *Conceptual Framework for Cultural Statistics*: cultural occupations and cultural industries. The Statistics Canada *Framework* differs, however, in that it recommends only the following 6 domains for organizing culture:

⁵ As specified in *Cultural Resource Mapping: A Guide for Municipalities*, 2010, MCPI, funded by the Government of Ontario.

- Heritage and libraries
- Live performance
- Visual and applied arts
- Written and published works
- Audio-visual and interactive media
- Sound recording

What this means is that the concept of organizing cultural assets according to consistent categories has different meanings at different jurisdictional levels. The conflicting frameworks used at the regional, provincial and federal levels for categorizing culture make the process of defining and organizing inventories complicated, adding uncertainty regarding which system should be used and which system will provide the most benefit. **One solution may be to develop some level of overlapping categorization—at the regional, provincial and federal levels—so that the inventory can be adapted to the different levels and provide some level of interoperability.** We recommend this in the section summary, below.

At present, the St. Marys inventory follows the MCPI framework, with reference to the Statistics Canada Framework for individual sub-categories. This framework is consistent with the source of funding, also the Government of Ontario, for the cultural inventory and mapping project.



Canada Day

4.1.5 *Review of the St. Marys Inventory*

The Town of St. Marys developed a cultural inventory as part of the 2009/2010 Cultural Mapping Initiative and the 2010 Community Based Strategic Plan. The cultural inventory was produced in 2011 and documented in the report, "Municipal Cultural Mapping Project for the Town of St. Marys." The Museum and Archives Department is currently responsible for the cultural inventory and is prepared to allocate resources toward regular updating over time. But it is unclear if this responsibility is officially recognized in public plans or what resources the Museum and other departments have allocated to invest in its maintenance over time.

Over 300 assets have been identified as part of the existing cultural inventory, which is divided into a series of tables. Of particular relevance include definitions, procedures and recommendations in the Mapping Report as they relate to the inventory. Also important is the "Creative Cultural Occupations" table, which provides greater clarity on the types of cultural assets offered in St. Marys, and the "Spaces and Facilities" table, which is particularly relevant to physical infrastructure.

Definitions, Procedures and Recommendations in the Mapping Report

The framework for the St. Marys cultural inventory tends to follow the MCPI Guidelines.⁶ Although the report references these guidelines it does not explicitly state the guidelines or that it follows them for either the creation of the inventory or as procedures for cyclical updates over time.

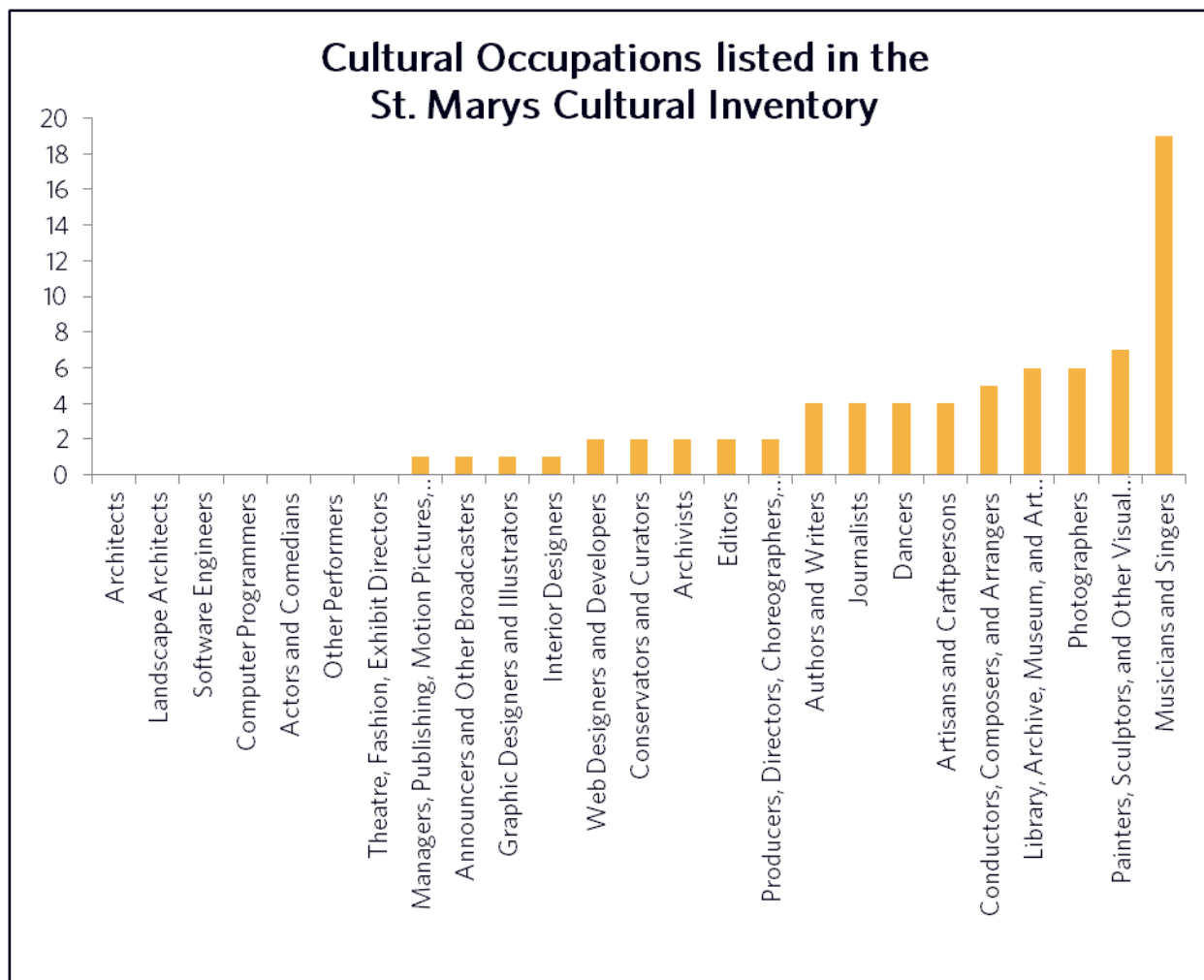
One policy recommendation in the report is to make the resources map available to community groups, town councillors and municipal staff, "so that as many people as possible are aware of the richness of our local resources." The document and maps are available to the public in Town Hall and thus are considered to be public documents. The report does not explicitly state that the inventory should be made publicly accessible, although the expressed objective appears to be the same.

