

Planning for Cultural Infrastructure on a Municipal or Regional Scale:

Key Frameworks and Issues from the Literature

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June 2007

Creative City Network of Canada



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Abstract: This paper explores the contributions of academic research and professional planning literature to understanding various approaches to, and issues involved in, planning for cultural infrastructure on a municipal or regional scale. Three key analytical frameworks emerge from the literature: *planning perspectives* on cultural infrastructure, *planning approaches* to cultural infrastructure, and *development strategies* for providing cultural infrastructure. The paper suggests that a broadly based, long-term planning approach for cultural infrastructure at a municipal or regional scale would help to achieve balance and coordination among these perspectives, approaches, and development strategies and help address key issues and challenges such as: (1) broadly defining cultural infrastructure and its interests, (2) building organizational and system capacities, (3) addressing issues of access and diversity, (4) considering various planning scales and coordinating planning efforts, (5) mediating potentially competing interests, and (6) balancing development strategies for providing cultural infrastructure.

Résumé : Ce document examine les contributions de recherches universitaires ainsi que de documentation sur la planification professionnelle pour comprendre les différentes approches et les différents enjeux en matière de planification de l'infrastructure culturelle à l'échelle municipale ou régionale. Trois cadres analytiques émergent de la documentation : les perspectives de planification de l'infrastructure culturelle, les approches de planification à l'infrastructure culturelle, et les stratégies de développement pour offrir une infrastructure culturelle. Le document suggère qu'une approche de planification générale et à long terme en matière d'infrastructure culturelle à l'échelle municipale ou régionale pourrait aider à atteindre un équilibre et assurer une meilleure coordination entre ces perspectives, approches et stratégies de développements, et à aborder les enjeux et les défis clés tels : (1) définir globalement l'infrastructure culturelle et ses intérêts, (2) créer des capacités organisationnelles et de réseau, (3) aborder les enjeux d'accès et de diversité, (4) envisager les différentes échelles de planification et coordonner les efforts de planification, (5) arbitrer les intérêts concurrentiels possibles, et (6) équilibrer les stratégies de développement pour offrir une infrastructure culturelle.

Introduction

The importance of investment and innovation in culture, knowledge, and creativity has been a growing focus in discussions about the development of cities and communities. This can be observed both in literature (e.g., Florida, 2002, 2005; Landry, 2000; Musterd & Ostendorf, 2004; Pratt, 2004a, 2004b; Pumhiran, 2005; Zukin, 1995) and in practice. Municipal and regional planners are increasingly presented with the challenge of creating or fostering a vibrant, *creative* community. One of the key factors in this

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scenario is *space* – space to produce, create, experiment and innovate; space to rehearse, perform, exhibit and preserve; space to interpret, learn, engage and share, and so forth. Planning for these spaces is integral to a community’s cultural and creative development – as well as its ongoing vitality, cohesion, identity and sense of place.

In general, there is a lack of municipal or regional planning tradition for the provision of cultural infrastructure, and there has been little analysis of planning perspectives, approaches, development strategies and issues in this area.¹ Literature on municipal or regional planning for cultural infrastructure is scant. Moreover, a quick survey of cultural plans reveals that a systematic approach to planning for cultural infrastructure on a municipal or regional scale is more the exception than the rule. More frequently, cultural infrastructure appears to be planned for and developed on an incremental, reactive, opportunistic, and site-specific basis.

This paper responds to this situation by bringing together various planning perspectives, approaches, development strategies, and issues that could inform planning for cultural infrastructure at a municipal or regional scale. Drawing from literature on cultural facilities, cultural planning, and infrastructure planning, three key interconnected analytical frameworks emerge:

1. *Planning perspectives* on cultural infrastructure (building-centred vs. people-centred, clustering vs. decentralization)
2. *Planning approaches* to cultural infrastructure (site-specific vs. community-wide, integrated vs. culture-specific)
3. *Development strategies* for providing cultural infrastructure (centralized vs. decentralized, integrated vs. specialized)

Broadly based, long-term planning for cultural infrastructure at a municipal or regional scale is needed in order to achieve balance and coordination among these perspectives, approaches, and development strategies. As part of this more comprehensive approach, six key issues or challenges appear:

1. Broadly defining cultural infrastructure and its interests
2. Building organizational and system capacities
3. Addressing issues of access and diversity
4. Considering various planning scales and coordinating planning efforts
5. Mediating potentially competing interests
6. Balancing development strategies for providing cultural infrastructure

This article explores the state of research addressing these analytical frameworks and key issue/challenges areas.

¹ For example, in the context of cultural districts as a municipal strategy for organizing cultural facilities and spaces, John McCarthy notes: “While it is clear that culture-led approaches to regeneration can deliver outcomes for both designated areas and wider cities, it is equally clear that the underlying conceptual frameworks are under-developed, with persistent areas of contention over both basic principles and good practice in relation to cultural clustering” (2006, p. 406).

Key frameworks in planning for cultural infrastructure

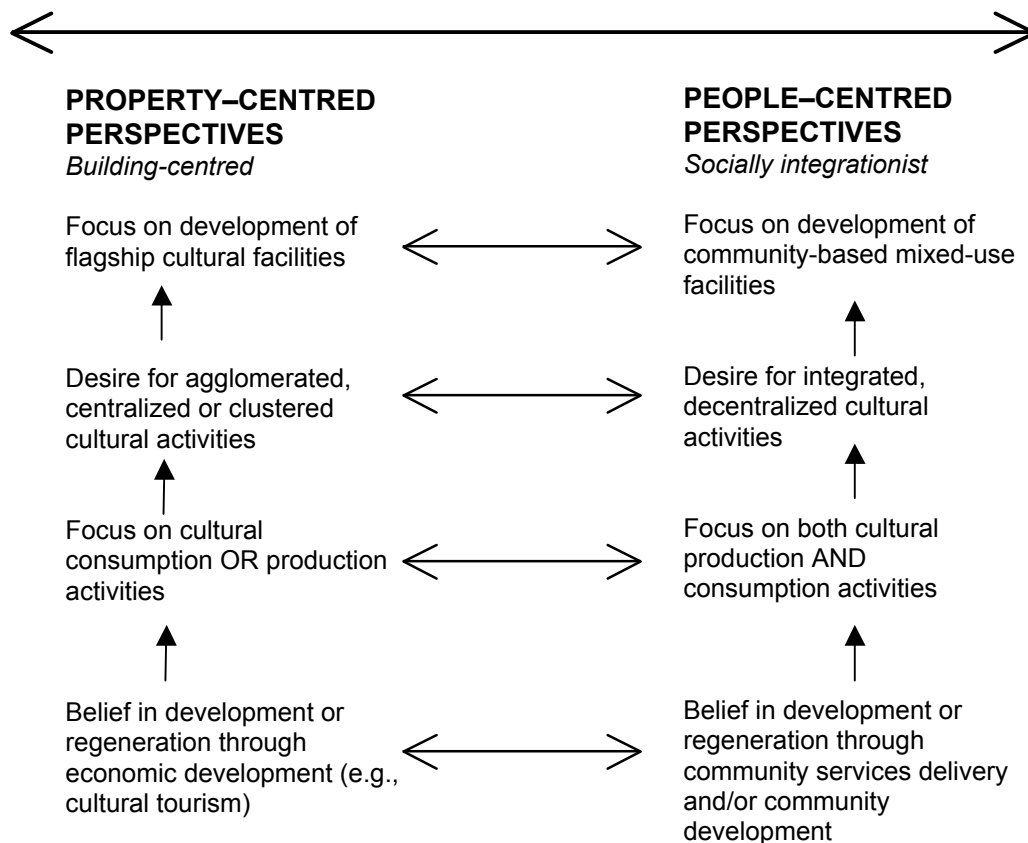
Planning perspectives on cultural infrastructure

Building-centred vs. people-centred

In their analysis of the urban spatialization of cultural production and consumption, Newman & Smith (2000) identified two dominant perspectives (or visions) that appear to influence most planning for tangible cultural infrastructure: *building-centred* and *people-centred* or *socially integrationist* (see Figure 1). The *building-centred* perspective focuses on property development and/or heritage preservation – particularly the development and/or preservation of flagship cultural facilities usually for the purposes of cultural consumption and economic development. The *people-centred* (or *socially integrationist*) perspective is predominantly motivated by community development objectives and focuses on the organization of both cultural production and consumption activities in an integrated manner.²

Of course, elements of both perspectives are often simultaneously evident in planning for cultural infrastructure. Indeed, the two perspectives are most usefully conceived as (roughly) corresponding sets of perspectives at different ends of a continuum.

