



# TOWN OF GEORGINA MUNICIPAL CULTURAL PLAN



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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## OUTLINE OF THE WORK

### Phases of the Work

Work on Georgina's Municipal Cultural Plan was begun in late winter 2012 and concluded in early fall 2012. It was carried out in three phases:

- Research covering statistical overview, public policy context, land use, social history, asset inventory. This part of the work addressed the question, "Where Are We Now?"
- Personal interviews and group discussions leading to a Vision Statement for Culture in Georgina. This part of the work addressed the question, "Where Do We Need to Go?"
- Creation of strategies for cultural development including identification of tasks, responsibilities, timing and resources. This part of the work addressed the question, "How Do We Get There?"

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The consultants wish to thank Mayor Grossi and Councillors, Senior Staff and the members of the Steering Committee for their contributions to the development of the Cultural Plan for Georgina, under the chairmanship of Phil Rose-Donahoe, Manager of Cultural Services. We also wish to recognize the Steering Committee that enthusiastically assisted in the development of ideas and provided thoughtful comments and guidance.

## THE CULTURAL PLAN

### A Vision for Culture in Georgina

Personal interviews and stakeholder consultations resulted in a number of key themes which were employed in crafting an eight point (long form) **Vision Statement for Culture in Georgina** and a condensed **Vision Statement** as follows:

*Culture in Georgina arises from a unique landscape and a balance of urban and rural life. Cultural expression and celebration in Georgina*

*contributes to the local economy, to personal growth and community well being; it transforms our communities by fostering creativity, the imagination and a shared vision of a better future.*

### Strategies for Achieving the Vision

The core of the Municipal Cultural Plan provides clear strategies to be deployed in cultural development over the next five years such as:

- Define the role of the Town
- Increase awareness of culture in Georgina
- Put culture in the heart of every community
- Explore partnerships
- Develop capacity in the cultural sector
- Embrace natural heritage as a cultural asset
- Create a cultural program investment fund
- Create a cultural capital investment plan

### The Case for Natural Heritage

While natural heritage typically appears as a minor component of a municipal cultural plan, Georgina's natural heritage has shaped its cultural identity in the past and will continue to be at the centre of its cultural identity into the future.

Georgina's Municipal Cultural Plan therefore brings an international planning perspective and recommendations related to two UNESCO initiatives:

- The World Biosphere program
- The Historic Urban Landscapes program

### **Managing the Municipal Cultural Plan**

Finally, Georgina's Municipal Cultural Plan includes strategies for managing the Cultural Plan as it goes forward.

#### Communications

Once it is received and adopted by Council, the Cultural Plan will be shared with stakeholders and the general public.

The Town will organize a kick-off event to launch the Plan and to celebrate culture in Georgina.

#### Measuring Success

Every year during Culture Days, the Town will issue a report on the State of Culture in Georgina. This report will summarize:

- Cultural participation levels
- Cultural products and offerings
- Distribution and impact of cultural events and activities
- Cultural sector growth and performance
- Access and inclusion
- Cultural facilities

#### Cultural Data Base

The Municipal Cultural Plan process has contributed to the advancement of the Town's Cultural Data Base which will be maintained as a key resource in managing the Cultural Plan.

### **BACKGROUND REPORT: WHERE ARE WE NOW?**

#### **Portrait of Georgina**

The work on the Municipal Cultural Plan began with extensive research which was undertaken to create a complete picture of Georgina today and where it may be in the near future. Using a wide variety of sources, this first report provides a summary of:

- History of Urban Growth in Georgina
- Characteristics of the Current Population
- Population Growth
- Employment Summary
- Summary of Policy and Planning Issues

This plan also provides a partial list of built and natural heritage sites that will be expanded as the project proceeds.

### **BACKGROUND REPORT: WHERE DO WE NEED TO GO?**

#### **Observations from Part One**

This plan begins by identifying the cultural planning themes which emerged directly from the Part One work including:

- Cultural Landscape
- Urban Centres
- Cultural Change
- Downtowns and Neighborhoods
- Commuter Community
- Seasonal Residents
- Town's Leadership in Culture
- Cultural Sector
- Cultural Tourism

This report also makes observations derived from the Part One work which emerged indirectly in relation to cultural planning trends including:

- Cultural Sector Development and Advancement
- Municipal Grants Programs
- Public Advisory Bodies
- Sectoral Organization and Advocacy
- Maintaining the Volunteer Base
- Municipality as Facility provider
- Municipality as Recruiter
- The Business Case for Culture
- Inclusion of the Private Sector

#### **Results of Previous Consultations**

This report provides a summary of the themes which emerged from planning and consultations undertaken by the Town prior to commissioning the Municipal Cultural Plan including:

- Cultural Identity
- The Role of Culture
- Cultural Sector Capacity
- Understanding and Communications
- Culture and Quality of Life
- Culture, Business and Economic Development
- Culture and Tourism
- Culture and Recreation
- Role of the Town

#### **Results of Municipal Cultural Plan Consultations**

This report also provides a summary of additional themes which emerged from further consultations including:

- Cultural Identity and Place
- Culture and the Environment
- Inclusion and Accessibility
- Cultural Industries and Economic Benefit
- Funding Strategy and Formula

**SUPPORT FOR THE CULTURAL PLAN**

# SUPPORT FOR THE CULTURAL PLAN

The Steering Committee which presided over the development of the Cultural Plan provides guidance and advocacy based on a collective commitment to the benefits of Culture. This commitment is evident in the following expressions of support for the plan.

**Denise Sheedy**

President

The Eaglewood Folk Festival

*We always knew we were different from other municipalities. Thanks to the new Municipal Cultural Plan, we can identify our uniqueness and appreciate the culturally vibrant community we have in Georgina. Future prospects look bright as the Plan is adopted and rolled out for the benefit of the entire municipality. It has been a real honour to contribute to the development of the Municipal Cultural Plan and the Eaglewood Folk Festival looks forward to a continuing partnership with the Town of Georgina in helping to celebrate our wonderful culture.*

**Mary Baxter**

Director of Library Services

CEO Georgina Public Libraries

*Georgina Public Libraries is thrilled to be part of the Town of Georgina’s Cultural Planning process, helping to shape our identity and way forward as a growing, vibrant community. The Library’s mission of “Opening Doors and Minds” celebrates collaboration with community partners, to bring a variety of cultural activities – from storytelling, to performance arts, to music and art displays – to our libraries, making culture available and accessible to all.*

**Widit McLean**

Georgina Arts Council

*Lake Simcoe, the river systems and the wetlands make Georgina a unique destination in southern Ontario. I believe the Cultural Plan will guide us in featuring and celebrating these differences, and thus attract new residents, visitors and businesses.*

**Andrew Sibbald**

The Briars Resort, Spa and Conference Centre

*Culture? Georgina? Really? While it’s hard for us to see it, visitors see it clearly. And they want more of it. Let’s discover it, cultivate it and freely share it with our friends, family and visitors. After all, good things grow...*

**Heather Fullerton**

Executive Director, Georgina Arts Centre & Gallery

*At the Georgina Arts Centre & Gallery we are all about collaboration, and this Municipal Cultural Planning process with the Town of Georgina has been a strengthening and fascinating experience. Our mission, “To excite the community about the Arts!” is imbedded in the fabric of this action plan and we look forward to the vitality the MCP will bring to Georgina’s cultural future as we move forward.*

**Michelle Vacca**

Artist and Resident

*I am delighted to have been involved in the development of the Municipal Cultural Plan for Georgina, because Georgina is not just any place- it is like no other place; down-to-earth beautiful yet distinctively complex and full of possibilities. Just as culture is the heart of all communities, it is the core of our being- unequivocally. Culture is experienced all the time, whether it's realized or not- Georgina's Cultural Plan will heighten this awareness and steer our cultural capacity into something that is uniquely ours.*