The report also recommends that, within the forthcoming Cultural Plan, "a procedure should be established for regular review and updating of the Cultural Resources inventories and map. This should be done on a comparative basis so that the growth and development of the town's cultural resources can be tracked."

Creative Cultural Occupations

The inventory lists residents working in cultural occupations with the greatest frequency for those specializing in the arts, including musicians, visual artists, photographers, artisans, and dancers (consistent with NAICS code 71 - arts, entertainment and recreation). The inventory has no listed architects or computer programmers (consistent with NAICS code 51 - information or cultural industries).

⁶ See "Municipal Cultural Mapping Project for the Town of St. Marys: Report with Maps, March 31, 2011," supported by a grant from the Province of Ontario's Creative Communities Prosperity Fund



The individuals listed in the creative cultural occupations table suggests that the competitive strength of those working in the arts in St. Marys primarily falls into two broad groups: musicians and visual artists.

Spaces and Facilities

The facilities database identifies 24 spaces/facilities. Although the inventory generally appears to follow the *Conceptual Framework for Culture Statistics 2011* and *Classification Guide for the Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics 2011*, Statistics Canada offers limited guidelines for classifying and organizing physical infrastructure, citing difficulties in the overlapping nature of how cultural spaces are used. A designated heritage building may house a performing arts space and a commercial art gallery, for instance, so a decision about where a building fits (e.g. Heritage and Libraries, Performing Arts, or Visual and Applied Arts) must be made. Statistics Canada therefore recommends an approach for spaces and facilities based on an analysis of local data.

The current inventory organizes spaces by current use (NAICS Sector) rather than by potential uses. In addition, heritage buildings are listed by nature based on their physical qualities, but these are not included as facilities. **Clarifying how the facility database will be used will help guide the organization of categories.**

Consistent with the listed cultural occupations, the facility inventory lists no facilities in film, video, sound recording, architecture or digital media. However, several facilities are listed as art studios, art galleries, schools, theatres, museums, community centres, and recreation centres.

Other Tables in the Inventory

Following the MCPI guidelines, the inventory has tables on the following:

- “Creative Cultural Industries,” which includes a variety of businesses
- “Creative Cultural Organizations,” which includes several organizations and women’s institutes
- “Natural Heritage,” which are primarily farms and parks
- “Festivals and Events,” which are distributed throughout the town and are not just focused in the downtown commercial area as suggested in the Official Plan
- “Related Resources,” which include recreation centres, religious organizations, schools, and hotels/restaurants/B&Bs.



St. Marys Via Rail Station

These tables include many other assets, organizations, or businesses not mentioned by name here, both privately-operated and Town-run, such as the Children’s Choir, the Community Players or businesses such as music stores or dance studios. It is not desirable or necessary to list each and every one of the 300 assets in this report; suffice it to say that St. Marys is very culturally vibrant and has an excellent inventory base from which to work.

4.1.6 *Other Inventories*

The Government of Ontario mentions St. Marys on its tourism website, <http://www.ontariotravel.net>, but only as a part of Perth County. It does not list any individual cultural assets in St. Marys.

The Perth County Visitors’ Association (PCVA) arts and culture inventory lists arts and culture products and experiences throughout the county. These are to be understood as tourism products and experiences. At present, it lists only 15 from St. Marys—fewer than the number of categories (19) that the PCVA designates for arts and culture. They include:

- St. Marys Museum
- BKRC Art Effects
- Sweet Leaf Bath Co.
- St. Marys Storytelling Festival
- Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame & Museum
- Mandy Verge
- Darlean Morris
- Anna Koot
- Nancy Vermond
- Alan Dhingra
- St. Marys ART SALON Group
- Contented Copy
- Acting Out
- Morris Art Gallery
- Village Craft and Candle Inc.

Some of these are Town-operated (such as the Museum and Archives), with most private operations. And there are other Town-operated institutions that are understandably not present on this list (because they are not all tourism products), including:

- St. Marys Public Library
- Pyramid Recreation Department
- Parks and trails



Lucid Musings 2011 Heritage Festival



- Plus other events and activities beyond the Storytelling Festival which are listed here – the Heritage Festival, the Canada Day party, the Festive Outdoor Lights festival, Doors Open or the Car and Bike Show, among others.

This list of 15 tourism-focused products is a partial list of existing market-ready tourism products in the Town – but they represent only a small fraction of the cultural assets of St. Marys or those listed on the St. Marys cultural inventory that could *become* tourism products. We have noted earlier that there are a great many other existing cultural business or organizations in the Town that may already be market-ready products, but they are not positioned as tourism products specifically. And there are certainly additional assets that might be considered worth of further development or positioning as market-ready cultural products.

4.1.7 Cultural Inventory Recommendations

The following are recommendations for the cultural inventory based on the information provided above:

- **Formalize the definitions and frameworks used in the inventory.** At present, the mapping study references MCPI guidelines, which indirectly references the Statistics Canada framework and classification guidelines for culture statistics. A more direct definition and classification strategy would clarify criteria for future updates to the inventory. This could be achieved through explicitly adopting the MCPI guidelines or the Statistics Canada Framework for Culture Statistics.
- **Assign ownership and resource allocation to the inventory.** Updating the inventory over time will require resources and ideally collaboration across departments. At present, public plans do not appear to assign ownership to a specific department, although the museum has claimed responsibility. Formally assigning responsibility will clarify the roles of departments, including the amount of time and materials that will be required for future updates.
- **Make the database publicly accessible.** This will achieve the goal of making “as many people as possible” aware of the rich cultural assets in St. Marys. Despite being a public document, the information in the inventory is not publicly accessible. Making it public will disseminate greater information about St. Marys to both residents and potential visitors, as well as providing opportunities for residents to suggest additions or corrections to the inventory over time. There are a variety of potential strategies for implementing this that can be explored in the cultural planning process, such as the creation of an online interactive map, or aligning addition fields to match regional databases, such as the PCVA.
- **Identify objectives for how the inventory will be used.** Identifying the objectives on inventory use provides clear direction for what to update. An example of this might be identifying the objective of having affordable cultural spaces available. Such an objective may suggest, for instance, that the inventory should track total square footage of appropriately zoned space and cost to rent per square foot for cultural facilities. Developing this as one of the fields for the cultural inventory could, in addition to helping measure and identify affordable cultural facilities and spaces, also address one of the metrics forth in the *Municipal Cultural Planning Indicators & Performance Measures Guidebook* supported by the Government of Ontario.