Figure 1: General perspectives that influence planning for tangible cultural infrastructure



Derived from Newman & Smith (2000).

² Russo & van der Borg (2002) compare these planning perspectives in a selection of European municipalities.

There are several examples of municipal developments in Canada that attempt to pursue both planning visions. For example, Ben Franklin Place in Nepean, Ontario, was developed as a flagship property serving both city-wide economic development needs *and* neighbourhood cultural needs. The development combines a diverse blend of facilities – including a four-floor office tower, 980-seat theatre, small art gallery, library, skateboard park, fragrance gardens, community rooms, and commemorative areas. The Roundhouse Community Arts and Recreation Centre in Vancouver, British Columbia, was developed within the cluster of buildings that originally served as the Canadian Pacific Railway’s western terminus. The development preserves a regional historic landmark and serves as both an important regional *and* neighbourhood facility for arts, culture, recreation, and social services.

Clustering vs. decentralization

The core or leading purposes for development or regeneration tend to correspond with planning perspectives and strategies to cluster or to decentralize development. A planning focus on development or regeneration through (cultural) economic development tends to lead to a strategy of *clustering* infrastructure in support of either cultural consumption (e.g., an entertainment district) *or* cultural production activities (e.g., a new media district).³ Focus is then typically placed on the development of flagship properties and/or facilities for the development of cultural industries (e.g., tourist attractions, film offices, screen production stages, etc.). Planning at this end of the continuum runs the risk of being dominated by property-based or industry-based interests such as: building characteristics, project glamour and profile, architectural reputation, development of specific cultural sectors, and financing and fundraising abilities. Subsequently, some broader community and organizational needs, missions, markets, and programmatic ends; planning for the ability of resident organizations to maintain the infrastructure; cultural participation as a recreational or leisure activity; and consideration of the impacts of new infrastructure on resident organizations may be neglected.⁴

On the other end of the spectrum, a planning perspective that focuses on development or regeneration through *community cultural development* or delivery of cultural services usually leads to a *more decentralized* strategy of providing infrastructure in support of both cultural consumption *and* cultural production.⁵ Planning then tends to focus on developing and/or integrating cultural activities into community-based, mixed-use facilities (such as community arts centres or the development of integrated cultural facilities within other community facilities like schools and churches) that serve a specific community of interest or geographic neighbourhood. With a focus on the democratization of cultural participation and the support and development of grassroots cultural organizations, other objectives such as global competitiveness, encouraging economies of scale, and city branding receive less attention.

Planning approaches to cultural infrastructure

Types of plans

Within the context of broad perspectives or visions, municipalities pursue the planning for cultural infrastructure through a variety of planning mechanisms, which are articulated in different types of plans. Based on a preliminary survey of municipal and regional cultural plans and Craig Dreeszen’s (2006) study of more general cultural planning approaches, a typology of common approaches to planning for cultural infrastructure can be constructed.

³ See Scott (2004).

⁴ See Nonprofit Finance Fund (2003).

⁵ For example, see Gilroy & Booth (1999) and Walker & Sherwood (2003).

Five *more common* approaches or types of plans used to plan for cultural infrastructure are:

1. *Component within a broader cultural plan* – planning for cultural infrastructure as a component of a broad cultural plan
2. *Cultural district plans* – planning for concentration of cultural infrastructure in a single geographic neighbourhood
3. *Issue-specific plans* – planning for cultural infrastructure in relation to a specific issue (e.g., infrastructure for new media industry development, live-work studios, etc.)
4. *Organization-specific plans* – planning for cultural infrastructure needs of a specific cultural organization
5. *Facility, property, or site-specific plans* – planning for a specific cultural facility, property, or site

Five *less common* approaches or types of plans that address cultural infrastructure planning are:

1. *Neighbourhood or community-specific plans* – planning for cultural infrastructure in a specific neighbourhood or community
2. *Regional cultural infrastructure plans* – regional planning for cultural infrastructure
3. *Comprehensive community arts infrastructure plans* – broadly based, long-term planning for cultural infrastructure in support of community-engaged arts and culture and community cultural development
4. *Comprehensive cultural infrastructure plans* – broadly based, long-term planning for cultural infrastructure needs and aspirations, approached holistically from the perspective of the entire cultural ecosystem
5. *Integrated planning strategies* – planning for cultural infrastructure as an integrated component in the planning for more general municipal or regional zoning, infrastructure provision, and/or development strategies

Site-specific vs. community-wide | Integrated vs. culture-specific

These various approaches to planning for cultural infrastructure can be roughly mapped according to *geographic scale* and to *degree of integration* with policy decisions in other sectors (see Figure 2). These approaches are not mutually exclusive, serve different planning functions, and can work well in concert towards comprehensive planning for cultural infrastructure in order to serve a broad spectrum of community objectives.