**Annabel Slaight**

Co-founder, Ladies of the Lake

*We are fortunate to live in a place blessed by nature. By connecting our ecological, social, cultural and spiritual activities and fostering links between creativity, science, and innovation, we can help Georgina fulfill its potential as a truly desirable place to visit, to live in and to work in. Economic strength will be the inevitable outcome of a vision like this.*

**Melissa D. Matt**

Cultural Services Representative, Recreation and Culture Department

*With each generation, waves of people leave their mark and shape the communities that form Georgina. It's exciting to begin the Municipal Cultural Planning process, which helps us to examine how those who came here before us have impacted our lives, our culture, and how we define ourselves today. The Cultural Plan will help all of us to better understand our shared culture and allow us to celebrate it to its fullest, together.*

**Karyn Stone**

Economic and Tourism Development Office

*Georgina is so rich with culture that it is time that we truly recognize and create a greater awareness of our community's cultural assets. The Municipal Culture Plan will assist in communicating and connecting the cultural opportunities in our community and celebrate their importance to the economic sustainability of our Town. The Municipal Cultural Plan will also help us to identify opportunities to encourage growth and to support the various sectors that affect Georgina's culture.*

## **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

# ABOUT THE CULTURAL PLAN

## GOALS OF THE MUNICIPAL CULTURAL PLAN

The goals of the Municipal Cultural Plan for the Town of Georgina are:

- To identify the cultural resources in Georgina
- To set these resources into the provincial, regional and local planning context
- To identify goals and strategies for developing Georgina’s cultural resources
- To provide a framework for managing cultural development going forward

## SUMMARY OF THE MUNICIPAL CULTURAL PLAN

### Summary of Introduction and Background

The first section of this chapter is titled **Cultural Planning in Ontario**. This section identifies culture as a provincial policy priority and it provides a definition of culture.

The second section is titled **Cultural Planning Context**. This section identifies the Greenbelt, the Town’s Official Plan, and urban growth issues as forces affecting culture. This section also provides a summary of cultural assets in Georgina.

The third section is titled **Cultural Narrative**. This section provides a cultural history of Georgina and it identifies the significance of landscape as a cultural determinant.

The fourth section is titled **Public Consultations**. This section summarizes the themes which emerged from the meetings and discussions which took place during the planning process.

The fifth section is titled **Observations**. This section expands the list of planning themes by identifying themes which emerged from research and other sources.

### Summary of Cultural Development Plan

The first section of this chapter is titled **A Vision for Culture in Georgina**. This section includes a vision statement in both a short form and a long form.

The second section is titled **Goals and Strategies for the Cultural Plan**. This section identifies 8 major goals and strategies related to the achievement of those goals.

The third section is titled **Cultural Plan: Communications**. This section provides an outline for the communications plan for the Cultural Plan.

The fourth section is titled **Monitoring and Evaluation**. This section sets out the parameters for managing the progress of the Cultural Plan.

### Summary of Background Reports

The first section of this chapter describes the **Results of the Planning Process** which had occurred prior to the start of the Municipal Cultural Plan process in 2012.

The second section is titled **The Case for Natural Heritage in the Culture of Georgina**. This section sets the international (UNESCO) approach into a Georgina context.

The third section contains the **Background Report** prepared by Sierra Planning and Management as the first part of the Municipal Cultural Plan process.

# CULTURAL PLANNING IN ONTARIO

## INTEGRATED COMMUNITY PLANNING

The Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport defines cultural planning as a “place-based approach to planning and development. It is a process for identifying and leveraging a community’s cultural resources, strengthening the management of those resources, and integrating those resources across all facets of local planning and decision making.”

In other words, a municipal cultural plan works hand in hand with a community’s other policies in the social, economic and environmental arena to strengthen the community as a whole.

### Culture and Community Sustainability

The Town of Georgina is joining leading municipalities in Ontario and elsewhere in the country who are increasingly recognizing culture’s role as one of the four pillars of community sustainability.

Culture is one of the four pillars of community sustainability, and supports the three other pillars:

*Culture contributes to the **social pillar** by building social cohesion, personal fulfillment, health and wellness and prospects for youth.*

*Culture contributes to the **economic pillar** through business attraction, tourism, and by stimulating urban and real estate development.*

*Culture contributes to the **environmental pillar** through retention of both built and natural heritage.*

### Immediate Benefits of the Plan

Not only will a Municipal Cultural Plan contribute to community well-being, but will also bring immediate benefits by helping to:

- Bolster civic engagement
- Strengthen community identity
- Promote a better understanding of culture
- Support the growth of the cultural sector

- Create links from culture to other civic goals
- Demonstrate link between culture and economic development
- Build consensus to move community goals ahead toward realization

Some of these benefits have already been evidenced through the process of preparing the Culture Plan.

The completed Municipal Cultural Plan for Georgina is intended to:

- Develop a vision for culture in Georgina
- Document local values and characteristics including local cultural identity, existing public policies and an inventory of current activities in the cultural sphere
- Recognize places where cultural activities currently occur
- Develop an integrated framework for local cultural planning
- Identify goals and strategies to achieve the vision
- Recommend the organizational frameworks and resources required to achieve the vision
- Provide a plan of action for cultural development
- Allow for the measurement and monitoring of achievement

## WHAT IS CULTURE?

Culture has both a broad societal context, and a specific set of manifestations (e.g., the arts and other expressions of the imagination.)

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) definition reflects the former. The organization has defined culture as "...the spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society...not only the arts and letters, but also the modes of life...value systems, traditions...".

More specifically, however, and in the context of municipal cultural planning, culture can be described in terms of its manifestations in activities and places associated with the following disciplines:

- Performing Arts
- Communications Media
- Literary Arts
- Heritage
- Electronic Arts
- Visual Arts
- Crafts
- Civic Arts
- Festivals & Events
- Design Arts

The following list shows the wide range of activities and places that typically fall under each of these disciplinary categories. (The list is non-exhaustive).

## Cultural Activities

### Performing Arts

- Spoken Word Theatre
- Musical Theatre & Opera
- Dance & Mime
- Circus & Magic
- Classical Music of all World Cultures
- Folk Music of all World Cultures
- Non-classical & New Music

### Communications Media

- Radio Broadcasting
- TV Broadcasting
- Webcasting & Blogging
- Publishing & Print Media

### Literary Arts

- Fiction
- Poetry
- Non-fiction
- Storytelling

### Heritage

- Natural Heritage
- Built Heritage
- Material Heritage
- Folkloric Arts

### Electronic Arts

- Film
- Video
- Audio

- New Media
- Digital & Animation

### Visual Arts

- Painting & Drawing
- Sculpture & Installation
- Printmaking
- Photography
- Performance Art
- Conceptual & Interdisciplinary

### Crafts

- Textiles & Fabric
- Glass
- Stone
- Metal
- Wood
- Mixed Media

### Civic Arts

- Public Art
- Urban Design

### Festivals & Events

- Civic
- Independent

### Design Arts

- Graphics
- Industrial Design
- Architecture
- Landscape

## **Cultural Places**

### Performing Arts

Concert Halls

Playhouses

Lyric Theatres

Recital Halls

Amphitheatres & Outdoor  
Performing Spaces

Teaching & Rehearsal Studios

Community Centres, Schools &  
Worship Centres

Restaurant/Pub/Cafe

### Communications Media

Broadcast Studios

Newspaper & Magazine Publishers

### Literary Arts

Bookstores

Libraries

### Heritage

Public Archives

Cultural Centres

Museums

Heritage Properties

Historic Sites & Monuments

### Electronic Arts

Cinemas

Digital Production Facilities

Film, Video, Audio Recording  
Studios

### Visual Arts

Commercial Art Galleries

Artist-Run Nonprofit Galleries

Public Art Galleries

Artist Studios

Teaching Studios

### Crafts

Artisan Studios

Artisan Studio & Stores

Retail Stores

Artisan-Run Nonprofit Galleries

Teaching Studios

### Civic Arts

Public Art Sites

Vistas & Streetscapes

Public Parks & Gardens

### Design Arts

Graphic Design Studios

Web Design Studios

Industrial Design Studios

Architectural Design Offices

Landscape Design Offices

## **Experiencing Culture**

Culture encompasses the range of modes of participation, from creator to casual observer.

