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Municipal Best Practices in Attracting and Retaining Immigrant Artists and Cultural Workers

In *Rise of the Creative Class*, Richard Florida introduced the concept of human creativity as “the key factor in our economy and our society” (Florida, 2002, p. 6). At the heart of Florida’s theory of economic growth lies what he terms the “Super-Creative Core”: researchers, university professors, designers, architects and professional artists of all types (Florida, 2002, p. 68). The popularity of Florida’s book has led countless municipalities to create strategies aimed at attracting the new urban elite.

Florida presents creative workers as a unified economic class whose members share similar preferences in how they choose where to live. Other research on creative class migration, however, reveals that members of different creative professions choose where to live based on occupation-specific concerns as well as personal preferences (Bramwell, Nelles and Wolfe, 2008; Donegan, Drucker, Goldstein, Lowe and Malizia, 2008; Storper and Scott, 2009). Data on working artists in particular indicates significant differences between artistic specializations (Bennett 2010; Markusen and Schrock, 2006), but suggests some patterns common to artists as a migrant group. Municipalities interested in attracting artists can use these findings to create policies specific to the opportunities present in their communities.

This paper briefly explores best practices in artist attraction and retention. The first section considers current literature on the push/pull factors that affect the migration of practicing artists and identifies recent trends. The second section looks at strategies used in various regions of Europe, North America and New Zealand interested in attracting artists. The third section examines the Canadian context and shows that municipal plans and policies can enhance and support cultural industries. Given that much of Canada’s population growth comes from immigration, the section pays special attention to the linkages between immigration and cultural plans.

Recent Literature on Artist Location Choices

Statistics Canada and other government agencies often group arts and cultural workers with sports and recreation professionals; however, “the location and work behaviour of sports players and artists are strikingly different” (Markusen and Schrock, 2006, p. 1663). Of the numerous published studies on creative class preferences, few focus on professional artists as a distinct group. Notable works on artist migration include a recent study of emigrants from Western Australia (Bennett, 2010) and Markusen and Schrock’s work on artists in the United States (2006). Drake’s 2003 study of the impact of place on creative workers in England provides supporting data on the factors affecting artist migration.

Dawn Bennett looks at the factors influencing decision taken by members of the core creative class (music, film and visual artists) of Perth, Western Australia to leave their home region for Eastern Australian or overseas destinations. The study sought to discover why these members of Perth’s creative class chose to migrate, what influenced their choice of destination and the degree to which they remain connected to their home province.

Bennett found that artists, like most migrants, move between regions and countries to improve their chances of occupational success. However, artists differ from other professionals in that they usually move on the basis of *perceived opportunity* and *place reputation* rather than a specific employment position. Established creative industries, strong public support for the arts and/or a sufficiently large population to consume cultural goods strongly attract artists. Artists differ from other creative professionals in their willingness to move away from established social and familial networks in order to practice their craft. Moving away from networks without the security of a job offer often leads to “an unstable migration involving financial risk” (Bennett, 2010, p. 125).

Markusen and Schrock adopt an occupation-based approach to understanding the economic contribution and location choice of different artistic sectors. The authors used quantitative data to assess whether specific US metropolitan regions specialize in attracting particular sub-groups of artists and identify reasons for these trends. They start from the premise that artists differ significantly from other members of the creative class in their tastes and interests, but can be targeted by municipal policies through occupation-specific strategies. The authors suggest cities already attracting artists investigate what niche market the city appeals to: It is easier to draw more of the same types of artists than to attempt to create new industries.

Drake (2003) contrasts the location choices of craft metalworkers and digital media workers in a study looking at the relationship between place and individualized creativity. Drawing on interviews with workers in the creative sector in three cities in England, Drake sought to understand the degree to which *locality* serves as a source of aesthetic inspiration for particular types of cultural production. He found significant differences between the two sub-sectors, concluding that place-based attributes can provide cities with “non-substitutable” advantages allowing them to become a magnet for creative workers (Drake, 2003, p. 523). He identifies four ways in which specific place attributes matter: locality as a resource of raw visual materials and stimuli; locally-based intensive social and cultural networks; locality as a brand based on reputation and tradition; and locality-specific communities of creative workers.