State of planning

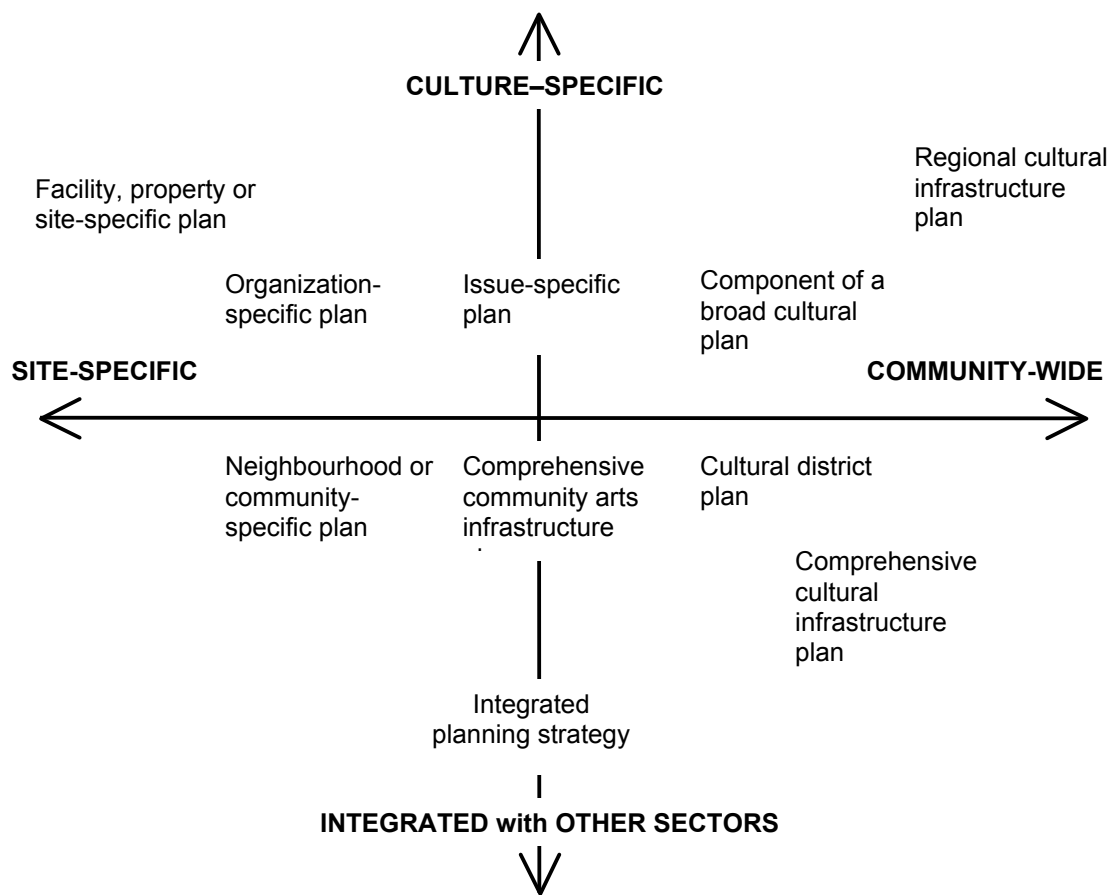
While cultural infrastructure is addressed through a wide range of planning approaches, it is not often considered in a comprehensive or systematic manner. Cultural infrastructure is often a component of broader municipal or regional cultural plans, but its consideration is often brief and limited to statements of intent, inventories of current and proposed cultural facilities, and/or specific plans for individual cultural facilities. In most cases, the focus is the development and maintenance of individual municipal properties (especially consumption-based facilities such as libraries, museums, archives, heritage buildings, galleries, and performance venues) and the support of individual cultural organizations/institutions.

A growing number of plans also provide for the development of cultural districts, that is, the geographic clustering of cultural infrastructure for the purposes of cultural tourism, economic development, and/or

urban regeneration.⁶ However, consideration of cultural infrastructure in comprehensive planning for broader, long-term community needs and aspirations is rare.

Moreover, except in the case of libraries, cultural infrastructure is rarely considered as a standard component in the more general planning for municipal or regional infrastructure. Unlike planning for the provision of other public community amenities (such as community centres, libraries, parks and schools), per-capita or per-square-kilometre standards or targets for the provision of cultural infrastructure are rarely established.⁷ A notable exception is the City of Vancouver’s policy of community development cost charges, which include culture in its list of community amenities.

Figure 2: Comparison of planning approaches/types of plans



⁶ See Dreeszen (1999), Mommaas (2004), Montgomery (2003), and Nonprofit Finance Fund (2003).

⁷ There are a few exceptions to this rule. For example, the City of Shanghai uses population-based objectives to plan for the provision of cultural infrastructure (see Government of Hong Kong, 1999).

Development strategies for providing cultural infrastructure

Types of cultural facilities

On the ground, these planning perspectives and approaches translate into several basic development strategies for the provision of cultural infrastructure. Wester's (1992) list of six types of cultural facilities commonly developed by local arts agencies in the United States may be adapted to serve as an initial typology of common municipal development strategies for providing cultural infrastructure:

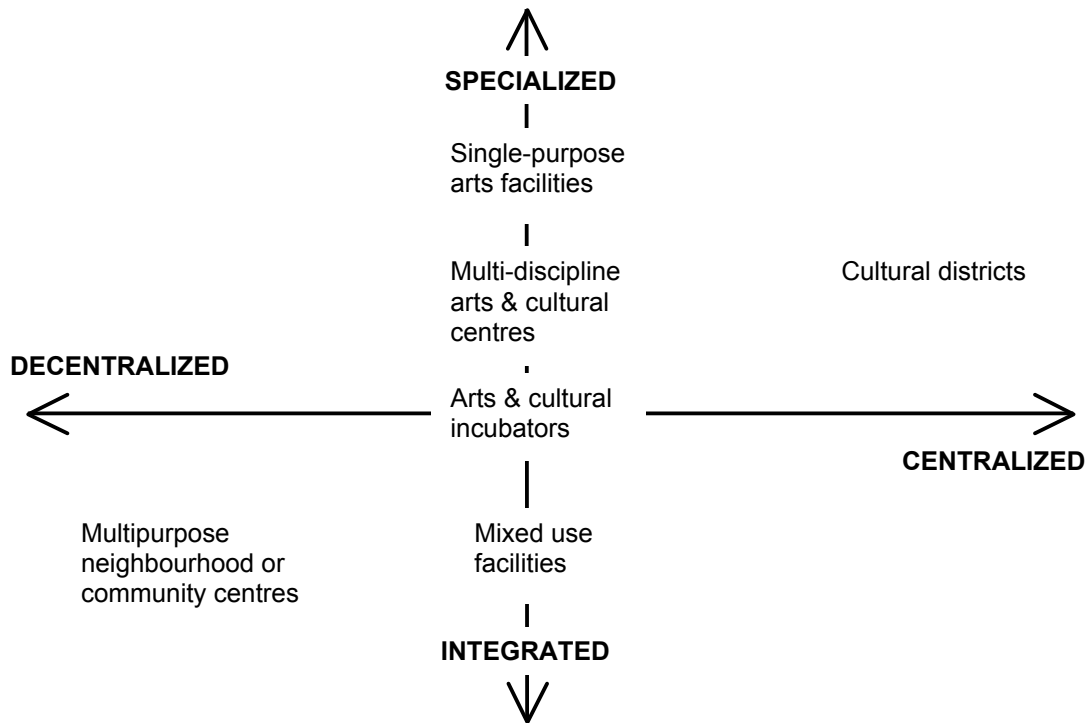
1. *Single-purpose arts facilities* (i.e., a municipal or neighbourhood gallery, theatre, or museum).
2. *Multi-discipline arts and cultural centres*, such as a municipal arts centre, a community arts centre, or a cultural centre serving the cultural activities of a particular ethno-cultural community (e.g., a single venue that provides space for dance, music and visual arts or a facility that provides space for video, film and music production).
3. *Multipurpose neighbourhood or community centres* in which cultural activities are integrated with other social and recreational services (e.g., a community centre housing an aquatic centre, gymnasias, performance venue, art workshop spaces, library and daycare).
4. *Mixed-use facilities* that provide infrastructure for many social and economic activities, including cultural activities (e.g., a complex that provides space for offices, restaurants, retail stores, performance venues and a museum).
5. *Cultural districts, campuses or complexes* for cultural production and/or consumption activities in a spatially-concentrated area or protected heritage district (e.g., an arts district, a fashion design district, a preserved historic ethno-cultural district or a new media campus).
6. *Arts and cultural incubators* that provide infrastructure in one location for several related cultural activities, and supporting activities, in order to promote organizational development, creativity, and innovation (e.g., a facility that houses various performance venues, rehearsal studios, offices for diverse performing arts organizations, meeting rooms, box office facilities and design studios).

As mentioned earlier, cultural districts have received increasing attention as a development strategy primarily in the service of economic development (e.g., cultural tourism) goals. Arts and cultural incubators have also been increasingly promoted – especially for the re-use of formerly industrial or heritage properties.