Some people believe that only a portion of society participates in culture. In fact, anyone who reads a magazine, downloads music, notices a historic building or reads a news item online is participating in culture.

Cultural participation occurs in five modes from the most active to the most passive:

- Inventive: involving the act of creation (a songwriter)
- Interpretive: adds value to pre-existing works (the singer who records the song)
- Curatorial: selecting, organizing, collecting (the producer who organizes the concert)
- Observational: participation in selected experiences (the concert goer)
- Ambient: art that "happens to you" (the song overheard from a passing car)

## **Universal and Local**

Culture is embodied in a set of universal values that manifest themselves in a particular time and place. A made-in-Georgina definition of culture has been one outcome of the cultural planning process.

# CULTURAL PLANNING CONTEXT

## TOWN OF GEORGINA CULTURAL ADMINISTRATION

The Town of Georgina administers its interests in culture overall through its Department of Recreation and Culture and directly through that department's Manager of Cultural Services.

The Department of Recreation and Culture currently has responsibilities for:

- Theatres
- Parks
- Arenas
- Municipally owned recreation facilities including: Georgina Pioneer Village and Archives, Stephen, Leacock Theatre, The ROC (Recreational Outdoor Campus), Sports Fields, Aquatic Centre, Seniors Centres, Community Halls, Gym
- Leisure based recreational programming
- Cultural services
- Facility and Park Development

The Department is also responsible for producing Georgina's Calendar of Events.

The Town's Leisure Services Master Plan of 2004 (scheduled to be updated in 2013) identifies the distribution of facilities as a major challenge. This challenge is equally pertinent to the Municipal Cultural Plan.

## GREENBELT PLAN

Ontario's Greenbelt Act of 2005 and the Greenbelt Plan identify areas where urbanization should not occur in order "to provide permanent protection to the agricultural land base and the ecological features and functions occurring on this landscape."

This Greenbelt Plan provides provincial recognition of the variety and importance of the various agricultural, natural and open space

systems in Georgina.

## GEORGINA'S OFFICIAL PLAN

### Key Objectives of the Official Plan

The key objectives related to cultural planning of the Official Plan confirm that Georgina's cultural identity will continue to maintain a balance between rural and urban. These objectives include:

- Preserving significant natural heritage and environmental features
- Maintaining sustainable rural/agricultural area and agricultural industry
- Providing opportunities for residents while protecting the natural environment
- Expanding economic opportunities and diversifying the economic base

The Secondary Plans for Keswick, Sutton/Jackson's Point and Pefferlaw all contain goals for environmental protection and sustainability.

## NATURAL HERITAGE IN GEORGINA

In addition to the natural features identified in the Greenbelt Plan and the Official Plan, there are 31 natural heritage sites as noted in Appendix B of the Background report including Lake Simcoe and its tributaries, regional forest tracts and First Nation Reserves.

## BUILT HERITAGE IN GEORGINA

The Town has established the Georgina Heritage Committee as its agent under the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act.

There are currently 14 properties in Georgina which are designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. The Georgina Heritage Committee has conducted a preliminary review of Sutton's historic High Street

area to consider this area as a Heritage Conservation District.

The Regional Municipality of York is currently undertaking an Archeological Management Plan which includes a mapping component to determine archeological potential in all of York Region.

### **URBAN GROWTH AS CULTURAL DETERMINANT**

While population growth can be an economic advantage, it can also produce a period of socio-cultural transition as newcomers become integrated and begin to make their contribution to cultural life.

Between 1996 and 2032 (36 years), the population of Georgina will have doubled and at least half of Georgina's residents will be relative newcomers, bringing their own cultural narratives to add to the greater Georgina story as tributaries to a larger stream enriching the flow.

In addition to the practical realities of providing more services and facilities to a growing population, broader societal trends (aging baby boomers, the tastes and preferences of the Net Generation, change in ethno-cultural mix, etc) will also be influential.

#### *Keswick as Focal Point of Urban Growth*

Keswick will be the focus of urban growth in Georgina with about 39,000 residents anticipated by 2021 (representing 67% of Georgina's projected population at that time.)

Within the designated urban area of Keswick, the Secondary Plan identifies three urban centres for higher density, mixed use development:

- Glenwoods Urban Centre
- Maskinonge Urban Centre
- Uptown Keswick Urban Centre

In terms of cultural interests, the Maskinonge Urban Centre will be a tourist oriented commercial area focused on the marina uses along the Maskinonge River. Uptown Keswick will focus on service

commercial and retail shopping experiences.

Keswick's role as the major growth centre of Georgina will be further reinforced by the development of the Keswick Business Park.

#### *Sutton/Jackson's Point and Pefferlaw*

The population in Sutton/Jackson's Point is predicted to more than double from its present level and will eventually (2032) represent about 21% of Georgina's projected population.

Growth in Pefferlaw is expected to be modest in keeping with its role as a rural centre.

### **Place of Work and Cultural Participation**

In 2006, the number of local jobs in the Town of Georgina represented about 14% of the population. In 2032, this number is expected to rise into the order of 30% of the population. In 2010 Georgina's service producing sector accounted for over 90% of the jobs in Georgina. With many of the service sector positions being seasonal or part-time, over 70% of Georgina's population travels outside of the community to work.

From a social and cultural perspective, having the majority of the workforce employed elsewhere has been detrimental in terms of the ability for commuting families to enjoy leisure time and both cultural and recreational programs. The Town's Recreational programmers report fewer program registrations than the need and demand would suggest.

Although the extension of Highway 404 is expected to reduce commute times, more importantly it is anticipated that this extension will provide improved transportation routes for companies looking to relocate in Georgina thereby providing value added employment opportunities.

The Keswick Business Park which includes over 500 acres of land will make a significant contribution to the availability of serviced industrial/commercial lands and over time will have the ability to support up to 9,000 jobs.

### **Seasonal Residents as a Cultural Force**

In the early 20th century, many lakefront communities in Ontario became destinations for day-trippers who arrived by steamer or inter-urban rail. These destinations also attracted those who developed summer homes.

Georgina's claim to being the "original cottage country" is a valid one and the legacy of this claim can readily be seen along Lake Drive among other places.

The original seasonal residences have given way to year-round dwellings and new houses have been built on many lakefront lots. Today, there are an estimated 4,855 second home residents occupying 1,805 dwellings (or about 11% of the existing housing stock.)

Given that there is limited available lakefront, the seasonal resident population will presumably remain constant in absolute terms but will decline in relative terms from about 10% of the population today to about 7% of the projected population in 2032. Some seasonal residences may also become year round.

In terms of cultural participation, seasonal residents tend to participate mostly in one cultural activity – "cottaging" – and in the public events which occur in the prime cottaging season.

### **SOCIOECONOMIC STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Town's Socioeconomic Mission and Strategic Plan of 2009 identifies "Expansion of the Tourism Sector" as one of four priority areas for economic development.

In this Plan, lack of universal access to the shoreline was seen to be an obstacle to tourism while the improvement of historic downtowns was identified as an aide to improving visitor experience.

Notwithstanding, that attendance at public beaches is reported to be at or above capacity there is a need to provide attractions to engage these visitors and take advantage of this market.

Tourism in Georgina is a mixture of significant opportunity and small capacity. On the one hand, there are 2 or more million

daytrippers within a short drive; on the other hand, Georgina's unique visitor appeal (its lakefront) is almost entirely privatized and with Georgina's limited hospitality infrastructure overnight accommodation to facilitate overnight stays by families who attend the larger sporting events is limited.