Findings on Employment of Artists

With few exceptions, professional artists tend to be low-income earners; many work multiple jobs in addition to practicing their craft (Hill Strategy, 2009). Markusen and Schrock (2006) found that artists working in creative hub (areas with a higher percentage of artists) report higher reported wage earnings than those in peripheral areas. However, it was not clear whether this is due to higher income from the arts or greater opportunity for secondary employment. The instability and unpredictability of artistic employment causes many to burn out and leave the arts. In a study of undergraduate dance majors in the United States, Montgomery and Robinson (2003) found few people continue working only as dancers for more than ten years, and those employed in dance rely heavily on non-dance jobs due to the sporadic nature of dance employment. Moreover, very few of those considered employed in dance were performers; the majority worked in dance facility administration, choreography and instruction.

Markusen and Schrock (2006) note artists are more likely than the average worker to be self-employed; this matters in terms of attracting artists as self-employment allows for flexibility in location choice. Writers have the highest reported self-employment at 68 percent, while performing artists the lowest with 24 percent. (The overall rate in the general population is 8 percent). Bennett concludes having an adaptable practice (such as a pianist who can teach, perform and record) provides artists with greater flexibility in location, making them more likely to stay in peripheral regions. Artists who work exclusively in real-time, such as orchestral musicians, do not have this luxury.

Bennett suggests that due to the risk involved, most *planned* artist migration takes place prior to commencing a professional career (either before or after post-secondary training). Established artists, they argue, are generally pushed to move. Such *reactive* migration results from lack of creative infrastructure or opportunities for career development in the home region. The authors note that opportunity does not necessarily mean full-time employment; even in established creative hubs like Berlin, most artists work multiple jobs. However, if a city cannot offer the desired level of social and physical infrastructure (e.g., performance venues), artists will leave for places they believe will better meet their needs.

Attracting Artists to Smaller Cities

Overall, large centres have a distinct advantage for attracting artists. Markusen and Schrock suggests several reasons why this has been the case. First, major cities have the population and tourism potential to provide markets for cultural products and performances. Higher-wage earning groups (typically other knowledge-workers) supportive of an artist-friendly urban agenda tend to live in large cities. Artists may cluster in cities with complementary industries such as advertising and media to take advantage of the additional work opportunities. Such industries have often clustered in world class centres such as New York. Finally, artists seeking to collaborate with creative workers in other disciplines may find larger centres offer greater opportunity for such creative synergy.

However, small and medium cities have some advantages over big cities: they often

have lower housing costs and accessibility to natural landscapes. This may be enough to attract artists, particularly those who don't need access to performance venues. "Prior research has found that performing artists are more apt to live closer to metropolitan cores than are visual artists and writers, with musicians in the middle range" (Markusen and Schrock, 2006, p.1664). Isolation may appeal to some artists: Gibson, Luckman and Willoughby-Smith (2010) draw on a government study of the small, remote town of Darwin in tropical Northern Australia. Interviews and surveys of nearly a hundred cultural workers found geographical distance a key source of creative inspiration.

Markusen and Schrock outline three areas of action that municipalities of all sizes can take to increase their artistic appeal. First, invest in cultural infrastructure such as artist live/work spaces and performance venues. Cities can support the creation of artist-run centres, institutions that often bring in artists from other areas for residencies and learning exchanges. Second, municipalities can connect the artistic population with complementary industries to encourage crossover between sectors to increase opportunities for employment. Finally, cities interested in growing their creative sectors may wish to re-evaluate how public money is spent on the arts: major, one-off events generate less cultural / economic development than smaller grants to local organizations.

Bennett suggests small cities use social media to promote *artist connectivity*, one of the most important elements to attracting and retaining artists: "Smaller centres require a greater entrepreneurial approach to creating and managing performance or exhibition opportunities" (Bennett, 2010, p. 124). For cities with artist-training centres, establishing young artists' connectivity with the region *during and immediately after* post-secondary education may prove effective in retaining the population over the long term.

International Best Practices

The case examples below highlight municipal approaches to drawing and keeping artists, including place branding, cultural planning, and progressive social policy. Stakeholders in the non-profit and private sectors play an important role. The section looks at examples of non-municipal bodies that support new and emerging artists through mentorship programs, access to space and creating opportunity with industry. While often relying on private funding, these programs indicate what kind of partnerships municipalities can seek when looking to collaborate with other actors or to fund external programs.