Centralized vs. decentralized | Integrated vs. specialized

Among these different development strategies, the tensions between *centralization and decentralization*, and between *specialization and integration*, are apparent (see Figure 3). More centralized and specialized development strategies usually correspond with more building-centred, economic-driven planning perspectives. Meanwhile, more decentralized and integrated development strategies tend to pursue more people-centred, community development planning objectives.

Figure 3: Comparison of cultural development strategies



Moving towards more comprehensive planning for cultural infrastructure

Arguments for developing a more comprehensive planning approach

The literature on cultural infrastructure, cultural planning, and infrastructure planning provides several arguments for developing a more comprehensive, broadly based, and long-term approach to planning for cultural infrastructure, including:

1. Growing consideration of culture as a “fourth pillar” in the planning of sustainable communities, which implies a more broadly-based, long-term and holistic approach to infrastructure planning (e.g., Creative City Network of Canada, 2005a, 2005b; Hawkes, 2001);
2. Increasing recognition of diversity, complexity and interconnectedness within the cultural sector and the interdependency between social, economic, environmental and cultural activities (e.g., Chang & Lee, 2003; Evans, 2005; Government of Hong Kong, 1999; Musterd & Ostendorf, 2004; Pratt, 2004a, 2004b; Van der Groep, 2004; Walker & Sherwood, 2003);
3. Growing emphasis on planning for “creative communities” – community-wide or region-wide environments that foster creativity, collaboration, innovation, and the growth of cultural and knowledge-based industries (e.g., Florida, 2002, 2005; Landry, 2000; Musterd & Ostendorf, 2004; Pratt, 2004a, 2004b; Pumhiran, 2005; Zukin, 1995);

4. Growing emphasis on planning for more “complete” communities that meet the needs and aspirations of residents to live, work and recreate within their individual neighbourhoods (e.g., City of Nanaimo, 2003; Curran, 2003; Greater Vancouver Regional District, 1996; Greater Vancouver Regional District Social Issues Subcommittee, 2001; Guelph Civic League, 2006);
5. Calls for the democratization of culture and cultural planning (e.g., Brugg Bawden, 2002; Gilroy & Booth, 1999; Mennell, 1979; Walker & Sherwood, 2003); and
6. Increasing recognition of the critical importance of addressing less tangible infrastructure needs such as organizational capacities, financing and creation of the organizational conditions that foster creativity, collaboration, and innovation (e.g., Chang & Lee, 2003; Mommaas, 2003; Musterd & Ostendorf, 2004; Nonprofit Finance Fund, 2003; Pumhiran, 2005; Russo & Borg, 2002).

Two additional arguments for a comprehensive approach to planning for cultural infrastructure emerge from the key frameworks:

7. The need to balance different perspectives, approaches, and development strategies in order to address multiple (and sometimes competing) community needs and aspirations; and
8. The frequent lack of coordination and integration between individual plans that address cultural infrastructure, and between these plans and those for other municipal and regional infrastructure.

The need for balance

Many authors and cultural planners call for equal attention to different planning scales and to both centralized *and* de-centralized development strategies (e.g., Government of Hong Kong, 1999; Pumhiran, 2005; van der Groep, 2004); to both cultural production *and* cultural consumption (e.g., Pratt, 2004a; Evans, 2006); and to the interconnectedness between cultural infrastructure and other infrastructure in the community (e.g., Musterd & Ostendorf, 2004; Pumhiran, 2005). For example, the Government of Hong Kong’s 1999 study on the needs for cultural facilities, which informs the development of new planning standards and guidelines, recommends that planning for cultural infrastructure addresses and balances multiple community needs and aspirations:

- the needs and aspirations for *both* centralization (i.e., arts, cultural, entertainment, and cultural tourism districts) and de-centralization (i.e., cultural uses in non-dedicated facilities);
- the needs and aspirations for *both* “horizontal agglomeration” (clustering of similar cultural activities) and “vertical agglomeration” (clustering of diverse activities – cultural and non-cultural);
- the needs and aspirations of *both* cultural production (supply-side or artists) and consumption (demand-side or audience); and
- the needs and aspirations of all activities that contribute to cultural production and consumption (e.g., communications and transportation, service facilities such as rehearsal space and storage, ancillary facilities such as restaurants and box offices, and demand-side facilities such as arts education facilities, etc.).

Similarly, Peter Newman & Ian Smith (2000) recommend a more comprehensive agenda in planning for cultural infrastructure – notably a planning approach that attempts to: (a) deal with both production and consumption issues at a number of spatial scales; (b) address labour-market issues, property issues and finance issues; (c) possibly rework local place identities; and (d) mediate conflict and shape the distribution of benefits.

Key issues and challenges

The academic and professional literature on cultural infrastructure, cultural planning, and infrastructure planning raises several key issues and challenges involved in more comprehensive planning for cultural infrastructure on a municipal or regional scale:

1. *Broadly defining cultural infrastructure and its interests* – including the full range of a community’s potential cultural infrastructure amenities and assets, cultural production *and* cultural consumption chains, and the connections between them
2. *Building organizational and systemic capacities* – addressing critical “intangible” infrastructure issues (e.g., organizational capacities; communications and community networks; fostering innovation, collaboration, and a creative milieu; talent development, succession, and labour markets; and property and finance issues)
3. *Addressing issues of access and diversity* – to infrastructure for both cultural production and consumption
4. *Considering various planning scales and coordinating planning efforts* – planning scales in terms of geography, time, and integration with other policy sectors
5. *Mediating potentially competing interests* – including economic and social or community development objectives) and the distribution of benefits (e.g., Brugg Bawden, 2002; Newman & Smith, 2000)
6. *Balancing development strategies for providing cultural infrastructure* – both centralized and decentralized strategies, and both culture-specific and more integrated strategies

Addressing some or all of these key issues and challenges would significantly expand the planning exercise for cultural infrastructure beyond the incremental, reactive, opportunistic, and site-specific norm.

1. Broadly defining cultural infrastructure and its interests

The term *cultural infrastructure* is sometimes used in reference to only *built* cultural facilities (i.e., buildings), but the literature suggests that the infrastructure required to support artistic and cultural activities in a community comprises a much more diverse range of amenities and assets. A community’s *tangible* cultural infrastructure not only includes facilities like theatres, libraries, museums, studios, and archives, but also infrastructure such as outdoor performance venues, public squares, festivals sites, public art, streetscapes, café galleries, bookstores, art schools, live work studios, culturally significant sites, built and natural heritage, and places that facilitate interdisciplinary, intercultural and intergenerational exchanges. Planning for cultural infrastructure also requires consideration of *less tangible* amenities and assets: ancillary, supporting and “connecting” infrastructure, as well as organizational and system capacities.

Toronto’s Strategies for Creative Cities Team (2006) broadly defines *cultural infrastructure* as “creative spaces” – space for creativity “to incubate, to innovate, to agitate, to cogitate, to anticipate, to congregate and to cultivate.” Such spaces would include affordable live and live/work space for creative practitioners; newly-developed or renovated facilities for cultural organizations; public and/or natural outdoor spaces; preserved heritage; and well-designed built form and streetscapes. The City of Ottawa’s cultural infrastructure plans (2003, 2006) similarly considers a broad range of cultural facilities and spaces.