Lucid Musings 2011 Heritage Festival

- **Consider revised categories for the cultural facilities database.** The Statistics Canada framework offers little advice as to how to organize cultural facilities. At present, the cultural facilities categories are based on broad categorizations of their use, based on NAICS codes, rather than the physical nature of the space or how it could be used. Similarly, heritage buildings are categorized as Cultural Heritage in a separate table, despite being by nature facilities. Identifying the goals of how the inventory will be used will help identify what categories to assign to the cultural facilities.

4.2 Potential Markets for Culture in St. Marys

The previous sections have outlined the strengths of the cultural product and asset base in the Town. This section explores the “match” between the products on offer and the available market for these products.

4.2.1 Potential Resident Market: Population and Demographics

The Town of St. Marys is located in Perth County, but it is so close to Middlesex County and the greater London area that this area must also be considered a resident population (defined as less than one hour's driving time). So, while the Town grew very slowly between 2006 and 2011, its population increasing from 6,617 to 6,655 over that time period, and while Perth County also has a relatively small population at about 75,000, both are located close to a growing City of London and County of Middlesex population. The County of Middlesex has nearly half a million residents (which includes City of London residents), a substantial market for cultural attractions in St. Marys. Thus, while the Town's efforts must of course be focused on quality of life for Town residents, it should also strive to make itself a regional destination for those living in the nearby city. Waterloo Region is also a major nearby population centre.

Resident Population	2006	2011	Projected 2021	Projected 2031	% Change Projected 2011-2021	% Change Projected 2011-2031
St. Marys	6,617	6,655	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Perth	74,344	75,112	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
London	352,395	366,151	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Middlesex	422,333	439,151	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ontario	12,160,282	12,851,821	14,639,100	15,698,700	13.9%	22.2%
Canada	31,612,897	34,532,400	38,025,000	41,740,000	9.2%	17.3%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

Analyzing the resident and regional population by age yields some interesting conclusions. The median age of Town residents is much higher than provincial or national figures – St. Marys residents report a median age of over 44 years while the medians for Ontario and Canada are just over 40 years. In fact, St. Marys has an older age profile than any of the surrounding jurisdictions, including Perth County which is substantially younger. The age distribution reflects this reality as well, with the Town reporting a lower percentage of young or middle-aged adults and a significantly higher percentage of older people. Interestingly, the percentages of children under 14 are much closer to national averages.

Key Age Distribution, 2011	St. Marys	Perth	London	Middlesex	Ontario%	Canada%
Under 14 years	16.5%	18.3%	16.2%	16.6%	17.0%	16.7%
15-29	17.9%	18.9%	22.0%	21.3%	19.7%	19.5%
30-49	24.3%	25.1%	27.1%	26.9%	28.2%	27.9%
50-64	21.4%	21.2%	20.0%	20.4%	20.5%	21.1%
65 years and older	19.9%	16.5%	14.7%	14.8%	14.6%	14.8%
Median Age	44.4	41.2	39.9	39.8	40.4	40.6

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

Educational attainment is one of the most important indicators of the likelihood of participating in a cultural event or program. In the case of St. Marys, the figures are well below provincial and national averages. Median 2005 income is reported to be higher than London or Canadian figures, if slightly lower than the median for Ontario and Middlesex County. However, if we consider that the main resident market for St. Marys cultural products are not actually the 6,600 Town residents, but the much larger London and Middlesex populations (and perhaps also Waterloo Region residents), the picture becomes much brighter, with both of those jurisdictions showing much higher levels of educational attainment – and therefore a higher propensity to participate in cultural activities.

Educational Attainment and Income, Population 15+	St. Marys	Perth	London	Middlesex	Ontario	Canada
University diploma or degree	10.5%	10.0%	20.3%	18.9%	24.6%	18.1%
Median 2005 Income-All census families	\$68,541	\$68,713	\$67,018	\$68,728	\$69,156	\$63,866
Median 2005 Income-All private households	\$56,317	\$57,225	\$53,684	\$55,435	\$60,455	\$53,634

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census

Finally we look at **immigration and ethnicity** in St. Marys, where the data reveal what might be a typical breakdown for a small southwestern Ontario town. National trends pointing toward increasing diversity have only begun to make an impact in St. Marys proper, although trends in nearby London and Middlesex are much closer to national norms and indicate the presence of diverse populations in those jurisdictions.

Immigrant, Ethnicity and Related Data	St. Marys	Perth	London	Middlesex	Ontario	Canada
% First Generation Canadians (15 and older)	9.5%	11.4%	26.2%	24.3%	34.0%	23.9%
% Visible Minority	1.5%	2.1%	13.8%	11.7%	22.8%	16.2%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

% Non-English Mother Tongue	5.2%	10.2%	20.9%	19.0%	30.2%	41.9%
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Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

In summary, the implications of this resident market analysis for the Town of St. Marys Cultural Plan are as follows:

Substantial regional population: St. Marys is a small town but fortunately located at the border between Perth and Middlesex Counties, giving the larger Middlesex population easy access to its cultural products and experiences. Waterloo Region is also a substantial nearby population centre. Taken together, there is a market of close to a million people within an hour's driving time of the town.

Older Town population: St. Marys is an older “island,” surrounded by jurisdictions with significantly younger populations. But the Town has maximized the advantages in this, utilizing to a great extent the pool of volunteer labour that supports so many of the cultural activities in the town. Steps to support this pool of volunteers, prevent burnout and ensure their long-term commitment to the support of culture should be developed.