### **Cultural Industries**

The Socioeconomic Mission and Strategic Plan also identifies "Entrepreneur Attraction" as an economic development goal and cites cultural industries as a principal target market.

## **CULTURAL ASSETS AND KEY INITIATIVES**

### **Community Improvement Plans**

The Planning and Building Department is undertaking Community Improvement Plans (CIP) for Keswick, Sutton/Jackson's Point due to their historic significance and economic development potential. Proceeding with the CIPs exemplifies the Town's commitment to promote revitalization and redevelopment efforts within these areas. As the success of these efforts will require support from the private sector, Economic Development staff has been working to develop strong business associations within these neighbourhoods and have determined their readiness for this project. Through a Community Improvement Plan municipalities can:

- Focus public attention on local priorities and municipal initiatives
- Target areas in transition or in need of repair, rehabilitation and redevelopment
- Facilitate and encourage community change in a coordinated manner
- Stimulate private sector investment through municipal incentive-based programs

### **Cultural Inventory and Mapping**

Prior to the beginning of the Municipal Cultural Plan process, the

Town undertook a cultural asset mapping process which collected information in all categories of cultural assets across Georgina and which has been further refined by Town staff in the initial phase of the Municipal Cultural Plan process.

The resulting Cultural Data Base is an evolving document. A copy of the Data Base (inventory and mapping) as it was at the end of June 2012 is included in Appendix B.

The existing cultural venue assets in Georgina which will figure in the development of the Municipal Cultural Plan include:

- Community Halls
- Eildon Hall Museum (Jackson's Point)
- Georgina Public Libraries (Keswick, Sutton, Pefferlaw)
- Georgina Arts Centre and Gallery (Sutton)
- Georgina Military Museum (Keswick)
- Georgina Pioneer Village and Archives (Civic Centre site)
- Stephen Leacock Theatre (Keswick)
- Sutton Fair Grounds (Sutton)

### **South Shore Community Broadband**

Georgina is fortunate to have its own broadband Internet infrastructure which enables local artists and artisans, particularly those in rural areas, to display their art and talent to a worldwide audience, to access a global marketplace, and to collaborate with other artists and artisans around the world.

### **Water Conservation**

Efforts are underway by all levels of government to bring about a new way of thinking about, using and protecting our water. Water plays a large part in Georgina's identity both in its physical form and its socio-cultural development. Lake Simcoe is also a major part of Ontario's ecosystem and, today, water is a subject of global significance. With 52 km of shoreline, Georgina is particularly well

positioned to take an active role in this awareness campaign. Over the past decade a number of projects have been undertaken by the Town of Georgina and various partners to further the ongoing efforts of the Region, Province and Federal governments in this respect.

Most recently, the Ladies of the Lake, a group of women dedicated to Lake Simcoe have been working in collaboration with agency and government organizations to further the efforts to preserve and celebrate Lake Simcoe, and in 2011 and 2012 hosted the Splash Floating Water Festival to celebrate water and further the idea of Lake Simcoe becoming a hub for water related innovation, research and learning. At the 2011 festival, the restoration of the Spring House was celebrated. Designated under the Heritage Act, the Spring House identifies the destination of city folks who came to drink the healing waters of Lake Simcoe. The Ladies of the Lake are currently working to further the concept of developing a Water Centre that would tie Georgina's history to global sustainability.

### **Sutton Public School**

In 2011, the Town acquired a de-commissioned elementary school in downtown Sutton including a building containing about 40,000 sf of area, an eight acre site including frontage on the Black River

The Town recognizes the potential which exists to re-develop this property as a socio-cultural hub and has begun the process of considering its options.

### **Loss of the Red Barn Theatre**

The Red Barn Theatre in Jackson's Point was a seminal force in the development of Canadian Theatre in the middle of the 20th century. Although its pivotal role diminished as theatre festivals sprung up all across the province, it continued to be an important part of Georgina's culture and a visitor destination. Many participants in this study noted that the destruction of this facility by fire was both a cultural and an economic loss and look forward to opportunities for culture to once again be developed within this space.

# CULTURAL NARRATIVE

## GEORGINA'S CULTURAL CONTEXT

### Landscape as Culture

Georgina is characterized first and foremost by a series of creek and river systems flowing from the higher ground of the Oak Ridges Moraine in the south northward (mostly) into Lake Simcoe.

The legacy of this topography today is a mixture of:

- Rich agricultural land
- Forests and wooded areas (some regionally significant)
- Wetlands and shore lands
- Natural areas protected for biological, hydrological and physical features
- Public parks
- Various types of urban and rural settlements

Within this topography, historic settlement patterns are visible in:

- Urban centres which arose around mill sites
- Residential/recreational settlements related to 52 kms of Lake Simcoe shoreline

As growth has occurred in Ontario over the past five decades, many areas in and around the GTA have been covered by new development and the natural characteristics of their landscapes have been obliterated.

Because of local, regional and provincial planning policies, this will not occur in Georgina; nature will prevail as form-giver to the cultural landscape.

As a cultural landscape, Georgina is made up of:

- A residential/recreational shoreline on its north and western edges with 29 identified "beaches" and 6 "points"
- The Province's Greenbelt Plan protects the majority of natural heritage and agricultural lands within Georgina

- Two large urban centres, rural and lakeshore communities and hamlets.

### First Nations in Georgina

The First Nations presence in Georgina has been continuous in a self-governing community now encompassing Georgina Island, Snake Island and Fox Island.

While the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation is not directly involved in the development of Georgina's Municipal Cultural Plan, their cultural presence and the continuing influence of their traditional relationship to the land and water adds significant cultural value to the local narrative. They also have developed the first phase of their cultural plan.

### Community of Communities

In 2010, the residents of Georgina produced an illustrated local history entitled, "The Georgina Book: What Citizens Value the Most."

This book describes a "community of communities" whose unique character is derived from "lakefront communities and small rural hamlets interwoven between its three larger communities –Keswick, Sutton and Pefferlaw."

The book also described Georgina's post-1970 identity as "operating as a township in which dispersed communities share a common administration."

As is the case with all such municipalities which have been created on the basis of a provincially mandated amalgamation, Georgina has distinct historic communities that must be respected and considered:

- How will our local historical identities be protected within the larger new municipal entity?
- What are our culturally significant assets today; and how are they to be managed going forward?
- How do we manage the new cultural developments which will occur within the larger municipal entity?

### Urban Centres in a Natural Setting

This report takes the position that Georgina's three larger communities – Keswick, Sutton/Jackson's Point and Pefferlaw -- will continue to maintain their own cultural identities within Georgina as distinct urban places with their own residential neighbourhoods clustered around a commercial/retail core.

## LANDSCAPE AS A CULTURAL ASSET

### Forever Natural

This report also takes the position that Georgina's watersheds and land forms will continue to provide the organizing structure for its cultural narrative; that its protected and agricultural lands will remain in balance with and in counterpoint to its urban areas.

### International Perspective on Landscape

UNESCO's work represents the international benchmark in the protection of cultural assets and, in 2012, the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO celebrates its 40th anniversary. UNESCO's influence in the protection of natural assets has been exercised under two themes -- "cultural landscapes" and "world biosphere reserves" -- both of which provide validation of the cultural significance of landscape in Georgina.

#### *Cultural Landscapes*

The World Heritage Committee of UNESCO has three landscape categories:

- A landscape designed and created intentionally by man
- An "organically evolved landscape" which may be a "relict (or fossil) landscape" or a "continuing landscape"
- An "associative cultural landscape" which may be valued because of the "religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element"

UNESCO's message is clear: landscape is cultural.

#### *World Biosphere Reserves*

The UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves covers internationally designated protected areas that are meant to demonstrate a balanced relationship between man and nature (e.g. encourage sustainable development).