Three other useful definitional frameworks emerging from the review of literature on cultural infrastructure, cultural planning, and infrastructure planning are:

- (a) Broadly defining a community's *creative/cultural sectors*,
- (b) Broadly defining a community's *cultural ecosystem*, and
- (c) Broadly defining a community's *cultural stakeholders*.

a. Broadly defining a community's creative/cultural sectors

Simon Evans (2005) provides a broad definition of the cultural sector as industries “based on individuals with creative arts skills in alliance with managers and technologists making marketable products whose economic value lies in their cultural (or ‘intellectual’) properties” (n.p.). He identifies and categorizes four components in the creative sector supply chain:

1. *Origination activities* – activities that create tangible cultural artefacts (designs, stories, songs, pictures, games, dances, objects, etc.) and intangible cultural concepts (styles, fashions, brand-values, characters, patterns, treatments, etc.);
2. *Production activities* – activities that transform these raw cultural materials into marketable products (mass reproduction, performances, books, CDs, television programmes, etc.);
3. *Distribution activities* – activities that focus on the circulation of cultural products in the market (broadcasting, ticket sales, publishing, etc.); and
4. *Consumption activities* – activities that provide the means for consumers to experience cultural products (venue management, event management, gallery curation, sales of technology for the personal consumption of cultural products, etc.).

Andy C. Pratt (2004a) similarly provides a broad definition of the cultural sector, categorizing the cultural production chain as consisting of four similar components: (1) creation/content origination activities, (2) manufacture activities, (3) distribution/mass production activities, and (4) exchange activities. Exchange activities are of three types: (a) those that focus on bringing the content to the audience, (b) those that bring audiences to content, and (c) service-based activities.

Pratt stresses the importance of a comprehensive planning perspective that identifies and addresses all upstream inputs into a cultural product output, arguing the need to consider all “the steps or cycle that any product or service goes through to transfer it from an idea through production, distribution, and exchange, to final consumption,” and to appreciate that “each link is... dependent upon, and... often interactive with, the other links in the chain” (p. 11). In this exercise, Jan van der Groep (2004) cautions against any fixed definition of a supply or production chain in regards to the cultural sector. Van der Groep argues that cultural industries are inherently and especially dynamic, and that the means and nature of cultural creation, manufacture, distribution and consumed are constantly shifting and reconfiguring.

Furthermore, Andy C. Pratt (2004b) and T.C. Chang & W.K. Lee (2003) warn against what they see as an overemphasis on defining the general public as merely passive consumers of cultural products. These and many other authors argue that most economic perspectives ignore the significant role of non-professional artists and cultural producers, as well as the value of arts and culture production and participation as part of everyday life in the cultivating creative communities. Indeed, when subjected to greater scrutiny, the distinction between what is traditionally considered components of the cultural production chain and components of the cultural consumption chain is blurred, and more complex interdependencies between supply and demand are revealed.

In their comprehensive research on cultural participation in the United States, Chris Walker & Kay Sherwood (2003) demonstrate that the overwhelming majority of cultural production, participation and consumption activity by the public takes place in community-based facilities and spaces – the majority of which are non-professional venues. The authors provide strong evidence that exposure to arts and culture in community venues cultivates public demand for professional cultural products in professional venues. Access to, and participation in, community arts and culture and in arts education positively impact demand for professional cultural products (and vice versa). Les arts et la ville (2004) similarly found that support of non-professional artists and cultural practitioners is an effective strategy for the development of creative communities and audiences for professional arts and culture.

b. Broadly defining a community's cultural ecosystem

Emphasizing the interactions and interdependence of links in the cultural production chain, Pratt (2004a) suggests a cultural ecosystem approach to planning for cultural infrastructure at a municipal or regional scale:

the notion of a production chain takes us beyond simple mapping of co-location and begins to open up a space for the analysis of process.... Processes such as in inter-firm interaction, and the intra-firm organisation of production itself, are highly variable and linked to materials, technologies and relationship to audiences, as well as to the structure of markets. (p. 14)

A cultural ecosystem is both the sum of the interests of its individual components and a set of distinct interests that arise from being an entity in its own right. Taking these complex relationships into consideration, the Government of Hong Kong's 1999 report argues the need to plan infrastructure with the complete cultural ecosystem in mind. In addition to considering the interests of a more comprehensive range of cultural stakeholders, components and activities, the authors stress the need to address other infrastructure needs – such as traffic, transport and hospitality, which have critical implications for the success of cultural infrastructure. Sako Musterd & Wim Ostendorf (2004) also stress the careful consideration of the “connecting infrastructure” between stakeholders, components, and activities within the cultural ecosystem. Important considerations for the comprehensive planning of cultural infrastructure thus include ecosystem components such as:

- information, communication and technological development;
- partnerships with universities and other institutes;
- consumer and producer services;
- international communication networks;
- a historically-grown urban atmosphere; and
- connections with residential, commercial, and other infrastructure.

On the whole, a cultural ecosystem perspective appears to strongly support the need for more comprehensive planning for cultural infrastructure, and better integration with planning for other community infrastructure. More research is needed to define and delimit the cultural ecosystem of a given community in a way that is useful to infrastructure planning.⁸

c. Broadly defining a community's cultural stakeholders

Many cultural planning processes tend to engage only the “major” and/or “usual” cultural stakeholders – the interests of established cultural organizations, and sometimes, more established individual artists in

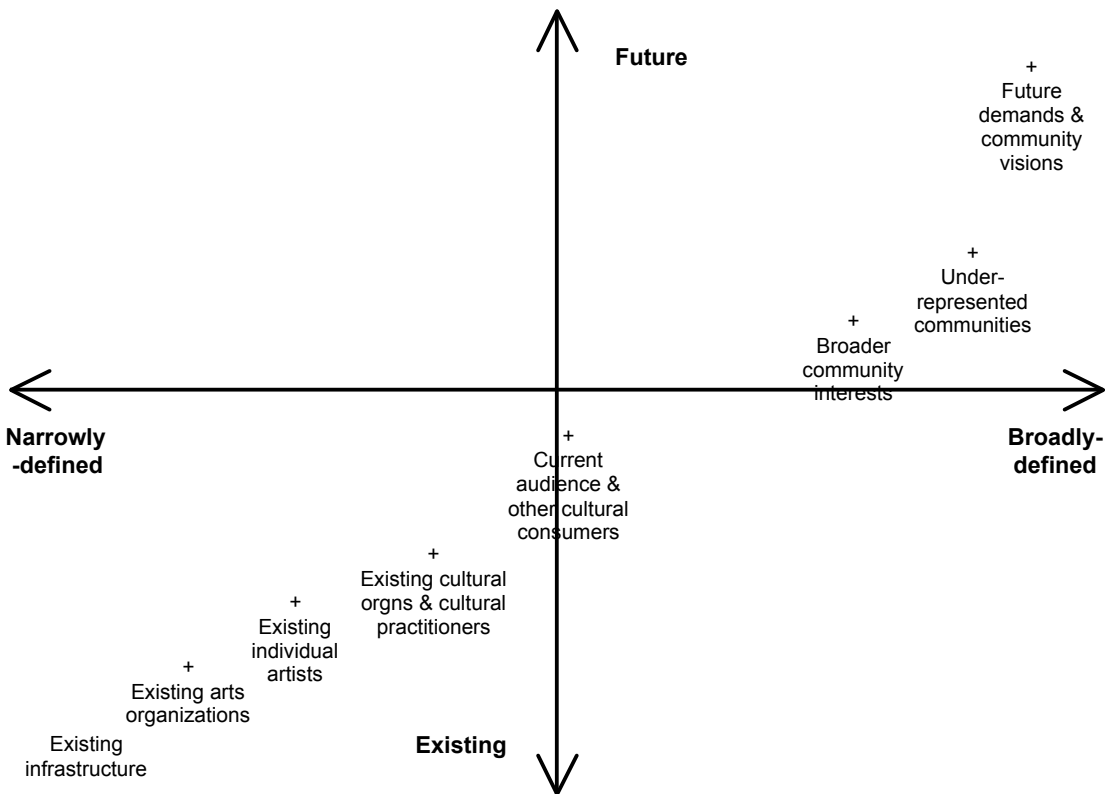
⁸ For further information on the theoretical origins of ecosystem approaches, historical influences on uses of the phrase *cultural ecology*, and possible implications for cultural policy and planning, see Simons & Warfield (2007).

the community.⁹ The literature suggests that a more comprehensive approach requires a broader and more inclusive definition of cultural stakeholders and cultural interests.