Demographic Contrast Between Town and Region: St. Marys’ demographic profile strongly contrasts the profile for London, Middlesex, Ontario and Canada, and even differs from surrounding Perth County of which it is a part. St. Marys is truly a heritage town in all respects, representative of all that is good about small-town Canada, and its points of pride as outlined at the beginning of this chapter indicate that citizens embrace these aspects and value them highly. These are heritage aspects that should be reflected in the town’s cultural experiences and products, and the Town has recognized that these aspects should be leveraged and the stories of the town and its people should be highlighted.

4.2.2 Tourists

When we speak of tourism in the context of a cultural plan, we are obviously speaking about cultural tourism. By way of introducing the case for cultural tourism in St. Marys, some terms and qualities are defined below:

Who is The Cultural Tourist?

Cultural tourists are defined as “*persons from outside the host community motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical, artistic, scientific or lifestyle/heritage offerings of a community, group or institution.*”

What are the Traits of the Cultural Tourist?⁷

Cultural tourism is an important and growing segment of the tourism industry. Its participants are young, well-educated, spend more money on their trips, and seek unique personal experiences.

Although not a new phenomenon, cultural tourism has consistently been characterized by the points below.

- **Frequent short trips:** The cultural tourist, while small as a percentage of all tourists, makes numerous short trips to participate in cultural activities year-round. This strategically positions St. Marys for cultural consumption by many people in several nearby urban centres, including Toronto, London, and Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge. The frequency of short trips suggests the importance of “**total visitor experience**” in a city or town so that visitors are given an incentive to return for new cultural offerings rather than simply “trying a new place”.
- **A Personal Experience:** Cultural tourists seek experiences that are meaningful to them and that will result in individual reminiscences and memories which refer more to the tourist’s personal history than to that of the site.

⁷ *Canadian and US Culture and Entertainment Activities While on Trips: An Overview*, TAMS, 2007. Many of these trends were identified in the 1998 cultural tourism trends discussion paper produced by Lord Cultural Resources for the Government of Ontario and updated in 2009.

- **Travellers are increasingly world-conscious:** Cultural tourists are well-informed and well-prepared about the social histories of their destinations before embarking on their trips. Typically they bring with them a bank of cultural knowledge that informs the way in which they choose and interact with their host destination.

Especially among young people, contextual research is just as important as logistical planning. For St. Marys, this means cultural tourists arrive equipped with knowledge about the Town and its history. It becomes important to ensure that cultural tourists are easily able to engage with this subject matter upon their arrival. St. Marys' Heritage Conservation District again highlights the Town's move toward more strategic development of cultural tourism.

- **Cultural and heritage tourism increasingly includes cultural landscapes and townscapes:** For cultural tourists, landscapes are not necessarily valued for their inherent beauty as they are for their social and historical significance: that is, how the land formed, how it is/was used and what happened there.
- **Blockbusters and special events are major attractions:** Blockbusters create a sense of urgency and an excitement that captures the attention of people who would not normally attend. People will pay higher admission charges, often two or three times regular admission charges. The cultural tourist values these experiences particularly because they are temporary. This means that facilities or spaces capable of handling such events are necessary.
- **City-as-Stage:** City-wide collaborations on cultural phenomena attract cultural tourists more than a singular attraction or event.

A recent embrace of city-wide (or in this case, town-wide) cultural programming, utilizing the city as a backdrop for innovative arts and culture initiatives, has played favourably in regards to cultural tourism. Many cultural tourists will take the time to research and visit large-scale events in hopes of engaging with something unique, creative and memorable.

- **Most likely to visit museums, historic sites and monuments:** For cultural tourists, these attractions are must-sees. Historically, logistical obstacles like purchasing tickets, limited hours of operation and navigating a foreign language have impacted participation in performing arts events, such as concerts and theatre performances.

In addition, the cultural tourist:

- Has a **higher level of education** than the mass tourist;
- Has a higher propensity to **"explore"**;
- **Spends more money** at their destination;
- Is **concerned about environmental, economic and cultural sustainability**, for both the site and the local populations;
- Seeks **high-impact, time-specific cultural events**, such as blockbusters and festivals; looks for a 'once-in-a-lifetime' experience;
- Is increasingly a **creative worker** (est. 30% of the workforce);
- Enjoys **heritage and culture at home**.



Photo: Gord Strathdee

The cultural tourist is therefore a highly attractive kind of tourist, and represents a potential market and an opportunity for St. Marys given the town's location (some regional residents may be considered day-trip tourists for the purpose of this analysis), asset base, and of course the town's proximity to the large numbers of cultural tourists who come to the region for events such as the Stratford Festival.

Benefits of Cultural Tourism

The tourism industry as a whole continues to grow unabated. According to the UN World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO) 2012 Tourism Highlights report, tourism has experienced continued expansion and diversification over the past six decades, becoming one of the largest and fastest-growing economic sectors in the world. Growth worldwide has been virtually uninterrupted - from 277 million visits in 1980 to 528 million in 1995, and 983 million in 2011.⁸ It goes without saying that tourism is an economic juggernaut.

Numerous studies also extol the benefits of cultural tourism. Lord Cultural Resources' 2009 study for the Government of Ontario on cultural tourism examined numerous studies on the subject. The data clearly say that cultural tourism is on the rise and yields economic benefits. For example, the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund (OCAF) Report E examines cultural events they supported between 2002-2005. The economic impact analysis showed that "by investing in cultural and heritage events that attracted over 3.5 million visitors between 2002 and 2005, OCAF has made a significant contribution to cultural organizations and cultural tourism in communities across Ontario... The Fund also helps generate an economic return to Ontario and new tax revenues for governments."

⁸ See UNWTO Tourism Highlights 2012, http://dtxqt4w60xqpw.cloudfront.net/sites/all/files/docpdf/unwtohighlights12enlr_1.pdf

The 97 festivals and events funded by OTF, OAC and OCAF contributed nearly \$80 million to the GDP at that time, as well as over \$30 million in taxes for all levels of government. Some 2,600 jobs and over \$50 million in wages and salaries resulted.⁹

There is an opportunity, then, for cultural tourism to be a focus for growing the tourism sector in St. Marys, and that opportunity stems not only from the general trends outlined above, but in St. Marys' case from the asset base and the pool of cultural tourists that are already coming to the region.