There are several World Biosphere sites in Ontario including the Niagara Escarpment, Georgian Bay and Long Point.

### Socio-cultural Zones

For the purposes of cultural planning, it may be appropriate to consider three socio-cultural planning zones within Georgina:

- The Urban Communities (Keswick, Sutton/Jackson's Point and Pefferlaw)
- The Lake Simcoe Shoreline (and related back lands)
- The Rural Lands (including hamlets, productive and protected lands)

# PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

## PROCESS PRIOR TO MUNICIPAL CULTURAL PLAN

### Consultations in 2010 and 2011

Prior to the start of the process for this present Municipal Cultural Plan (MCP), there had been discussions about the future of culture in Georgina with various stakeholders and interested parties.

Following the establishment of the Cultural Services Division and the engagement of the Cultural Services Manager in 2010, planning forums were held in November of 2010 and in February and March of 2011 and formal interactions occurred in the same time period with the Chamber of Commerce, at the Mayor's Youth Task Forum and others.

The outcomes of these forums and discussions have been summarized by the Town's Cultural Services Division and this summary is included in the Appendix to this present document.

### Cultural Development Themes from Previous Consultations

As interpreted by the present Consultants, the key points which emerged from these public consultations include:

#### *Cultural Identity*

Georgina is a composite of several communities which have had their own identities for a very long time. Georgina needs to be able to articulate a cultural identity in which these historical communities have a place.

#### *The Role of Culture*

It was agreed that culture had a role to play in economic and community development (as exemplified in other communities) but it was not made clear what strategies Georgina could use to further community development.

#### *Sectoral Capacity*

While Georgina is home to many artists, cultural events and assets, the community had no framework to support cultural sector organization, collaboration and development.

#### *Understanding and Communications*

The functions of culture, the role culture in a civil society and culture's potential contribution to community development were found to be generally not well understood. This lack of common understanding is a barrier to communications.

#### *Culture and Quality of Life*

The role which culture might play in social development was also not clear. One side of this issue is the question of access to cultural experiences by all segments of the community. The other side of this issue is opportunities for personal and collective expression through cultural media. This second point is an important one in relation to the lives of teenagers.

#### *Culture, Business and Economic Development*

Apart from sponsorships and donations by local business to local culture, the relationship between cultural development and economic development was not clear especially the extent to which culture is a "cost" versus the extent to which it is an economic generator.

#### *Culture and Tourism*

Georgina's proximity to the GTA makes it an ideal destination for festivals and events. The means of capitalizing on Georgina's proximity to this enormous market need to be developed. In the short term, tourism to Georgina will consist mostly of day-trips because Georgina's hospitality infrastructure is small.

#### *Culture and Recreation*

Georgina's identity has always been closely tied to its Lake Simcoe shoreline and to its watersheds, its shoreline and its entire natural landscape. Given the importance of Georgina's natural heritage, culture should be connected with the unique ecosystem.

#### *Role of the Town*

Potentially, the role of the Town through the Cultural Services Division includes providing administrative support, direct and indirect funding and facilities.

The Town also has a role to play through the Planning and Economic Development departments.

### **MCP CONSULTATIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS**

The present Municipal Cultural Plan process enjoyed the benefit of the results of the conversations about culture in Georgina which had already been going for a year and a half.

Notwithstanding these conversations, it was important for the MCP Consulting team to meet with a sampling of stakeholders and community representatives (most of whom had previously been involved) to verify the outcomes from earlier discussions and to explore relevant issues further.

The MCP consultations included:

- Presentation and Q+A with Mayor, councilors and senior staff
- Individual interviews with Mayor and councilors
- Round table discussion with senior staff
- Meetings with the Steering Committee
- Panel discussions with selected community representatives

### **Cultural Development Themes from MCP Consultations**

Not surprisingly, many of the comments and observations from the previous discussions re-emerged with the following key themes:

#### *Cultural Identity and Place*

Local communities should maintain their own cultural identity within Georgina. There are characteristics that are common to all Georgina and characteristics that are specific to local communities.

Culture should be evident “at the heart of each community.” Each community should have a place or cluster of places that can be identified as cultural focal point or hub. Creation of such cultural focal points should occur as part of downtown revitalization.

#### *Environment*

Culture needs to be connected to the environment not just within Georgina but across York Region.

#### *Inclusion and Accessibility*

There is a need to be aware of the barriers to culture and to create a culture which is open to all – those who are disadvantaged, newcomers and those with diverse ethno-cultural backgrounds, and those of all ages.

Generational differences should be recognized. There is a need to recognize youth culture (boarding, video games, fashion, etc) as legitimate cultural expression and provide a place for it. The use of social media is key to youth participation and to inclusion generally. Transportation is continually cited as a barrier to participation.

#### *Cultural Industries and Economic Benefit*

The business case for cultural industries and their role needs to be better understood. Georgina should have a program for recruitment of cultural industries. The loss of the Red Barn has demonstrated the economic impact (in this case, loss) of culture.

#### *Funding Strategy and Formula*

Although the town provides significant cultural funding to various organizations and special events annually, it does not offer

community development grants. These are not specific to culture. A funding model which strengthens the cultural framework through such grants is required.

## **SURVEYS AND QUESTIONNAIRES**

### **Information Collected by the Town**

The Town took an active role in making contact with various stakeholders throughout the summer of 2012 to solicit opinions on the future of culture in Georgina. This initiative ensured that the opinions of summer residents are reflected in the Plan.

The results of this initiative have been incorporated into the final version of this document together with the results of an online survey.

# OBSERVATIONS

## RESULTS OF THE OVERVIEW

Examining Georgina from a broad planning perspective, a number of themes emerged which validate the results of the consultations and which will inform and shape the Municipal Cultural Plan. These themes include:

### *Cultural Landscape*

Georgina encompasses a bonafide cultural landscape. The exploration of themes related to the stewardship of land and water is a legitimate role for cultural development in Georgina.

### *Urban Centres*

The overwhelming majority of Georgina's urban population will be centred primarily in Keswick and in Jackson's Point/Sutton. Pefferlaw and the nine historic villages will be home to the balance of the population. An independent neighbour, Georgina Island First Nation, shares Georgina's natural history.

### *Cultural Change*

Population growth will not only raise the level of demand for services and opportunities, it will also change the cultural makeup of Georgina.

### *Downtowns and Neighbourhoods*

Growth in the urban centres provides an opportunity to integrate cultural services and providers at the downtown/neighbourhood level.

### *Commuter Community*

In terms of both cultural participation and cultural identity, Georgina will be challenged by the fact that many of its residents will continue to travel outside the community for their work.

### *Seasonal Residents*

Seasonal residents are a small but influential part of the population occupying the shoreline for which Georgina is famous. They represent a culture within a culture.

### *Town's Leadership in Culture*

The Town's Manager of Cultural Services is the focal point for cultural development in Georgina; Georgina Public Libraries, the Georgina Arts Centre, Gallery, the Georgina Pioneer Village and Archives, the Stephen Leacock Theatre and Georgina Military Museum are the major and most active cultural program providers in Georgina.

### *Cultural Sector*

While there are many in the community variously engaged in cultural pursuits, the cultural sector has no collective identity.

### *Cultural Tourism*

Georgina is limited as a destination for cultural tourism by having limited hospitality infrastructure to speak of (therefore only day trip visitors) and no destination attractions except festivals (occurring mainly in the summer)

## CULTURAL DATA BASE

A review of the Town's Cultural Data Base produces a general picture of the types and levels of cultural activities currently taking place in Georgina. (It is understood that the Data Base is a work in progress that will be continually updated.)

### *Visual Arts*

The data base identifies 31 individual visual artists/craftspersons, 3 visual arts festivals and 1 visual arts public facility. There is a notable absence of places and opportunities for learning and practice in visual arts and crafts.