Municipal Strategies

Place Branding: Berlin, Germany

Many major world cities have adopted place-marketing strategies: few have invested as heavily as Berlin in re-inventing their urban image. In 2008, the Berlin Senate launched the "*be Berlin*" capital city advertising campaign. The Senate committed 11 million Euro to the place branding effort after market research indicated the city suffered from a poor international reputation. The campaign aims to strengthen the city's positive image and promote it on a national and international level as a great place to live and do business.

The first year of the campaign focused on encouraging local residents to take pride in their city, using multimedia and participatory strategies to solicit Berliners' personal stories. Highlights from 2008 campaign include sending 1,350,000 letters to Berlin households asking their input; publishing a campaign book and creating a campaign film; developing public billboards, video advertising, and a line of manufactured items for the brand with a temporary storefront; installing a subway station advertisement called "the longest love letter to Berlin" featuring 2,000 messages submitted by residents; and organizing a three-week citywide scavenger hunt for billboard riddles.

In 2009, the campaign broadened its horizons to focus on an international audience with the revised slogan *Berlin, the place to be*. This campaign highlights Berlin as the place to be for five things: business, science, art, city life and change. Berlin Days, a traveling exhibit, has already gone on tour to New York, Brussels and Shanghai and will visit Istanbul and Copenhagen in Summer 2010. The tour promotes the city to potential tourists and migrants alike, noting, "Some stay for the night, others stay forever."

Putting Culture First: Cultural Planning in Austin, Texas

With a population of 757,688, Austin is the fourth largest city in Texas and the self-proclaimed "Live Music Capital of the World." Beginning in 2007, the municipality undertook a 16-month public consultation that led to the creation of the 2009 Cultural Master Plan, *CreateAustin*. Described as both a community cultural planning process and a public/private collaboration, the Plan promotes arts, culture and creativity as "essential keys to Austin's distinct and unique identity" (*CreateAustin* Summary, 2009, p. 11).

CreateAustin emphasizes the contribution artists make to Austin's social and economic prosperity. The Plan makes several recommendations aimed at raising the profile of artists and the arts, including consolidating all cultural programming in a new City Department of Arts and Culture. The report recommends building new partnerships with private industry, universities and community-based organizations to better leverage existing resources. The municipality will invest in new cultural spaces while improving access to existing facilities. At the same time, a public awareness campaign encourages local residents to appreciate the importance of the arts to the Austin brand in an effort to garner support for the new investments.

Progressive Social Policy: Santa Fe, New Mexico

The oldest capital city in the United States, Santa Fe became the first UNESCO-designated creative city in the country in 2005. To bring attention to its unique creative industries, the municipality focused on growing the multicultural artistic community. Santa Fe's population of 72,000 makes it the fourth largest in the state. The area has long been known for Aboriginal and folk crafts and music; recent migration to the city allowed Santa Fe to build on traditional artistic sectors to become a global creative city.

Weekly and annual art markets provide regular opportunities for artists to sell and promote their work. Two of the markets take place year-round, with three annual international festivals to draw tourists to the area (the International Folk Art Market in July, the Spanish Market in July, and the Indian Market in August). In 2008 the municipality released the Cultural Voices Initiative, a comprehensive study of the challenges and opportunities for diverse artists in the city.

In 2007 Mayor of Santa Fe, David Cross, introduced a living wage ordinance requiring that businesses with more than 25 employees pay their staff \$9.50 an hour (the amount deemed necessary to stay above the poverty line). Living wage policies particularly benefit artists and new immigrants, two groups often working in low-income sectors such as sales and services. While local debates raged as to whether Santa Fe's economy suffered as a result of the ordinance, David Cross's re-election in May 2010 suggests high levels of voter satisfaction.

Stakeholder Programs

Artist Mentorship Programs in New York City and Hamilton, Ontario

New York State Council on the Arts established the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) in 1971 as an independent organization whose mission is to “empower artists at critical stages in their creative lives.” The NYFA started the Immigrant Artist Project to better serve artists of diverse backgrounds who share the experience of immigration. The project objective is to “connect immigrant artists with the necessary resources to foster their creative careers, gain support and exposure for their work, and integrate them into the art world of New York and beyond while upholding their distinct identities” (New York Foundation for the Arts, 2010, online).