Tourism in RTO 4: The Current Situation

St. Marys is part of Regional Tourism Organization (RTO) 4, which is the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for the area. The geographic area for RTO4 includes Huron, Perth, Waterloo and Wellington Counties. Data for RTO 4 indicate the following:

- **Tourism is a substantial source of economic activity.** At 8.8 million person-visitors per year and over \$826 million in visitor spending, tourism is a major industry in this area.
- **Most visitors are pleasure or VFR (visiting friends and relatives) visitors** – with nearly 7.3 million person-visits (or 83% of the 8.8 million total) coming for these activities.
- **The overwhelming majority of RTO 4 visitors come from Ontario at 91%** of total person visits. Americans are the next largest category but only account for 6% of visitors, followed by international visitors and finally other Canadians, respectively.
- **In 2010 the largest single activity type was outdoor activities (926,000 person-visits)** followed by cultural performances at about 515,000 person-visits. Sports events rank third at about 259,000 person-visits. Museums and galleries, historic sites, festivals, and zoos/botanical gardens combined for some 620,000 person-visits. When combined with cultural performances, it can be said that **cultural activities as a whole are a very important activity with some 1.135 million person-visits in 2010.**

The data suggest that there is quite a large pool of cultural tourists that come to RTO 4 that St. Marys can tap. This plan must therefore include strategies and initiatives designed to better leverage the Town's cultural offerings in attracting this large existing market.

⁹ *From Egypt to Einstein: Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund 2002-2005.*

4.3 Key Conclusions

The research and analyses outlined in this chapter leads to the following key conclusions:

Strengthening St. Marys' Cultural Products and Product Market

This process has identified several key needs for the Town of St. Marys in terms of cultural provision, and the market analysis indicates that while there are many good quality cultural products in St. Marys, there is an opportunity to leverage more of the assets into market-ready products. In addition to new products, positioning some of the existing assets (the parks, trails or Town-sponsored events, for example) to appeal to regional resident and cultural tourist markets and in such a way as to support the overall Town of St. Marys brand will help strengthen the town as a regional centre of culture.

Supporting Volunteers and Grooming Future Leaders

The success of St. Marys cultural scene owes much to its many hard working and dedicated volunteers. As the market analysis showed, there is a large pool of older people in St. Marys that have been serving in this role. But opportunities in the town for leadership in the cultural sector are limited. To complicate matters further, volunteers are overworked and overcommitted. Sustained support for the cultural sector and opportunities to gain leadership experience and foster future volunteer participation can help ensure the vitality of the St. Marys cultural scene in times ahead.

The Potential for New and More Diverse Cultural Products

St. Marys residents are proud of the town's historic legacy. Beautiful limestone buildings, an abundance of natural assets, and various family focused festivals offer engagement opportunities to cultural participants. Yet, the assets should be developed and leveraged in diverse ways, and diversity in cultural programming is needed to support the increasingly varied cultural tastes of those who might wish to visit – while being true to the heritage character of the town (i.e. the town must not try to be something it is not). And this is also true for younger town residents who are looking for meaningful cultural experiences that include opportunities to socialize.

Building on the Town's Heritage Assets to Develop Market-Ready Products and Grow Cultural Tourism

St. Marys is strategically positioned to attract the attention of savvy cultural tourists – not only the London and Middlesex residents outlined in the resident market analysis, but RTO 4 tourists from other parts of Ontario that come from within a reasonable driving distance to the town. Yet, seasoned cultural tourists can be demanding visitors, expecting high quality cultural experiences and unique engagement opportunities.

Good quality, market-ready cultural products and experiences are already available; the key questions are as follows:

- How can existing assets be better positioned as cultural products? What products could be improved?
- What additional assets does St. Marys have that can be developed into market-ready products?
- What groundwork needs to be laid to make it possible for the Town to create or improve the products, and to market those new and/or improved products to a wider audience? What support needs to be put in place?

This latter point is an important outcome and perhaps the chief goal of this Plan. The priorities and initiatives in the next chapter are intended to answer these questions.



Public Library. Photo: Gord Stratthdee

5

Priorities and Strategies

St. Marys is a community in which residents value and actively participate in arts and culture offerings. However, residents and stakeholders in the town have expressed an appetite for broader programming in support of a more diverse cultural scene. Residents and stakeholders have also expressed a strong desire to maintain the inviting small town atmosphere with which they have strongly identified.

A thorough process of public consultation with St. Marys residents, leaders of cultural organizations, Town government, and local business partners have led to the priorities articulated in this plan. Research on best practices for cultural policy, Canadian and international trends, as well as existing resources in St. Marys have been considered to help successfully guide the recommended strategies and initiatives that address each priority.

The three priorities are:

1. **Inspire Leadership and Municipal Support of Culture**
2. **Enhance Cultural Offerings**
3. **Expand the Market for Culture in St. Marys**

These priorities are distinct, yet broad enough to adapt to change as St. Marys continues to evolve through the years. As new stakeholders emerge, new strategies and initiatives should be considered to help fulfill the opportunities identified through the planning process. This plan provides a flexible framework that artists and cultural participants, organizations, funders, and Town council, administration, and staff can use to develop the cultural life of St. Marys for many years to come.

Priority 1: Inspire Leadership and Municipal Support of Culture

St. Marys residents, council and staff work incredibly hard to support the cultural scene of their Town. Yet the Town's vibrant cultural scene is threatened by burnout facing many of its active and dedicated volunteers and staff. It is important that these dedicated individuals are supported in their pursuits to make St. Marys a more culturally vibrant community for all residents, stakeholders and potential visitors. In addition, St. Marys' population is aging and new opportunities for fostering leadership and vision in the cultural sector are desperately needed. Enhanced leadership skills and improved municipal support of culture are needed to energize and ensure success of the cultural sector in St. Marys. Creating leadership opportunities in the town will also help make St. Marys a more attractive place for residents, who otherwise might seek career opportunities in towns and cities where leadership opportunities are more plentiful.

Strategy 1: St. Marys should allocate additional staff resources to culture.