### *Performing Arts*

The data base identifies 26 individual musical performers and 1 live theatre producer, 8 performing arts festivals, 3 schools of dance and 4 providers of music lessons and 1 public open stage, performing arts facility of 295 seats. Georgina appears to rely on outside sources for virtually all performing arts product and other than outdoor festivals has limited facility capacity to host performing arts.

### *Literary*

The Data Base identifies 3 public library branches, 1 bookstore and 3 publishers. The lack of a high profile literary festival, a writers-in-residence program or local writers is notable.

### *Cultural Industries*

There are arguably about 30 cultural industries identified in the Data Base of which the overwhelming majority is suppliers of goods and services with a high preponderance of gift and craft retail outlets. There is a conspicuous lack of design arts and cultural product producers in Georgina.

### *Media Arts*

The Data Base identifies 1 movie theatre. There is a notable lack of any activity in audio, video, new media, digital animation, mixed media arts, etc.

### *Community Festivals*

The Data Base identifies about 10 community festivals (excluding events for retail promotion) of which most are heritage in theme and 3 are related to natural history and harvest. Given the relationship which land and water have to Georgina's identity, the lack of major public events and facilities related to environmental sustainability and to agriculture is notable.

### *Civic Arts and Places*

While the Data Base identifies 6 public parks, there are no public gardens, public art or monuments noted nor are there any urban squares.

## **OBSERVATIONS RELATED TO TRENDS IN CULTURAL PLANNING**

### **Additional Ideas**

Many communities in Ontario are undertaking or have recently completed municipal cultural plans. While the consultation process in Georgina has produced a great many ideas for incorporation into the plan, there are some notable topics which have emerged elsewhere but were not cited or not identified in the same terms in Georgina. These include:

#### *Sectoral Development and Advancement*

Many communities wish to build culture as a contributing sector. Some municipalities have full departments with comprehensive mandates.

#### *Municipal Grants Program*

Many municipalities provide annual grant programs for the purpose of assisting cultural development, maintaining cultural activity levels, ensuring accessibility, etc.

#### *Public Advisory Body*

Many municipalities have Council appointed bodies with well defined terms of reference to advise Council on matters of public policy related to culture. Georgina has an established Heritage Committee in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act.

#### *Sectoral Organization and Advocacy*

In many municipalities, the cultural community has come together to form an administrative organization (e.g., arts council) often formed with the assistance of the municipality.

#### *Maintaining a Volunteer Base*

Culture is but one community sector which relies on volunteers. Finding and retaining volunteers is an ongoing task for every organization. Bringing on new volunteers as the boomer generation ages out is a high priority in the community and non-profit sector.

#### *Municipality as Facility Provider*

In the same way that municipalities provide arenas, pools, playing

fields, many provide facilities for cultural development (e.g., workshops and studios) as well as cultural program delivery (museums, galleries, theatres.)

*Municipality as Recruiter*

Along with other municipalities, Georgina has identified recruitment of cultural industries as an economic development goal but any plan for recruitment requires a parallel accommodations plan to support it.

*The Business Case for Culture*

Everyone recognizes that culture is a quality of life issue. Full partnership between culture and the community at large (especially, the business community) depends on a well articulated case for the impact and benefit of culture beyond the quality of life effects.

*Inclusion of the Private Sector*

The business case will be an inducement for participation by the private sector as representatives of cultural industries; as sponsors, benefactors and program partners; as providers of in-kind resources (human and material), etc.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

# A VISION FOR CULTURE IN GEORGINA

## **Vision Statement (Short Form)**

Culture in Georgina arises from a unique landscape and a balance of urban and rural life. Cultural expression and celebration in Georgina contributes to the local economy, to personal growth and community well-being; it transforms our communities by fostering creativity, the imagination and a shared vision of a better future.

## **Vision Statement (Long Form)**

Cultural vibrancy will make Georgina a better place to do business and it will make a direct contribution to the local economy

Culture in Georgina will continue to be deeply rooted in natural heritage, in the experience of land and water throughout the seasons

Culture in Georgina will continue to be reflected in the perspectives of both urban and rural life, of new communities and old communities

Culture in Georgina will explore the unique relationship between art and nature

While honoring the past, Georgina will continue to encourage and support all forms of cultural expression and celebration as a core community value and as a way of life

Georgina will be a place where many forms of cultural expression can be learned and experienced and where works of art are produced

Cultural experience in Georgina will be open and accessible to all and will contribute to a higher quality of life

Culture in Georgina will also contribute to the maintenance of a cooperative and caring community

# GOALS AND STRATEGIES FOR THE CULTURAL PLAN

## GOAL #1: DEFINE THE ROLE OF THE TOWN

This goal addresses the need to ensure that the role of the Town is clearly defined and understood

Strategies to Achieve Goal #1	Lead		Timing					Financing Required	
	Town	Cultural Sector	YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	Yes	No
Develop, maintain and implement cultural policy	X		X	X	X	X	X		X
Provide statement of goals for cultural policy	X		X						X
Maintain a Council appointed committee to manage cultural policy	X		X	X	X	X	X		X
Through staff, provide facilitation, support and continuity for cultural development in Georgina	X		X	X	X	X	X		X
Maintain and manage the Town's cultural capital assets	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Integrate cultural development goals with economic development goals	X		X						X
Integrate cultural development goals with urban planning goals	X		X						X
Support cultural sector in development of a volunteer corps	X		X	X	X	X	X		X
Maintain and manage the Cultural Data Base	X		X	X	X	X	X		X
Develop and maintain a public art program	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Develop and maintain a cultural awards program	X			X	X	X	X	X	
Develop and maintain a cultural sector funding program	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	

**GOAL #2: INCREASE AWARENESS OF CULTURE IN GEORGINA**

This goal addresses the need to develop a broad and common understanding of the nature and function of culture in Georgina

Strategies to Achieve Goal #2	Lead		Timing					Financing Required	
	Town	Cultural Sector	YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	Yes	No
Develop an online presence to promote cultural literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the components of the cultural sector</li> <li>Describe the organization of the cultural sector</li> <li>Describe the categories and sub-categories for cultural activities and places</li> <li>Develop and maintain a Cultural Asset Data-base and an ongoing cultural map</li> </ul>	X		X					X	
Develop on-line community outreach and social media program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify all potential participant groups</li> <li>Develop initial FAQs about cultural participation</li> <li>Set up and manage “help line”</li> <li>Create capacity to respond, facilitate and follow through</li> </ul>	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Develop a visual identity program for culture in Georgina and incorporate into all municipal communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish budget and timetable</li> <li>Define the design process and terms of reference</li> <li>Recruit and engage graphic design consultant</li> <li>Select preferred logo/wordmark and graphic style</li> <li>Develop a graphic applications manual and standards linking with wayfinding, facility and program signage</li> </ul>	X		X	X				X	

**GOAL #3: PUT CULTURE IN THE HEART OF EVERY COMMUNITY**

This goal addresses the fact that Georgina will always be a “community of communities”

Strategies to Achieve Goal #3	Lead		Timing					Financing Required	
	Town	Cultural Sector	YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	Yes	No
Identify centres for cultural development and engage with local business operators and property owners	X		X						X
Review neighbourhood and local planning goals and existing facility locations with a view to developing clusters of related uses such as cultural nodes	X		X						X
Within these clusters, develop site-specific public realm features to consolidate identity of place	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Look for opportunities for programmable outdoor public space in these clusters	X		X						X
Provide identifying signage, way-finding signage and plaquing in each cluster	X		X	X				X	
Develop a program and identify potential sites for public art projects throughout Georgina	X		X	X	X			X	

**GOAL #4: EXPLORE PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN CULTURAL SECTOR, COMMUNITY AND TOWN FOR CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

This goal addresses the need to coordinate the efforts of the main players in cultural development