The Immigration Artist Project focuses on four areas: providing information through a newsletter and online outreach; a mentoring program; cultural community workshops; and a resources directory highlighting services for immigrants. The mentoring program pairs a working American artist with an emerging immigrant artist from the same or similar disciplines for a period of six months. This popular program has proven highly successful in helping newly arrived artists gain a foothold in the New York arts scene.

Mentorship programs for newcomer artists are not limited to large cities like New York. The Immigrant Art and Culture Association of Hamilton, Ontario provides an example of such a program in a medium-sized city. A non-profit group established in 2000, the Immigrant Art and Culture Association caters specifically to the needs of immigrant artists but works to support all immigrants and low-income artists. In addition to an artist mentorship program, the Association offers workshops, job search support and free art classes for young clients.

Artist Space in Berlin, Germany and Providence, Rhode Island

Access to affordable work and performance space poses a major challenge to many professional artists. The Cultural Project of the Professional Association of Berlin Artists describes itself as a self-help project for and by Berlin artists. An artist-funded organization with over 2000 members, the organization works “in deliberate opposition to individual sponsorship through stipends and prizes” by providing access to its studios to all professional artists. The group provides free and/or subsidized access to the infrastructure required for artistic production. While use of the print and sculpture workshop involves a nominal fee, the group provides free workshops and administrative help. A limited number of subsidized studio spaces are available. The group refuses public funding, claiming that doing so would compromise its basic principles of freedom of art and artist self-management.

Located in Providence, Rhode Island, AS220 is a non-profit community arts space. The organization is committed to providing “an unjuried and uncensored forum for the arts” (AS220, 2010, online). The centre offers a spectrum of programs, some catering to professional artists (e.g., residencies) while others are open to the general community. AS220 acts as an incubator for emerging artists, a meeting space for community groups, and as an arts promoter in the broader community. The organization’s mission statement emphasizes the accessibility of the space, offering the assurance that “If you live in the state of Rhode Island, you will get an opportunity to exhibit or perform at AS220” (AS220, 2010, online).

Partnering with Industry in New Zealand and Nashville, Tennessee

The success of the Lord of the Rings trilogy provided New Zealand unprecedented exposure as a location for film shooting and production. Film New Zealand, an independent, industry-led organization, seized upon the opportunity by launching an international campaign to market the nation’s film industry. The international focus of Film New Zealand complements the mandate of the New Zealand Film Commission, the government agency responsible for supporting New Zealand-based filmmakers. (The Film Commission does offer some funding for co-productions with non-New Zealand filmmakers but at least 20% of the production content must come from New Zealand artists). Recent activities of Film New Zealand include a “You’re Welcome” exhibit at the 25th annual Film Locations Trade Fair in Los Angeles, California.¹

Long known as Music City, in 2009 Nashville’s Area Chamber of Commerce collaborated with the Office of the Mayor to create the Nashville Music Council. The new Council includes over 60 musicians and industry executives, including high profile musicians such as Jack White of the *White Stripes* and Emmylou Harris. The Council’s mandate focuses on five economic development goals: growing the Music City brand, increasing jobs, public education music programs, growing the live venue scene and attracting creative talent to Nashville.²

¹ The Government of New Zealand has adopted more aggressive immigration policies in recent years in an attempt to stabilize a decreasing population and stimulate economic growth. New Zealand uses a points based system similar to that of Canada. Immigration New Zealand also offers a work to residence talent visa similar to that of Australia, under which to persons of “exceptional talent in a declared field of art, culture or sport.” Eligible applicants must be sponsored by a New Zealand organization of national repute, be less than 55 years of age and meet health standard requirements. Successful applicants are granted a working visa for up to 30 months, after which they may apply for permanent residency.

² Tennessee is home to another aspiring creative city. Located 133 miles from Nashville, Chattanooga (population 155,000) is the fourth largest city in the state. Since 2006, the non-profit group Choose Chattanooga has offered a program called ArtsMove that provides \$2,500 to artists willing to re-locate to within 3.5 miles of downtown Chattanooga for at least one year. Essentially a downtown development scheme intended to revitalize the core by bring artists from the surrounding region to central Chattanooga, ArtsMove is now in its fourth of five funding rounds.