Recommended Initiatives:

- A. Establish a new full-time Cultural Officer responsible for strategically managing and coordinating all aspects of culture in St. Marys.
 - Strategically positioned within the Cultural Services Department of the Town and reporting to the Manager of Cultural Services, this position should be focused on strategy development and identifying synergies between work in culture, tourism, marketing and communications, community services, and other departments. By assigning one dedicated individual to focus on strategy development, St. Marys can ensure that all of its cultural and related initiatives align with the aims of the Cultural Plan and the Town's other strategic documents, making St. Marys a more attractive place to live and visit. This position can also contribute to ensuring consistent and strategic representation of St. Marys' identity. Further, the Cultural Officer can contribute sustained insights about cultural events throughout the region and in St. Marys, aligning events and cultural happenings and strategically positioning market ready cultural products to benefit St. Marys in the most fruitful ways (a discussion regarding cultural assets and market ready cultural products was discussed in the Contextual and Market Analysis chapter). In addition, the Cultural Officer can contribute to implementing cultural events and communicating regularly about cultural offerings with St. Marys' many cultural organizations and creative people.
- B. Establish a Cultural Committee comprised of municipal staff, residents, volunteers, and relevant stakeholders such as members of business associations to focus on culture.
 - The primary role of the Cultural Committee will be to evaluate and communicate the readiness of cultural assets within the Town of St. Marys for consumption by residents, stakeholders, and cultural tourists. The Committee will also contribute ideas for how cultural assets can be transformed to market ready cultural products. It is essential that the new Cultural Officer oversee these meetings as they will offer much by way of strategy for enhanced cultural engagement of the Town. Further, the Cultural Committee will provide a continuous community voice and insights to help shape the town's cultural scene.

Strategy 2: St. Marys should make culture a consideration across all departments during budget planning.

Recommended Initiative:

- A. St. Marys should require consistent and sustained funding of cultural programs.
 - For example, the Façade Improvement Program, Heritage Grant Program, Community Grant Program and any additional programs and resources which contribute to the vitality of St. Marys as a cultural hub in southern Ontario.
- B. St Marys should provide funding for infrastructure improvement projects which increase the Town's ability to support a greater number of cultural tourists.
 - Cultural tourists can provide significant economic benefits to St. Marys residents and stakeholders. However, the town is presently not well equipped to support a large number of cultural tourists. Infrastructure improvements can do much to elevate St. Marys' cultural experience and keep it competitive with neighbouring communities.

Strategy 3: Apart from general leadership in directing the Town's cultural services, St. Marys should support volunteer cultural efforts with municipal staffing and resources.

Recommended Initiatives:

- A. Hire a new assistant for the existing Volunteer Coordinator position to assist with the planning and implementation of all culturally-oriented volunteer run events, as well as in the recruitment of new volunteers interested in contributing to the Town's cultural efforts.
 - This position will help build capacity within the Town's Cultural Services Department and provide necessary support to the Volunteer Coordinator and volunteers to prevent burnout.
- B. Introduce seasonal positions aimed at supporting volunteer initiatives during months with increased cultural activity.
 - These positions can be filled as needed and provide vital support for cultural initiatives when higher than average participation levels are expected (ex: summer months, winter holidays).
- C. Allocate funding in support of volunteer initiatives to ensure consistency and quality for all cultural events in the town.
 - Funding can support such initiatives as providing up to date and consistent training through educational materials (up to date volunteer manuals and policies), increased support for strategic positioning of volunteer run events to align with the town's cultural identity, and funding for improving offerings at these events to appeal to a broader audience. For example, if a volunteer run event lacks important engagement elements, offering funding so that these can be included is vital to align with the desired quality of the town's other events.

Strategy 4: St. Marys should market volunteering and involvement in culture as a way of integrating newcomers to the town.

Recommended Initiatives:

- A. Establish a Newcomers Guide accessible through the Town's municipal website, highlighting volunteer opportunities for new residents.
- B. Organize monthly mixers to introduce volunteer organizations and opportunities to newcomers and acknowledge the contributions of the Town's many active volunteers.
- C. Appoint a Welcome Ambassador to actively promote volunteering to newcomers during the Town's festivals and cultural events. This initiative might strategically align with responsibilities assigned to the Town's new assistant Volunteer Coordinator (Strategy 3).

Strategy 5: St. Marys should set standards of quality for all volunteer events.

Recommended Initiatives:

- A. Establish a Quality Review (which can be done through the Cultural Committee) for all volunteer events in the town.
- B. Implement annual kick-off meetings to communicate Town standards for cultural events to participating volunteers.

Strategy 6: St. Marys should encourage the next generation to take on leadership roles in culture.

Recommended Initiatives:

- A. Establish year round internships for contributing to cultural initiatives while building the capacity to develop future leaders in the sector.
- B. Establish a Youth Task Force aimed at representing the interests of young people in St. Marys.
- C. Offer workshops and seminars that can help local businesses and non-profits secure funding to hire young people through Young Canada Works.
- D. Develop coordinated youth leadership (mentorship, board involvement, apprenticeships, etc.) across St. Marys' cultural institutions.

Metrics

- ✓ *(Measuring municipal support for culture through increased voluntarism)* Number of new volunteers attracted to support cultural initiatives; number of youth volunteers.
- ✓ *(Measuring output of enhanced volunteer efforts)* Number of new resources produced (such as the Newcomers Guide, annual volunteer kick-off meetings and monthly mixers); impact on existing events; and amounts of increasing funding to support volunteer cultural initiatives.
- ✓ *(Measuring municipal support for culture through funding)* Number of sustained or increased funding initiatives for cultural programming, and the creation of a funding strategy for allocating support to infrastructure improvement.
- ✓ *(Measuring enhancement of standards for volunteer cultural undertakings)* Number of newly created criteria which can aid in the enforcement of quality control for all cultural initiatives in the Town.
- ✓ *(Measuring support for future leadership)* Number of newly created initiatives (internships, mentorships, task force) to nurture training and development of future cultural leaders in St. Marys.