Strategies to Achieve Goal #4	Lead		Timing					Financing Required	
	Town	Cultural Sector	YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	Yes	No
Establish the composition of a high level working group to explore the relationship of the main players	X		X						X
Bring representatives together and create draft goals for this relationship	X		X						X
Define the “business case” for culture in Georgina	X		X						X
Identify the role and potential of institutional and non-commercial program providers	X		X						X
Identify the opportunities for cultural industries and commercial program providers	X		X	X					X
Identify the needs of cultural industries for skills training, product development and business practice	X		X	X					X
Identify the needs of cultural sector for human resources including the development of a corps of volunteers	X		X	X					X
Develop recruitment process and goals for development of cultural industries	X		X	X				X	

**GOAL # 5: DEVELOP CAPACITY IN THE CULTURAL SECTOR**

This goal addresses the need for the cultural sector to have the ability to act effectively and independently

Strategies to Achieve Goal #5	Lead		Timing					Financing Required	
	Town	Cultural Sector	YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	Yes	No
This goal and the strategies for its achievement are the responsibility of the cultural sector acting independently of the Town of Georgina:		X	X					X	
Establish a working group to explore organizational development of the cultural sector		X	X					X	
Establish draft goals and terms of reference for a cultural sector organizing body		X	X					X	
Circulate goals and terms of reference to stakeholders for comment		X	X					X	
Explore options for organizational models for a cultural sector organizing body		X	X	X				X	
Identify preferred option(s) and rationale		X		X				X	
Conduct research into cultural sector funding models in other municipalities		X	X					X	
Identify preferred funding model for Georgina		X		X				X	
Adopt a plan for creating the cultural sector organizing body including timetable and budget		X		X				X	
Conduct a “workshop” to finalize the plan		X		X				X	
Recruit a “Council of Champions” to develop the cultural sector organizing body		X		X				X	
Create a communications plan for the cultural sector organizing body development process and launch		X		X				X	
Establish a working relationship with the Town		X		X				X	

**GOAL #6: EMBRACE NATURAL HERITAGE AS CULTURE**

This goal addresses the incorporation of natural heritage as a significant force in Georgina’s identity – not just in the past and present, but also in the future

Strategies to Achieve Goal #6	Lead		Timing					Financing Required	
	Town	Cultural Sector	YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	Yes	No
Through the Town’s Environmental Advisory Committee, establish the composition of a high level working group to explore the relationship of natural heritage to culture in Georgina <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring representatives together for a workshop on the future of natural heritage in Georgina</li> <li>• Consider the relationship of various UNESCO programs (Biosphere, Cultural Landscape, Historic Urban Landscape)</li> <li>• Create a draft vision statement for natural heritage in Georgina</li> </ul>	X		X	X					X
Suggest ways to coordinate the various natural heritage stewardship organizations in regard to education and advocacy	X			X					X
Suggest program and administrative linkages to other aspects of Georgina culture	X			X					X
Develop a draft action plan and communications plan for the next two years	X			X				X	

**GOAL #7: CREATE A CULTURAL PROGRAM INVESTMENT PLAN**

This goal addresses the need to finance cultural development

Strategies to Achieve Goal #7	Lead		Timing					Financing Required	
	Town	Cultural Sector	YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	Yes	No
Define the proposition for “investment” in culture in Georgina and coordinate with the Town’s economic development goals	X	X	X						X
Analyse current use of municipal resources and provide recommended strategies and best use of resources	X		X						X
Compare cultural funding in other similar municipalities	X	X	X						X
Forecast capacity and growth of municipal resources in Georgina for next ten years	X		X						X
Identify examples of non-governmental strategies for supporting cultural development	X	X	X						X
Engage local business in a discussion of shared vision and goals	X	X	X	X					X
Develop draft protocols and expectations for local partnerships with cultural providers	X	X		X					X
Identify the preferred role of cultural sector organizing body in determining financing priorities and distribution of funds	X	X		X					X

**GOAL #8: CREATE A CULTURAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN**

This goal addresses the need for purpose-built facilities for the development of cultural skills as well as for the presentation of cultural products and events

Strategies to Achieve Goal #8	Lead		Timing					Financing Required	
	Town	Cultural Sector	YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	Yes	No
Create an inventory and detailed description of cultural facilities in Georgina	X		X						X
Create cultural facility SWOT analysis	X		X						X
Compare Georgina to similar communities with respect to cultural facilities	X		X						X
Prepare draft vision statement and standards for cultural facilities in Georgina	X		X						X
Develop short, medium and long terms goals for cultural facilities	X			X					X
Identify capital financing sources and development tools (incentives, bonusing, mixed use)	X			X					X
Create a high level leadership group to develop strategies and partnerships	X			X	X	X		X	
Identify the top priority project and begin planning	X			X	X			X	

# CULTURAL PLAN: COMMUNICATIONS

## OUTLINE OF COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The completion of the process of developing the Municipal Cultural Plan represents an important opportunity to raise public awareness and generate new interest in culture in Georgina.

### Communicating to Council

- Prepare staff report
- Presentation to Council
- Adoption by Council and directions to proceed

### Communicating to Stakeholders

- Distribute the Plan to all participants and stakeholders
- Convene a meeting to discuss the implementation of the Cultural Plan

### Communicating to the General Public

- Post the Cultural Plan on the municipal website
- Prepare a “messaging” outline for use in all communications
- Prepare and send a media release following Council’s adoption of the Cultural Plan
- Prepare to respond to public comment

### Launch the Cultural Plan

- Organize a “ribbon cutting” event for the Cultural Plan
- Make the event a demonstration and celebration of culture

# MONITORING AND ANNUAL EVALUATION

## ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STATE OF CULTURE IN GEORGINA

An annual review process should be established to track the progress of the Cultural Plan.

A “State of Culture in Georgina” report should be provided to all stakeholders and interested parties. The release of this annual report should occur during the annual cross-Canada Culture Days event in September.

Reporting will be organized by the following sub-sectors:

- Natural Heritage
- Cultural Heritage
- Living Culture
- Cultural Businesses
- Festivals and Special Events

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR EVALUATING THE PROGRESS OF THE PLAN

The performance indicators for the annual State of Culture in Georgina report may include:

### Participation Levels

- Overall number of attendees at cultural events and activities
- Overall number of citizens involved in organizing cultural events
- Overall number of cultural volunteers

### Growth in Cultural Product and Offerings

- Overall number of cultural events
- Number and type of new events since last report
- Overall number of cultural businesses
- Number and type of new businesses since last report

### Distribution of Cultural Events and Activities

- Overall number of event and activity sites
- Distribution of events and activities by location
- Distribution of events and activities by date

### Impact of Cultural Events and Activities

- Cultural profile: level and types of media traffic related to culture
- Cultural sector employment profile
- Number of private businesses supporting culture
- Types of support

**Cultural Sector Capacity and Performance**

- Initiatives undertaken for cultural advocacy and public awareness
- Initiatives undertaken for integrated planning and coordination
- Description of overall marketing and promotional program
- Description of sectoral capacity building and administration
- Growth in cultural data management

**Access and Inclusion**

- Initiatives undertaken to increase access to programs, events and activities
- Initiatives related to newcomer integration

**Cultural Facilities and Infrastructure**

- Status report on heritage buildings and sites
- Status report on public presentation facilities and sites
- Status report on facilities for skills development and training

**BACKGROUND REPORTS**

# SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS CONSULTATIONS

## MUNICIPAL CULTURAL PLANNING ACTIVITIES PRIOR TO 2012

In the summer of 2010, Andrew and Barbara Sibbald, proprietors of the Briars Resort in Jackson's Point, attended a Municipal Cultural Planning conference in Barrie. Inspired by stories of how other municipalities had leveraged their cultural assets to support economic development agendas, the Sibbalds invited key stakeholders – including business owners, cultural professionals, residents, and municipal staff – to form a cultural advisory committee, with the purpose of investigating how Georgina could mirror the experiences of municipalities that had embraced Municipal Cultural Planning.