Antonio P. Russo & Jan van der Borg (2002) argue for a stronger audience or consumer-driven focus in planning for cultural infrastructure. The authors note, for example, that it is strangely rare for cultural tourism infrastructure planning to be guided by the interests of cultural tourists. Stephen Mennell (1979) advocates for priority consideration to be given to the interests of less influential, resident communities who are generally under-represented in cultural planning processes. Similarly, Allison Brugg Bawden (2002) emphasizes the interests of diverse, under-serviced and disadvantaged communities as cultural planning priorities – with accessibility and distribution of cultural benefits as the key determinants of cultural infrastructure policy. Finally, Rose Gilroy & Chris Booth (1999) advocate for an “everyday life” perspective in planning for infrastructure. In terms of cultural infrastructure, residents (especially women and children) would be seen as the dominant stakeholders in cultural infrastructure decisions – with the primary goal being to provide infrastructure for cultural production, consumption and participation as part of the daily life of citizens.

The broadening list of cultural stakeholders to be considered or included in the planning for cultural infrastructure can be roughly mapped according to whether the community of interest is more narrowly or more broadly defined, and to how far in the future their interests are considered (see Figure 1). A more comprehensive planning approach would tend toward an approach in which stakeholders are more broadly defined and more future-oriented.

Figure 4. Stakeholders considered and/or included in comprehensive planning for tangible cultural infrastructure



⁹ See Rivkin-Fish (2005) for a case study of how specific planning styles determine the selection of planning partners (i.e., the stakeholders involved) and the knowledge privileged in the planning process.

There are a few examples of cultural infrastructure plans that adopt a broad definition of cultural stakeholders. The Government of Hong Kong's 1999 report addresses the interests of a fairly wide range of stakeholders – the interests of both artists *and* audiences, as well as current, projected *and* desired demands for cultural infrastructure. Cultural infrastructure planning in the City of Vancouver (2006) and the City of Brandon, Ontario (2005) likewise appears to incorporate the interests of the broader public.

2. Building organizational and system capacities

In its extensive study of American cultural facilities, the Non-profit Finance Fund (2006) found an overwhelming emphasis on property development in the planning of cultural infrastructure. Such an emphasis frequently resulted in poor planning for long-term cultural needs, assets and aspirations. A focus on building characteristics, project glamour and profile, architectural reputation, and funding and fundraising abilities often neglected other critical issues such as larger community and organizational needs, missions, markets and programmatic ends; planning for the ability of resident organizations to maintain the infrastructure; and consideration of the impacts of new infrastructure on resident organizations. Without attention to building organizational and system capacities, cultural facilities and spaces can become under-utilized, overstretch cultural organizations, or fall into disrepair over the long-term.

Antonio Russo & Jan Borg (2002) argue that in the cultural tourism sector, most infrastructure planning follows a “destination development” model rather than a “use-management-production” model. Most cultural tourism plans fail to adequately consider the perspective of the cultural tourist, even though the key market drivers for cultural tourism are almost entirely experiential – founded upon the quality of a visitor's experience. Russo & Borg argue that although some of a visitor's experience is dependent on the quality of cultural infrastructure (destinations, facilities and attractions), the quality of *intangible* infrastructure (the quality of human services, the creativity of production and programming, perceived safety, convenience and accessibility, and image projection) is significantly more influential. The authors thus stress that planning for the development of cultural facilities and spaces is insufficient for establishing a community as a cultural tourism destination. A community must also plan for the development of creativity, entrepreneurship, and human resources.

Similarly, in regards to the planning of cultural clusters, Hans Mommaas (2003) points to a lack of adequate attention to organizational and system capacities. He argues that cultural infrastructure plans that adopt cultural clustering strategies can be overly focused on place-positioning, heritage re-use and urban revitalization. These measures do little to foster coordination, collaboration, innovation and creativity among resident cultural organizations. Instead, Mommaas argues for equal attention to be paid to the development of intangible cultural infrastructure that directly cultivates a more “creative milieu” – critical measures such as managerial and financial integration. Nolapot Pumhiran (2005) echoes these sentiments, arguing that intangible infrastructure is often neglected in cultural planning. Pumhiran advocates for the development of creative spaces through planning for both “hard” and “soft” infrastructures that actively encourage face-to-face contacts, networking and the flow of ideas. In this sense, a “creative milieu” becomes both the raw ingredient and the product of a creative space. He argues that “the task of planners... is to develop strategies not merely to stimulate clustering of cultural activities at particular urban sites but rather to create favourable conditions for a creative milieu to take shape and become embedded in place” (p. 2).

T.C. Chang & W.K. Lee (2003) caution that planning for cultural *hardware* (physical spaces and facilities) must pay significant attention to the development of critical *heartware* (productive and collaborative social environments and a creative milieu). In order to achieve this, Toronto's Strategies for Creative Cities Project Team (2006) emphasizes planning for “connectivity” or “connecting infrastructure.” Their report calls for the development of “organizational infrastructure” (funding bodies,

foundations and arts councils, industry associations, large cultural institutions and arts-support organizations) to serve critical connective functions within the cultural ecosystem of Toronto:

- unblocking bottlenecks (such as difficulty in accessing funding and lack of appropriate business support);
- developing a strong and stable resource base for cultural support;
- Performing a coordinating function to transcend the many individual creative silos working in isolation from one another;
- ensuring a comprehensive system of support mechanisms for creative industries;
- promoting creativity in all its guises;
- providing a forum to share ideas about creative Toronto;
- developing new initiatives to support creative activity and enterprise;
- putting a spotlight on the many social and economic benefits of prioritizing creativity in the Toronto region; and
- coordinating and complementing the many organizations working at the neighbourhood level to address local needs.

Further work is needed in defining the intangible cultural infrastructure components that are critical to the long-term growth and success of creative communities and identifying strategies to develop them. In particular, it may be useful to examine models of cultural clustering that plan for managerial and financial support and the integration of organizations that inhabit the facilities.

3. Addressing issues of access and diversity

Since the early 1980s, global migrations, globalization and postmodern forces have intensified the experience of cultural diversity in our communities. Stephen Castles & Mark J. Miller (1998) describe an “Age of Migration,” distinguished by its acceleration, global dimensions, socio-economic diversity, feminization, politicization, and urbanization. Diversity creates more diversity as differences are “mutually stimulating” and their interactions foster creative synergies and cultural hybridization. The relationships between ethnicity, gender, socio-economic situation, and other markers of identity are growing in complexity and result in even greater distinctions within cultural groups.

It is now difficult to speak of a true cultural majority in most urban communities (Frankel, 2002). Urban geographers and sociologists document an increasingly complex social and cultural landscape in terms of ability, age, ethnicity, gender, health, sexuality, and socio-economic situation (Pratt, 1998). At the same time, access to, and enjoyment of, cultural infrastructure is often unevenly distributed among subcultures (Moore, 1998) and, as a result, a community is unable to benefit from all its cultural assets and its full potential for creativity, growth and innovation.