Priority 2: Enhance Cultural Offerings

St. Marys provides residents with numerous opportunities to engage with culture, many of which are outlined in the introduction and throughout the various chapters of this Plan. Yet, residents have expressed a need to see the diversity of cultural offerings in the Town broaden to support their varied interests and needs. And there is a great opportunity to increase the number of cultural tourists that come to the Town.

Residents expressed they often leave St. Marys to participate in many of the cultural offerings they cannot find in town. For example, residents mentioned such activities as concerts and contemporary art events, festivals promoting diversity, and even offerings supporting cultural vitality such as restaurants and cafes.

Cultural tourists, who are often well educated and knowledgeable, require high quality cultural tourism products and experiences to ensure they have a good experience and generate positive word of mouth.

In both cases, enhanced cultural offerings can do much to remedy this unfortunate situation and provide residents and tourists with the rich and meaningful cultural experiences they seek.

Strategy 1: St. Marys should take steps to improve its existing cultural products (where necessary) and develop new ones when the opportunity arises.

Recommended Initiatives:

- A. Use the Cultural Committee to evaluate product market-readiness and the potential for turning some assets into new products.

Strategy 2: St. Marys should capitalize on its heritage assets – including built, human and natural heritage - to support cultural programming and artistic initiatives.

Recommended Initiatives:

- A. Utilize the Town's parks as stages for cultural happenings including food festivals, heritage storytelling and musical performances.
- B. Collaborate with artists to activate the river as a place of cultural vitality; unique river-based art and performances can contribute interest and tourist appeal.
- C. Introduce artist interventions on historic buildings to juxtapose alternative historic narratives and provide tourist appeal.
- D. Initiate story gathering process for town residents, inviting them to contribute their personal stories to an archive that would be used for new programs – then develop new means by which to tell those stories to other residents and visitors, via the Museum, via street-level interpretation, via the Town's website, via a theatrical presentation or signature St. Marys-based play, or a number of other creative means.

Strategy 3: St. Marys should encourage cultural activities and activities which support culture to enliven the downtown core, particularly during evening hours.

Recommended Initiatives:

- A. "Make big bigger" to support increased cultural activity in the downtown core.
 - Expanding existing festivals into larger, more significant events capable of attracting a larger number of cultural tourists is an example – piggybacking new downtown-based events on existing ones (such as planning a new downtown event to complement the annual Hall of Fame induction ceremonies) is another.
- B. Introduce pedestrian only times with interesting opportunities for cultural engagement.
 - Art walks and culinary festivals have successfully been used in other towns and cities. Festivals celebrating diversity, the Town's history, and more contemporary art events are proven strategies for comparable towns and cities throughout Ontario, Canada, and the United States.
- C. Collaborate with artists to creatively activate vacant downtown spaces.
 - Pop-up museums and galleries are a great way to showcase local talent while adding a significant amount of tourist appeal.

Metrics

- ✓ *(Measuring new products)* Number of new cultural products. .
- ✓ *(Measuring the building of local identity)* Number of diverse narratives collected and the establishment of a database for these to be called upon for future curatorial projects in St. Marys.
- ✓ *(Measuring increased visitor traffic)* Number of increased visitors to St. Marys' newly engaged or established cultural activities. This can help illustrate how revamping cultural events and making them market ready can result in increased tourism.
- ✓ *(Measuring decreased vacancy in the downtown core)* Number of decreased vacancies in the downtown core due to collaborations with artists and other local creative people to engage vacant storefronts.

Priority 3: Expand the Market for Culture in St. Marys

Many cultural offerings in St. Marys have been developed with the help of the town's active and dedicated residents and Town staff. These offerings have made great strides in reaching out to the local community in meaningful ways. But we know from our review that the market for culture in St. Marys has room to expand, particularly to attract the economic benefits achieved through increased cultural tourism.

Strategy 1: St. Marys should take control of its cultural "identity."

Recommended Initiatives:

- A. Develop a Tourism Master Plan to secure a strategic direction for the identity of St. Marys.
 - The present Corporate Marketing and Communications plan does not lay out the comprehensive framework needed to achieve a strategic position for St. Marys. But a Tourism Master Plan can help establish this in terms of tourism and also ensure that St. Marys has the management capacity and policies in place to achieve the goals that that plan will lay out. Extensive destination development and marketing can then be developed to support the vision of a Tourism Master Plan.
- B. Implement standards to ensure the quality of the Town's identity and cultural experiences remains consistent and competitive with offerings in the region.
 - These standards can be included in the scope of work of developing a Tourism Master Plan, discussed in the last strategy.

Strategy 2: St. Marys should take steps to better appeal to cultural tourists.**Recommended Initiatives:**

- A. Develop themed experiences and boost programming around cultural districts to strategically guide tourist and development activities unique to the region.
 - For example, themed culinary, botanical, shopping, and artistic itineraries can help enliven tourist experiences to the town. St. Marys' new Heritage Conservation District is one step in this direction but more programming to interpret and capitalize on the district should be provided. St. Marys residents noted their desire to maintain a tranquil and relaxing small town feel – perhaps products and experiences focused on relaxation (for example, a bed and breakfast district or spa or health and wellness district) can contribute to this.
- B. Implement municipal policies that encourage the responsible development of infrastructure that supports increased tourism, and work with out-of-town hotels and attractions to market St. Marys to tourists who visit nearby attractions
 - St. Marys has limited accommodations for lodging to support tourists visiting the town. Further, tourists seek experiences for dining and cultural engagement which are presently limited in the Town. Marketing St. Marys in London, K-W or Stratford, for example, once products have been developed and a tourism master plan has been implemented, would help generate more visitor traffic.
- C. Develop a tourism website for the Town of St. Marys separate from the website used by residents to look up municipal affairs.
 - Cultural tourists are picky travelers and seek unique, sophisticated engagement opportunities that offer much for their limited travel time and align with other experiences attracting their spending. The present website fails to articulate the Town's tourism focused vision and provides a wealth of information useful to residents, but not cultural tourists. Further, if an appealing and seductive new website for tourism is created for St. Marys, it will be easier to achieve buy-in and align the efforts of entrepreneurs who presently "put their own" spin on St. Marys. This website could include Cultural Mapping and Cultural Plan documents, electronic brochures and related links, but these should be presented in a more dynamic and attractive way to appeal to cultural tourists.
- D. Design and implement a targeted marketing campaign for reaching audiences who visit the Stratford Festival. This could be an element of the Tourism Master Plan discussed in Priority 3, Strategy 1.
 - Work closely with RTO 4 to improve tourism marketing for St. Marys so that the town's offerings complement those of nearby towns and cities and cater to cultural tourists coming from Toronto, London and Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge, among other locations.