Efforts to draw awareness to Georgina's underappreciated cultural resources coincided with the re-naming of the Town of Georgina's Leisure Services Department to Recreation, Parks & Culture, and the creation of a new Cultural Services Division guided by a Cultural Services Manager.

The initial meetings of the advisory group included:

- Andrew and Barbara Sibbald, Briars Resort
- Margaret Hyvarinen, Southshore Community Broadband
- Heather Fullerton and Suzanne Smoke, Georgina Arts Centre & Gallery
- Mary Baxter, Director of Library Services
- Karyn Stone and Karen Palmer, Economic Development Division, Town of Georgina
- Phil Rose-Donahoe, Manager of Cultural Services, Town of Georgina
- Catherine Campbell, Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Province of Ontario

In November, 2010, the group organized a conference to highlight culture's capacity to regenerate a community through a range of inventive economic development strategies.

Titled, *Redefining Culture in Georgina: Exploring the potential for*

prosperity and a better life by nurturing our cultural assets, the forum took place at the Briars Resort and featured Municipal Cultural Planning Consultant, Greg Baeker, of AuthentiCity. Dr. Baeker provided an overview of key Municipal Cultural Planning concepts and provided case studies of how Municipal Cultural Planning had transformed numerous communities.

Notable participants at the first forum included the Mayor, two Councilors, the Chief Administrative Officer, the Director of Recreation, Parks and Culture, the Director of Planning, representatives from various businesses and the Chamber of Commerce, cultural organizations, and Georgina Island First Nation.

The response to the first forum was overwhelmingly positive and provided momentum for a second forum on February 1st, 2011, which explored the potential of Georgina's many festivals and events to contribute to the community's quality of life and economic development prospects. In recognition of the potential for Georgina to become a festival and event destination within the Greater Toronto Area and beyond, the nearly 70 participants discussed how Georgina's festival and event organizers could better collaborate by sharing resources and expertise.

A third forum was held on March 29th, 2011, brought together Georgina's artists to explore how they could further contribute to "culture-led economic and community development."

In addition to the three forums, the Manager of Cultural Services presented at a Chamber of Commerce Breaknet on April 6, 2011, to discuss how business owners can contribute to ongoing efforts to create a culture-led economic development strategy in Georgina.

He, along with the Economic Development Officer, also attended the Mayor's Youth Task Forum on April 13th to discuss some of the challenges teens face regarding access to culture.

The community engagement strategy undertaken between Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 highlighted a number of key concerns, including:

- Limited access to overnight accommodations, making Georgina a less-attractive destination for multi-day

visits by outsiders

- Inability of our cultural festivals and events to attract large audiences, bring in sustainable revenue streams, sponsorship levels and media attention
- Lack of collaboration among cultural professionals and the small business community
- An inability to agree upon a coherent defining characteristic of our communities that can be marketed for tourism purposes
- Lack of an arts advisory council to advocate for the interests of our cultural community
- The need to better understand how recreation and culture are intimately connected and how in Georgina this relationship is defined by access to Lake Simcoe
- The need to apply a cultural lens to various social issues such as youth retention, lack of public transportation, and environmental concerns
- A misunderstanding of the Town of Georgina's vision for culture and its role in implementing this vision in collaboration with its community partners and other town departments

# THE CASE FOR NATURAL HERITAGE IN THE CULTURE OF GEORGINA

## COMMUNITY PLANNING CONTEXT IN ONTARIO

### Within the Four Pillars Planning Framework

Within the public policy context in the province of Ontario, cultural planning has recently taken a place of prominence as one of the “four pillars” of community sustainability which are:

- Social pillar
- Economic pillar
- Environmental pillar
- Cultural pillar

The work which has been undertaken to develop a Municipal Cultural Plan for the Town of Georgina fully subscribes to and supports this planning framework.

### Beyond the Four Pillars Planning Framework

Every community has a cultural identity which contains features which are unique to that locale. In some cases, one feature will be prominent above all others. For example, in Quebec City, it is its historic Old Town. In Georgina, it is the natural heritage and ecosystem.

## INTERNATIONAL PLANNING PERSPECTIVE

### UNESCO Framework

The assessment of Georgina’s cultural assets which was undertaken in the initial phase of the work on Georgina’s Municipal Cultural Plan identified natural heritage as a significant force in Georgina’s cultural identity.

The ecosystem of Georgina determined its original settlement forms and it will – through legislation and protective policy – continue to shape Georgina into the foreseeable future.

While the Municipal Cultural Plan for Georgina will embrace all the principles and practices of cultural planning in the province of Ontario, the significance of the local ecosystem opens Georgina

to connections with the approach to cultural planning which is practiced internationally through the networks and under the aegis of UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee.

While any UNESCO affiliation is non-binding at the local level, the value of its perspective and the access to knowledge which it provides cannot be underestimated.

This report therefore recommends that the Town of Georgina explore the following UNESCO programs in furtherance of its Municipal Cultural Plan.

### Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Program

THE MAB program promotes inter-disciplinary approaches to management, research and education in ecosystem conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

The World Network of Biosphere Reserves is a UNESCO platform for sharing knowledge and experiences related to environmental sustainability. Participating Reserves develop innovative approaches to achieving a balanced relationship between humans and nature through both policies and management practices and they share their experiences with others.

The recent emphasis in MAB Reserves is on ecosystem conservation through appropriate usage as places where livelihood is sustained – Biosphere Reserves even include urban greenbelts.

Biosphere Reserves in Canada include Waterton Lakes, Niagara Escarpment, Long Point, Georgian Bay, Charlevoix, Southwest Nova and others.

### Cultural Landscapes

The concept of a cultural landscape differs from that of a biosphere in that a cultural landscape is defined specifically by the effects of human intervention on a distinct geographical area. Human culture is the agent; the natural landscape is the medium; a cultural landscape is the result.

UNESCO provides three levels of differentiation of cultural landscapes:

- Those significantly shaped by human intervention
- Those where human intervention is balanced with nature
- Those least affected by human intervention

The cultural landscape of Georgina is characterized by a balance between human needs and nature which is a determining factor in its past, its present and its future.

### **Historic Urban Landscapes (HUL) Program**

UNESCO's HUL program is the newest of its approaches to world heritage conservation and the one which has most in common with heritage planning in urban settings as practiced in Ontario.

Historic Urban Landscapes are defined by the quality of the architectural and physical environment, by the persistence of a sense of place and by the concentration of historic and artistic events that form the basis for the identity of a people.

While it shares many of the values and goals of Ontario practice, the HUL perspective is much broader and more focused on research, trend analysis and the integrated management of cultural resources in an urban setting.

Specifically, HUL recognizes the continually evolving relationships between heritage conservation and urban growth and between urban settlements and their rural environments.

HUL has been developed as a mechanism for protecting "historic cities" but it is also a toolkit of ideas and practices which can be applied effectively in communities such as Georgina.

# COMMUNITY BACKGROUND REPORT

## SIERRA PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT BACKGROUND REPORT SECTIONS

Report is appended as a separate file

# CULTURAL DATA BASE

## CULTURAL RESOURCES IN GEORGINA

### **Cultural Resource Mapping**

Prior to the engagement of consultants for the development of a Municipal Cultural Plan, the Town of Georgina had begun baseline data aggregation as the first phase of a cultural mapping project. Additional data related to Georgina's tangible and intangible cultural assets was accumulated in the research phase of the Cultural Plan and was provided to the Town for incorporation into its GIS maps and cultural tourism website.

The ongoing maintenance and development of the cultural resource data base is being managed by the Town's Economic Development and Tourism Division.

# INTERVIEWS AND PARTICIPANTS

The following individuals participated in the development of the Municipal Cultural Plan:

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