Immigrant Artists: Immigration and Cultural Planning in Canadian Cities

The preceding case examples highlight cities seeking to maximize their social and economic potential by attracting artists. Some places, such as Santa Fe, pay attention to the multicultural dimension of this population. Other cities, like Austin, call themselves a creative city without critically examining how this collective identity does or does not include diverse ethnic communities.

According to the most recent Statistics Canada population report, by 2031 all of Canada's population growth will come from immigration. Given such trends, Canadian cities will see a large overlap between the goals of attracting artists and attracting immigrants. With concerns about population decline in regions outside the largest Canadian centres, many smaller cities have developed official immigration strategies. Meanwhile, the immigration hubs of the nation -- Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver -- struggle to provide services and support to a rapidly growing and increasingly diverse population.

Canadian cities operate under a different immigration system than their American and European counterparts, but many use the identified best practices seen in other countries to inform their economic and cultural strategies. The seven Canadian cities discussed below adopt different approaches to integrating cultural and immigration objectives; comparing them sheds light on different places seek to support their diverse creative communities.

Ottawa, Ontario

The City of Ottawa is in the process of creating an integrated immigration strategy called the Immigration Ottawa Initiative. The 2007 document, *Faces of Ottawa*, provides a snapshot of immigrants to the Ottawa region. Ottawa benefits from significant secondary migration from Quebec, and receives the second largest number of refugees per year in all of Canada. Ottawa's immigrant population is highly educated (82 percent have university degrees) with over half between the ages of 22-44 years. The most commonly cited reason for moving to Ottawa is to join family or friends. Ottawa's *20/20 Talent Plan* stresses the importance of creating an open and accessible labour market that will attract and retain workers from around the globe. The Talent Plan does not mention the cultural sector or cultural workers as an area of specific interest.

The City of Ottawa prepared the 2003 *Arts and Heritage Plan* within the broader context of the Ottawa 20/20 initiative, a two-year planning process intended to manage growth and change over the next 20 years. The Ottawa 20/20 initiative aims to balance social, economic and environmental objectives for long-term sustainability. The Arts Plan lays out a 20-year plan with five strategic objectives: broaden public access to the local arts, keep Ottawa's artists in the region, build creative capacity, revitalize public places and natural spaces through the arts, and realize the economic potential of the local cultural sector. The Arts Plan commits the city to strengthening and supporting multi-disciplinary community arts programs and developing a multi-sectoral support system aimed at building creative capacity within Ottawa's distinct and diverse communities.

New programs suggested in the Arts Plan include a Seed Funding Program for Artistic Activity in Distinct and Diverse Communities, and Arts Programs for Specific Communities such as ethnic minorities and youth. The Plan explicitly states the intent of

these programs is not to

“ghettoize nor give special long-term status to specific work [by diverse communities]. Instead, this temporary support is intended to provide opportunity to specific artistic traditions and artists whose work has not been easily folded into mainstream funding programs. This opportunity to catch up will allow for development as well as smooth transition into general, overall support programs” (Ottawa Arts and Heritage Plan, 2003, p. 40).

Montreal, Quebec

As the city receiving the largest number of francophone immigrants in Canada Montreal blends cultural and immigration policies in a different style than other Canadian cities. Despite the city’s efforts to create an inclusive environment for newcomers and its reputation for high quality of life, the requirements imposed by Quebec’s language laws means that a significant percentage of immigrants leave the city after becoming permanent residents.

The City of Montreal has a Cultural Services department responsible for arts and cultural planning. The department’s strategic objectives are outlined in the implementation plan for the 2005-2015 *Cultural Development Policy*, Montreal Cultural Metropolis. Following the publication of the report, City of Montreal Cultural Services began providing funds for what it termed “cultural mediation” services. The report identified problems regarding the accessibility of cultural activities and services to the general population, especially marginalized communities. Through these programs, Cultural Services aims to “create genuine encounters between artists, their works and the public” (City of Montreal Cultural Services Website).

Though not the provincial capital city, Montreal’s unique position in Canada as a cultural capital and the largest francophone centre generates benefits from several provincially and federally sponsored initiatives. One notable example is Vivacité Montreal, a grant program for young immigrant and visible minority professional artists living in Montreal. This three-year program receives funding from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Montreal Arts Council and the provincial Conseil des arts et des lettres. Now in its final year, Vivacité Montreal offers emerging immigrant and minority artists a non-renewable grant of up to \$10,000 to develop their work.