Metrics

- ✓ *(Measuring impact of strategic tourism initiatives)* Increase in annual visitors to the town; number of new resources created to augment initiatives for attracting tourists presently in St. Marys; number of inquiries from potential tourists about St. Marys. This can include the development of the Tourism Master Plan, standards for ensuring cultural competitiveness, new policies for establishing cultural tourism infrastructure, and a new tourism website.
- ✓ *(Measuring quality of visitor experiences)* Gathering feedback and commentary from visitors about their experiences in St. Marys; instituting visitor surveys at key locations around the town.



Downtown St. Marys Car and Bike Show 2012

6

Implementation Strategy

The following section provides a breakdown of timelines and costs associated with the recommended initiatives presented in this plan, as well as responsibility for implementation. Timelines and costs are presented within ranges to allow for flexibility and budget sensitivities; the extent to which the initiatives are implemented (which will be a decision of the Town and its staff), and the varying possibilities in terms of both hard and soft costs, make it impossible to provide precise figures in most cases. But we do attempt to provide focused cost ranges to enable the highest possible degree of precision.



	Start Up Schedule			Annual Resources \$=<\$25K \$\$=\$25K-\$50K \$\$\$=>\$50K-\$100K	Responsibility	One-time /Recurring Annual Costs
	Immed -2yrs	2yrs-5yrs	5yrs-10yrs			
Priority 1: Inspire Leadership and Municipal Support of Culture						
Strategy 1: St. Marys should allocate additional staff resources to culture.						
A. Cultural Officer	X			\$\$	Manager of Cultural Services	One-time
B. Cultural Committee	X			\$	Cultural Officer	One-time
Strategy 2: St. Marys should make culture a consideration across all departments during budget planning.						
A. Consistent and sustained funding of cultural programs	X	X	X	\$\$-\$\$\$	All departments	Recurring
B. Provide funding for infrastructure improvement projects		X	X	\$\$-\$\$\$	All departments	Recurring
Strategy 3: Apart from general leadership in directing the Town’s cultural services, St. Marys should support volunteer cultural efforts with municipal staffing and resources.						
A. New assistant for the existing Volunteer Coordinator.	X			\$	Volunteer Coordinator	One-time
B. Introduce seasonal positions	X			\$	Volunteer coordinator	Recurring
C. Funding in support of volunteer initiatives	X			\$\$	Volunteer coordinator	Recurring
Strategy 4: St. Marys should market volunteering and involvement in culture as a way of integrating newcomers to the Town.						
A. Newcomers Guide		X		\$\$	Assistant/volunteer coordinator	One-time
B. Monthly mixers		X		\$	Assistant/volunteer coordinator	Recurring
C. Welcome Ambassador		X		\$	Assistant/volunteer coordinator	Recurring
Strategy 5: St. Marys should set standard of quality for all volunteer events.						
A. Quality Review	X			\$	Cultural officer	Recurring
B. Annual kick-off meetings	X			\$	Volunteer coordinator	Recurring
Strategy 6: St Marys should encourage the next generation to take on leadership roles in culture.						
A. Year round internships		X		\$	Volunteer coordinator	Recurring
B. Youth Task Force	X			\$	Volunteer coordinator	One-time
C. Funding/Capacity Building Workshops		X		\$	Cultural officer	Recurring
D. Youth Leadership		X		\$	Volunteer coordinator	Recurring

	Start Up Schedule			Annual Resources \$=<\$25K \$\$=\$25K-\$50K \$\$\$=>\$50K-\$100K	Responsibility	One-time /Recurring Annual Costs
	Immed -2yrs	2yrs-5yrs	5yrs-10yrs			

Priority 2: Enhance Cultural Offerings

Strategy 1: St. Marys should take steps to improve its existing cultural products (where necessary) and develop new ones when the opportunity arises.

A. Evaluate product market-readiness	X			\$-\$\$	Cultural officer	Recurring
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Strategy 2: St. Marys should capitalize on its heritage assets – including built, human and natural heritage – to support cultural programming and artistic initiatives.

A. Parks as cultural stages	X			\$	Cultural Officer	Recurring
B. The river as a place of cultural vitality		X		\$-\$\$	Cultural Officer	Recurring
C. Artist interventions on historic buildings		X		\$-\$\$	Cultural Officer	Recurring
D. Story gathering process		X		\$	Cultural Officer	Recurring

Strategy 3: St. Marys should encourage cultural activities and activities which support culture to enliven the downtown core, particularly during evening hours.

A. "Make big bigger"		X		\$\$-\$\$\$	Cultural Officer	Recurring
B. Pedestrian only times		X		\$	Cultural Officer	Recurring
C. Activate vacant downtown spaces		X		\$	Cultural Officer	Recurring

	Start Up Schedule			Annual Resources \$=<\$25K \$\$=\$25K-\$50K \$\$\$=>\$50K-\$100K	Responsibility	One-time /Recurring Annual Costs
	Immed -2yrs	2yrs-5yrs	5yrs-10yrs			

Priority 3: Expand the Market for Culture in St. Marys

Strategy 1: St. Marys should take control of its cultural "identity"

A. Tourism Master Plan		X	X	\$\$	Cultural Officer	One-time
B. Implement standards to ensure the quality of the Town's identity		X		\$	Cultural Officer	One-time

Strategy 2: St. Marys should take steps to better appeal to cultural tourists

A. Cultural districts/themed experiences		X	X	\$\$-\$\$\$	Cultural Officer	Recurring
B. Implement municipal policies that encourage the responsible development of infrastructure		X		\$	Manager of Cultural Services	Recurring
C. Develop a tourism website		X		\$\$	Cultural Officer	One-time
D. Targeted marketing campaign		X		\$\$-\$\$\$	Cultural Officer	Recurring