



## Cultural Round Table

*County Culture: It's more than you think!*

*"The Cultural Round Table is an exciting group of people who represent a wide variety of cultural constituencies in Prince Edward County. As a group, it has been our vision to mobilize cultural energy and resources; to raise the profile of culture and cultural opportunities and to be a clearing house for information on local arts, heritage and cultural activities. Along the way, we all learned a lot about this amazing community. County Culture, it really is more than any one of us ever thought,"* asserts Theresa Durning, a member of the Cultural Round Table.

### Our Vision

We are all settlers in Prince Edward County. For over 200 years, people have chosen to come to this island, to create a life for themselves and their families, and in the process to build a unique and remarkable County culture.

Our culture is a product of this beautiful place and the energy and passion of the many generations who settled here. It is the glue that connects old and new residents, our past and our future. It is where our history and creativity meet.

### It's More Than You Think!!

Preserving and enhancing this culture requires a larger vision and **a new mindset**. For example, did you know?

- More than **300 cultural resources** and related tourism and hospitality organizations exist in the County;
- **Employment** in the information/culture/entertainment sector combined with accommodation and food **now exceeds forestry and agriculture**.
- A 2004 *Economic Development Strategy* concluded the County's economic future lay not in traditional industry, but in a development models focused on **knowledge-based industries and creative content**.
- The *Economic Development Strategy* identified **culture as one of four pillars** of our economy - along with tourism, agriculture and industry/commerce.
- The County is ideally situation to capitalize on a rapidly expanding market for **cultural and culinary tourism**, drawing on a catchment area that includes Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and several highly populated northern American states.
- The number of **tourism visits has increased 74%** from 253,000 in 1999 to 440,000 in 2004.
- The amount of **visitor spending has increased by 168%** from \$24 million in 1999 to \$65 million in 2004.

### The Cultural Strategic Plan



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In 2005 County Council adopted a **Cultural Strategic Plan (CSP)** to guide our collective efforts. More than 300 County residents participated in the plan through surveys, interviews and public meetings. The Plan sets out a planning framework to support collaboration between the municipality and its community and business partners. This plan, which includes a working group, the Cultural Round Table, recently won in the Strategic Plans category at the Economic Developer's Council of Ontario's annual conference.

## **1. A Guiding Vision – Our Shared Understanding**

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We value the following defining characteristics of County culture.

- Our unique island character, scenic shorelines, sandbanks and maritime history.
- Our proud Loyalist traditions and history.
- Our rural landscapes, family farms and proud agricultural heritage.
- Our many villages, hamlets and small town ambience.
- Our historic homes, farmsteads and heritage streetscapes.
- Our long history and renown for agriculture and food production - from barley to canning to dairy and cheese to grapes and wine.
- Our entrepreneurial spirit and capacity to renew and reinvent our economy.
- Our writers, visual and performing artists and their creative excellence
- Our sense of community - one that connects old and new residents.

Within this overarching vision, the Plan sets out a series of principles and definitions to guide thinking and action.

## **2. Cultural Governance – Our Shared Responsibilities**

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Culture is everyone's responsibility. To help mobilize collective efforts and resources, a new cultural governance system has been established.

**A Cultural Roundtable** - provides strategic vision and leadership with representatives from:

- *Council*
- *Municipal staff* - from all departments (Planning; Corporate Services/Economic Development; Recreation, Parks and Culture; Public Works)
- *Local cultural leaders* – from the arts, heritage, libraries and commercial cultural activity
- *Business leaders*
- *Community leaders*



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**A Cultural Summit or Rally** - Once a year the entire community will come together to review achievements, identify opportunities, and define priorities and action plans for the next year. This years Rally took place on March 31<sup>st</sup> at the Prince Edward Community Centre in Picton.

**Ongoing Leadership Forums** - Regular issue-based forums will support collective learning and capacity building in cultural development.

### **3. Strategies and Actions – Our Shared Agenda**

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The Cultural Strategic Plan defines a multi-year agenda, in two parts.

**Community Capacity Building** – strengthening our collective capacity to support cultural development through: planning and policy; investment and resource development; partnerships and collaboration.

**Strategic Priorities** – immediate challenges and needs including: managing growth and development in the County; expanding spaces where cultural activity occurs; strengthening collective action in cultural business.

### **How You Can Get Involved**

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