Edmonton, Alberta

In 2005, the City of Edmonton created the Office of Diversity and Inclusion with the mandate to ensure that an increasingly diverse urban population has equal and fair access to municipal services and opportunities. Five years ago, the City commissioned a study of how to attract and retain more immigrants to Edmonton that made several recommendations. The City has followed many of these recommendations but has not yet developed a municipal immigration plan.

To raise Edmonton’s international profile as a creative city, the document *The Art of Living: A Plan for Securing the Future of Arts and Heritage in the City of Edmonton* (2008-2018) recommends creating an Edmonton International Mentorship Prize. This grant would be used to bring an artist of international repute to Edmonton for a period of one to six months. The invited artists would teach and mentor local artists, drawing attention to Edmonton’s artistic potential. In 2008 the City of Edmonton established the

Cultural Diversity in the Arts Award. This program provides up to 12 awards of \$7,500 to encourage and support Edmonton artists from ethnically diverse cultural backgrounds, and to engage those artists in the broader Edmonton community.

Vancouver, British Columbia

The 2008-2018 *Culture Plan* for Vancouver positions the city as “on the cutting edge of art, culture, education, entertainment, and the support of the creative industries” (2008, p. 5). The Plan supports diverse cultural and ethnic groups by providing community grants to non-profit organizations. The fine arts community receives significant support through programs such as the Cultural Infrastructure Programs, the Mayor’s Arts Awards and the Artist Live/Work Studio award. The latter is intended to increase the accessibility of productive space for artists in one of the most expensive urban areas of Canada.

The City of Vancouver does not have an official immigration strategy. Overall, the City’s role in regard to immigration issues has been to facilitate integrating newcomers into the local community, to enhance access to civic services and programs, and to ensure broad engagement and participation of diverse groups, including newcomers, in different civic arenas. In 2007, the City formed the Mayor’s Task Force on Immigration that made recommendations to improve accessibility of services. Suggested initiatives include the establishment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Program to provide training opportunities to staff on diversity-related issues and supporting local social and cultural development initiatives through the provision of civic grants to local non-governmental organizations, many of which deliver services to newcomers.

Calgary, Alberta

Calgary Arts Development (CAD) is an arms-length organization responsible for distributing the bulk of the city’s annual arts budget. The organization’s 2009 report, *Lead with Culture*, highlights the growing role that the arts sector plays in the local economy. Municipal support for the arts substantially increased between 2004 and 2009 with new funding for grants, non-profits arts organizations, cultural infrastructure and festivals. Creating artistic space remains a focus of the organization with up to \$165 million dedicated to cultural infrastructure over the next decade. Other initiatives include creating a downtown cultural district, launching a new website (www.calgaryculture.com) and declaring September as Culture Month. The 160 organizations receiving support include the Brazilian Community of Alberta, the Calgary Chinese Orchestra, the Calgary Multicultural Choir, the Hispanic Arts Society and ethnic dance groups. The City of Calgary is currently in the process of creating an immigration strategy but has not released details.

Toronto, Ontario

One of the most diverse urban regions in the world, the Greater Toronto Area attracts the greatest proportion of Canadian immigrants of any destination. With over half the G.T.A population born outside of Canada, Toronto seem poised to continue its strong record of immigrant attract and retention. Increasing numbers of immigrant inflows create many challenges for the City in terms of service delivery and social equity. A 2007 study of the link between economic prosperity and social inclusion, *Prosperity and Opportunity in Toronto: Getting it Right*, observed that the economic underperformance of the region’s immigrant population suggests many experience difficulty accessing Toronto’s labour market.

“The difficulty for recent immigrant residents to [find work] commensurate to their skill set damages Toronto’s ability to continue to attract highly skilled immigrants and the city’s ability to compete in the international marketplace” (*Prosperity and Opportunity in Toronto: Getting it Right*, 2007, p. 3).