Allison Brugg Bawden (2002) argues that priority should be given to issues of diversity and accessibility in planning for cultural infrastructure (see also Mannell, 1979). She equates cultural infrastructure (physical cultural infrastructure and communications infrastructure) with life opportunity and identifies barriers to access associated in particular with funding, disability, geography, cultural literacy, financial impediments, access to Internet and technology. She challenges planners to improve: (a) physical access (including addressing financial barriers); (b) access to traditional arts, culture and media opportunities, and (c) access to new media and cultural literacy.

Comprehensive planning for cultural infrastructure must also consider the wealth and diversity of artistic and cultural “scenes” within a community. Will Straw (2005) argues that the idea of a multitude of dynamic cultural “scenes” making up a community constructs a useful framework for cultural development:

Scene designates particular clusters of social and cultural activity without specifying the nature of the boundaries which circumscribe them. Scenes may be distinguished according to their location (as in Montreal's St. Laurent scene), the genre of cultural production which gives them coherence (a musical style...) or the loosely defined social activity around which they take shape (as with urban outdoor chess-playing scenes). Scene invites us to map the territory of the city in new ways while, at the same time, designating certain kinds of activity whose relationship to territory is not easily asserted. (p. 412)

Adding further complexity, attention must be given to the needs and aspirations of the full spectrum of opportunities for cultural engagement – from professional, to community-engaged, to amateur arts practices. Comprehensive planning for cultural infrastructure at a municipal and regional scale should serve to foster and liberate diverse cultural expression and participation, and to encourage interdisciplinary, intergenerational, and intercultural interactions. As Straw (2005) argues, it is the full diversity of artistic and cultural scenes that produces the culture of a community as a set of institutions and textures through mobilization, engagement, instruction, exchange, interaction, experimentation, and transformation. Planning for cultural infrastructure means providing diverse, flexible, and accessible facilities, spaces, assets, amenities, and supports through which this ongoing and dynamic experimentation, innovation, and creation can occur.

Significantly more research and development of practice are needed in this field. Some research priorities include:

- identifying potential barriers in accessing cultural infrastructure for different socio-cultural communities, cultural scenes, and artistic disciplines, and from perspectives of professional, community-engaged, and amateur practices;
- assessing the particular cultural infrastructure needs of these diverse cultural stakeholders;
- identifying and/or developing best practices in the development of infrastructure that addresses these concerns;
- identifying and/or developing best practices in the development of infrastructure that fosters interdisciplinary, intergenerational, and intercultural exchanges; and
- developing indicators to measure progress towards greater cultural accessibility and inclusion.

4. Considering various planning scales and coordinating planning efforts

From a sustainability perspective, in addition to being more holistic and inclusive, the literature suggests that planning for cultural infrastructure needs to consider different scales of time and geography. Cultural infrastructure is most often planned for, and developed on, an incremental, reactive, opportunistic and site-specific basis without consideration of long-term and regional needs, wants, and aspirations. Planning for the entire lifecycle of cultural infrastructure is often neglected, and there is little regional coordination between cultural infrastructure plans. While individual plans serve different planning functions and can work well in concert to serve a wide spectrum of community objectives, comprehensive planning can provide the direction of a common vision, establish procedural principles, coordinate efforts, ensure consistency, and evaluate progress.

Stephen Mennell (1979) consistently refers to a community's *needs*, *assets*, and *wants* as the basis for determining cultural planning goals and objectives. In regards to cultural planning in small communities, Lon Dubinsky (2002) emphasizes an *assets-based approach* with a focus on supporting and enhancing a community's existing heritage and nature of cultural participation. An assets-based approach to planning often builds on the social learning, capacity building and social mobilization that result from participatory processes. Tools such as community cultural mapping are often employed to enhance a community's appreciation and understanding of its cultural strengths and assets, which can then serve as the basis for

collective goal setting, decision-making, planning, partnership building, and action.¹⁰ Attention to a community's cultural *aspirations* recognizes the potential existence of latent community needs. Long-term, comprehensive planning for cultural infrastructure should also serve as an important tool with which a community can negotiate competing interests, develop a long-term blueprint for desired cultural changes, provide for implementation, and evaluate progress towards achieving community goals and objectives.

In regards to sustainable infrastructure planning more generally, J.P. Singh & S.N. Jena (2005) advocate a move away from the traditional focus on supply side management, in which the goal is to achieve a more efficient pattern of resource consumption. The authors argue that a sole focus on supply-side management often leads to neglect of environmental and social effects in favour of economic impacts, and to reactive planning or planning towards the status quo. Singh and Jena thus argue for a *demand-side intervention* approach to infrastructure planning, one that encapsulates a more complex understanding of the potential correlation between infrastructure development and infrastructure demand. For example, in terms of planning for transportation infrastructure, the goal of demand-side intervention might be to *reduce* automobile travel by planning for road infrastructure at a level *below* current and forecasted demand in order to force a shift to demand for public transit infrastructure. In terms of cultural infrastructure, the goal of demand-side intervention might be to *increase* cultural production and participation by planning for cultural infrastructure at a level *above* current and forecasted demand. This implies that in planning for cultural infrastructure on a municipal and regional scale, one should not only consider *meeting* current and forecasted community needs, assets and aspirations, but also *stimulating* future demand for cultural infrastructure.

The Government of Hong Kong's 1999 study acknowledges that demand for cultural products and participation is inherently driven by public policy and is led by the supply of infrastructure. In particular, the report cites the significantly positive role of providing infrastructure for arts education, artist development, and cultural tourism development on the demand for cultural products, cultural participation, and other cultural infrastructure in general. Hong Kong's planning for cultural infrastructure thus attempts to address and balance multiple community needs and aspirations: the needs of both cultural production *and* consumption, and the needs and aspirations for infrastructure that contributes to both these activities: communications and transportation; service facilities such as rehearsal space and storage; ancillary facilities such as restaurants and box offices; and *demand-side* facilities such as arts education facilities.

For the development of its comprehensive cultural infrastructure plan, the City of Vancouver (2006) proposes a process aimed at engaging the broad community and assessing the breadth of community needs, assets, *and* aspirations. The proposed planning "cycle" outlines the following steps:

1. Inventory assets
2. Survey community demand
3. Gap analysis
4. Evaluate against criteria (demonstrated need, driven by clear vision, organizational capacity, community support, building for the next generation)
5. Community consultation

¹⁰ For more information on assets-based approaches to community development, see Kretzmann & McKnight (1993) and Mathie & Cunningham (2002). For more information on community cultural mapping, see Creative City Network of Canada (2007) and Young (2004).

5. Mediating potentially competing interests

Comprehensive planning for cultural infrastructure at a municipal or regional scale will necessarily involve mediating potentially competing interests among diverse cultural stakeholders. In order to accurately determine the collective and sometimes conflicting needs, assets and aspirations for cultural infrastructure, Mennell (1979) argues that cultural planning needs to develop beyond “one-dimensional” efforts. One-dimensional planning is based on consultation with existing interest groups, survey research, etc. and ignores the possibility of latent needs. This type of planning assumes that the community knows its needs and that existing interest groups can articulate the collective good of the entire community.

More progressive practices – what Mennell calls “two-dimensional” and “three-dimensional” planning – are more appropriate and productive to comprehensive planning for cultural infrastructure on a municipal or regional scale. “Two-dimensional” planning refers to a more participatory approach to cultural planning. In this approach, the planner facilitates participatory public processes such that the community can discover the collective good, including latent needs, through dialogue, negotiation and collaboration among the broadest spectrum of community stakeholders and interest groups. “Three-dimensional” planning refers to a planning practice that is based on the idea that power and bias are deeply and systemically embedded. With this mindset, the planner assumes that the community is unlikely to know the collective good. Responsible planning thus requires a more critical examination of diverse community needs, assets and aspirations on the part of the planner.