In 2004, the Ontario Ministries of Economic Development and Trade funded the Strategies for Creative Cities Project. In partnership with the University of Toronto and creative industry leaders, the project produced the 2006 report *Imagine a Toronto...Strategies for a Creative City*. The report recognizes Toronto’s multicultural community as a vital source of creative talent that represents “a critically important economic asset” (2006, 13). The most recent City of Toronto economic development strategy, the 2008 *Agenda for Prosperity*, adopted many of the report’s recommendations. The Agenda highlights diversity and social cohesion as part of the Toronto Advantage. Creativity, Culture and Entertainment are keys to the strategy: Toronto’s creative industries generate 90% of Ontario’s cultural goods with over \$9 billion in GDP per year. The report discusses how Toronto can “leverage culture, events and tourism to enhance international presence.” A supporting document for the Agenda for Prosperity, the *Creative City Planning Framework*, provides detail as to how Toronto plans to grow its creative industries and attract new investment.

Halifax, Nova Scotia

HRM’s 2005 Economic Strategy, *Strategies for Success*, draws heavily on Richard Florida’s theory of economic development. The Strategy recommends collaborating with partners to develop a Creative Community Strategy that “integrates cultural, immigration, capital district, university and global strategies” (2005, p. 21). The section “Capitalizing on our Reputation” emphasizes the importance of place branding in attracting the creative workers and innovative companies. The Strategy recommended forming a Quality of Place Council that would “review existing brand equity in HRM and develop a multi-partner approach” (2005, p. 28).

In 2005, Halifax Regional Municipality adopted a municipal Immigration Plan as part of the Community Development mandate. Rather than discussing how to attract newcomers, the Plan focuses on how HRM can welcome and serve immigrants already in Halifax. The agency responsible for economic development in HRM, the Greater Halifax Partnership (GHP), operates under its own Halifax Regional Immigration Strategy. As a public-private partnership, the GHP treats immigration as a means to meet existing and anticipated labour market needs. Employer demand for qualified workers to fill the types of positions anticipated to be in demand (largely sales, services and health care) has determined the focus of Halifax’s approach to immigrant attraction.

In 2006, Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) adopted the region’s first *Cultural Plan*. The Cultural Plan refers to the *HRM Immigration Action Plan* as a Supporting Plan, and outlines several policies connecting the objectives of the cultural plan and the immigration plan. Policy 1.9 recommends integrating the development of the proposed Cultural Advisory Committee with that of other proposed Committees such as those proposed under the Immigration Action Plan. Goal 16, Arts Development, aims to enable professional and emerging artists in all media to successfully live, exhibit and perform in HRM. This goal includes Policy 4.7, under which “HRM will work with partners to help emerging artists incubate and develop their artistic and creative talent,” followed by the

recommendation to create an arts investment strategy would include a new Arts Diversity Grant.

Final notes

This paper provides a brief overview of current strategies employed by municipalities and stakeholder agencies to draw and support working artists. Understanding what attracts artists to a place -- and, more critically, what keeps them there -- presents a challenge. Artists have distinct needs and interests that set them apart from other knowledge workers. Recognizing how artists differ in their location choices helps policy makers understand which strategies present the greatest possibility of successfully increasing their city's "artistic dividend" (Markusen and Schrock, 2006).

As the developed world shifts from primarily resource-based to knowledge-based economies, cities everywhere proclaim the importance of creative work. Yet while the validation of cultural workers as socially and economically valuable certainly benefits artists in some respects, many artists continue to operate on the economic margins of society.³ Most earn below-average incomes and rely on multiple jobs in order to survive. Artists working outside their country of origin may face additional barriers such as inability to access professional networks or to negotiate language barriers. Artists contribute a great deal to the places they live, but they also have unique infrastructure needs such as productive space or low-cost housing. Short-term strategies may prove successful in attracting artists; creating a city that is both culturally rich and socially just requires appropriate long-term planning and investment.

³ For more on artists as the new 'precariat' class, see Ross, 2008.

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Other Internet Resources

Arts Council of Montreal: <http://www.artsmontreal.org>

The City of Berlin's Marketing Campaign *be Berlin*: <http://www.be.berlin.de>

Chattanooga ArtsMove: <http://www.artsmove.org>

Creative Santa Fe: <http://www.creativesantafe.org>

Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce: <http://www.nashvillechamber.com>

New York Foundation for the Arts Immigrant Artist Project: <http://www.nyfa.org>

New Zealand Film Commission: <http://www.nzfilm.co.nz/>

Imagine Toronto <http://www.web.net/~imagineatoronto/home.htm>