Ziggy Rivkin-Fish (2005) identifies four cultural planning styles: technocratic, stakeholder or interest-group, participatory communicative, and advocacy. He argues that these different styles differ significantly in terms of the role of the planner, criteria for assessing the optimal planning solution, planning target, nature of the planning solution, and nature of the planning process. In the technocratic style, the planner is considered an “expert” – planning for the community towards an efficient planning solution that it is hoped is seen by the community as “objective” and “knowledge-based.” In the stakeholder or interest-based style, the planner is considered a “negotiator” – planning by engaging recognized special interests towards a pragmatic compromise that is negotiated. In the participatory communicative style, the planner serves as “mediator” or “facilitator” – planning with the community towards consensus or “maximal inclusiveness” such that the planning solution is legitimized by the community through dialogue. In the advocacy style, the planner is an “advocate” for unrecognized or weaker special interests – working towards redress of the advocated group. Each planning style, therefore, mediates competing community interests in its own way, embeds its own values and shapes final outcomes through determining what type of knowledge is valued and which actors are involved or considered.

6. Balancing development strategies for providing cultural infrastructure

One of the key potential challenges that emerges from the review of the literature is mediating community interests in potentially competing development strategies for providing cultural infrastructure: centralized versus decentralized development strategies, and culture-specific versus more integrated development strategies.

In many regions and municipalities, there has been a trend towards the geographic agglomeration of cultural infrastructure into specialized cultural clusters: arts, cultural, entertainment, and/or heritage districts. This strategy usually corresponds with primarily economic development objectives by attempting to position a community competitively in the global market as a centre for cultural production (e.g., new media precincts) or cultural consumption (e.g., cultural tourism). As Newman & Smith (2000) note, most research suggests that locating cultural production and consumption in nodes in the global distribution network offers significant competitive advantages and benefits in terms of image-branding for large urban centres.

However, Sharon Zukin (1995) and Klaus Kunzmann (2004) caution that formal designation of cultural districts may be self-defeating in that the strategy may stifle other kinds of development with positive regeneration outcomes in the area and make the achievement of cultural development more difficult in non-designated areas. Moreover, in terms of achieving other developmental objectives – such as local community development, neighbourhood regeneration and the cultivation of a “creative milieu,” the outcomes for centralized, culture-specific development strategies are debatable. A.J. Scott (2004) argues that the economic advantages and synergies of cultural clustering may be lost at a smaller scale in smaller cities and towns. Hans Mommaas (2004) and Nolapot Pumhiran (2005) also note that most studies indicate cultural clustering initiatives generally result in consumption-oriented, large-scale redevelopments that trigger a gentrification process, which displaces artists and cultural producers and leads to the ultimate decline of creative communities and local cultural industries. Graeme Evans (2001, 2005) makes the same argument and suggests that there are perhaps equally strong social, cultural and economic arguments for the dispersal of tangible cultural infrastructure. In particular, a community with a vibrant arts and cultural life weaved into the everyday life of every neighbourhood may be just as attractive to the “creative class,” have equal potential for innovation, and be as globally competitive.

Rose Gilroy & Chris Booth (1999) advocate planning “infrastructure for everyday lives.” In terms of cultural infrastructure, this suggests a development strategy that focuses on integrating arts and cultural activities into neighbourhood amenities that are not culturally specific and developing flexible, mixed-use facilities and spaces. Chris Walker & Kay Sherwood’s (2003) research on cultural participation in the United States supports this strategy by demonstrating that more people attend arts and cultural events in community venues such as open air spaces, schools and places of worship than in conventional venues such as concert halls, theatres, museums and art galleries. Moreover, 25% of participants in arts and cultural activities only do so in community venues.

Certainly, both strategies – centralized and culture-specific on the one hand, and decentralized and mixed-used on the other – serve very different development objectives and community interests. Many large municipalities and regions are attempting to achieve a balance between the two potentially competing interests by pursuing both strategies simultaneously. For example, the City of Hong Kong’s (1999) preliminary report on planning for cultural infrastructure argues for concurrent development of both geographically concentrated *and* geographically dispersed, and both culturally-specific *and* more integrated facilities and spaces:

- concentrating on what is usually publicly planned, owned and run cultural infrastructure and decentralizing what is usually privately developed, owned and run cultural infrastructure;
- agglomerating cultural infrastructure in two ways: horizontally (by clustering similar cultural activities together) and vertically (by clustering a diversity of cultural and non-cultural activities together); and
- providing for cultural activities and uses in non-culturally dedicated facilities *and* planning for formally designated cultural clusters: arts, cultural, entertainment and heritage districts.

More research is needed to identify the advantages and disadvantages of these strategies for different cultural sectors, what might be the appropriate balance between centralization and decentralization development strategies for cultural infrastructure on a municipal or regional scale, and planning approaches to achieve the desired balance. Of course, in practice these considerations must necessarily be considered and contextualized within the specific histories, realities, and opportunities of particular communities.

Summary

Fostering a vibrant, creative, and sustainable community necessitates comprehensive planning for cultural infrastructure at a municipal and regional scale. A comprehensive approach is needed in order to address the full complexity, diversity, and richness of a community's artistic and cultural activities, as well as the interdependencies and synergies among the cultural, social, economic, and environmental dynamics and infrastructure in a community.

In general, there is a lack of municipal or regional planning tradition for the provision of cultural infrastructure, and a systematic approach to planning for cultural infrastructure on a municipal or regional scale is more the exception than the rule. Responding to this situation, this paper brings together various planning perspectives, approaches, development strategies, and issues that could inform planning for cultural infrastructure at a municipal or regional scale.

Drawing from literature on cultural facilities, cultural planning, and infrastructure planning, three key interconnected planning frameworks emerge: planning perspectives on cultural infrastructure, planning approaches to cultural infrastructure, and development strategies for providing cultural infrastructure. Within each of these interrelated frameworks, particular tensions and tendencies are evident. These frameworks can be used to broadly categorize or analyze municipal and regional efforts to plan for cultural infrastructure.

A broadly based, long-term planning approach for cultural infrastructure at a municipal or regional scale would help to achieve balance and coordination among these perspectives, approaches, and development strategies and to enable addressing key issues and challenges such as:

1. Broadly defining cultural infrastructure and its interests,
2. Building organizational and system capacities,
3. Addressing issues of access and diversity,
4. Considering various planning scales and coordinating planning efforts,
5. Mediating potentially competing interests, and
6. Balancing development strategies for providing cultural infrastructure.

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Creative City Network of Canada

Transforming communities through culture

The Creative City Network of Canada is a national non-profit organization that operates as a knowledge-sharing, research, public education, and professional development resource in the field of local cultural policy, planning and practice.

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Located at Simon Fraser University's Vancouver campus, the Centre of Expertise on Culture and Communities is a three-year project of the Creative City Network of Canada and Simon Fraser University's School of Communication. It is supported by Infrastructure Canada, the Department of Canadian Heritage, the City of Ottawa, and the Centre for Policy Research on Science and Technology (CPROST) at SFU. It is advised by a national multidisciplinary team of project collaborators consisting of leading individuals in the cultural, government, and academic fields.

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Production of this paper has been made possible through a financial contribution from Infrastructure Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the Government of Canada.

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