

DATE: April 30, 2009

SUBJECT: Arts and Culture Master Plan: Draft Report, as presented to Council April 1, 2009.

TO: Susan Burt Director, Office of Arts and Culture, City of Mississauga
 Bonnie Dowhaniuk Project Manager, Office of Arts and Culture

Carmen Corbasson Councillor, Ward 1

Jeff Evenson Director, Canadian Urban Institute (Consultant to the ACMP Review)

COPIED: Hazel McCallion Mayor, City of Mississauga
 Councillors Wards 2-11
 Janice Baker City Manager
 Paul Mitcham Commissioner, Community Services
 Ed Sajecki Commissioner, Planning and Building
 Martin Powell Commissioner, Transportation and Works
 Brenda Breault Commissioner, Corporate Services

Paul Stewart Port Credit Policy Planner, City of Mississauga
 Andrew McNeill Project Lead, Downtown21 Master Plan

Charles Sousa MPP, Mississauga South
 Paul Szabo MP, Mississauga South

SUBMITTED BY THE EXECUTIVES OF:

Town of Port Credit Assn (TOPCA)
Port Credit Village Project (PCVP)
Heritage Mississauga

COPIED: Leonard Walsh Founding Member, Friends of Old Port Credit Village
 John McKinnon Chair, Credit Reserve Association
 Richard Collins President, Mississauga South Historical Society
 Gil Penalosa Executive Director, Walk & Bike for Life

John Danahy Director, Centre for Landscape Research, U of T
 (consultant for VIVA Port Credit)

DELIVERED BY E-MAIL

Dear Susan:

Thank you so much for the time extension granted at the April 16th Public Meeting, which allowed citizen groups more time to respond to the Draft Arts and Culture Master Plan (ACMP). This Master Plan is so important that we determined to take a very serious, collaborative approach, and to consolidate our input. We understand that you desired any written comment to be brief and so we have summarized as much as possible, but are willing to respond in more detail on any point as required.

This response has been prepared with the assistance of an *ad hoc* subcommittee: Dorothy Tomiuk (Chair, VIVA Port Credit), Jayme Gaspar (Executive Director, Heritage Mississauga), Matt Wilkinson (Historian, Heritage Mississauga), Lydia Pawlenko and Deb Greenfield (Executive Members, TOPCA), and Richard Collins and Lori Ellis (Executive Members, PCVP).

Other member groups of VIVA Port Credit (copied) have viewed the draft of this response, but have not been able to fully analyze the Draft Master Plan and provide their Executives' endorsement of this response within the time frame provided.

This Cultural Master Plan is more about administrative and organizational details pertaining to the Office of Arts and Culture (OAC) and other departments with which it will interact, rather than an actual roadmap and action plan to get going on cultural enhancements in the City. Fair enough, as the consultants were guided by the high-level Terms of Reference for the Master Plan Review, but citizens are impatient and want to see movement on this vital Plan. We have already submitted our view of the nature of Public Culture in Port Credit, which led us to extrapolate about the entire City. There are common tie-ins with civic identity, tourism, heritage and land-use planning, transportation (active and transit), community amenities and grants administration.

In this light, we have attached an Appendix with our specific comments about the 44 recommendations included in the Draft Report, which form the *actionable* component of the Cultural Master Plan, and which Council will be asked to approve in June. This is where the public accountability lies.

Of the 44 recommendations, 37 directly relate to administrative procedures and changes, funding allocations and fundraising, and networking. It is not explicit as to how much public funding will be required and how much Council will eventually authorize. It may be a few years before follow-on studies and the initial recommendations are fully implemented and everything is in place to move forward. Creative use of new and existing staff can make this happen in the stated 5-year timeframe. When this stage is reached, please keep going with the annual Report Cards, and fine-tuning, but do not automatically launch a new Cultural Master Plan Review at the 5-year mark, as recommended in #25. Please give this Plan time to work and achieve tangible and measurable results.

We found the format and presentation of the 44 recommendations and the pre- and post-commentary for each to be somewhat confusing. A clearer layout and organization should be developed for ongoing reference. The OAC is taking on a lot of administrative and networking functions formerly handled through a variety of departments or groups. The names and purposes of all the networking initiatives (boards, round tables, sessions, strategies, interdepartmental teams, etc.) should be clear.

As citizens of Mississauga, we care deeply about this Cultural Master Plan process, and how it will enable our City to finally grow an identity and become a more cultural and liveable place that will attract new residents who in turn will contribute their talents and creativity. We entirely understand the need to organize the OAC administrative function properly, but had hoped that more of the visionary elements discussed in the Draft Report would be given immediate and concrete direction, to get us off to a fast start. The Vision needs to be made visible as soon as possible.

To that point, we see the best opportunities for short-term tangible results centering on:

1. Implementing a Pilot Project (see #36). We believe this should occur at the City Centre. The ideas emanating from the concurrent Downtown21 Master Plan process are focused and specific, with a commitment to action on the ground within the short term. It's got the goods. Tying in a cultural pilot project to the exciting street-oriented plans for the initial focal area of the DT21 project will enable a synergy of effort, expenditure and outcomes.
2. Timely presentation of the first Periodic Process Evaluation for May 2010 (see #25) which would include metrics from the first Report Card (see #33).

We believe this Cultural Master Plan should be approved, subject to our comments offered regarding Recommendations #1-44, to enable OAC staff to begin work immediately.

Respectfully,

Paul Smith President, Town of Port Credit Association (TOPCA)
Janis Alton Chair, Port Credit Village Project (PCVP)
Greg Carraro Vice-President, Heritage Mississauga

Appendix

Review of Recommendations #1 - 44

in Section 3. Strategic Directions (pp 58-79)

NOTE: The usage of the terms: Arts, Culture and Heritage (which appear throughout the report), needs to be clarified and streamlined for the final version of the Cultural Master Plan. Ambiguity and inconsistency in terminology have made the Draft Report somewhat difficult to read through. As stated in our earlier submission: http://vivaportcredit.ca/projects/VIVA_PC_re_Arts_Culture_Heritage.pdf, Arts and Heritage are but two (2) components of Public Culture (along with Festivals, Recreation, etc.), and the word “Arts” is in fact exclusionary to many cultural groups. See Figure 1, attached.

1. *Per capita* financial allocation: This is presented as the first recommendation, has in fact already been initiated, and may seem to be the most important point, but this falls more under the “effort” column. There needs to be a sustaining period, to allow groups to catch-up with the increased opportunity for funding (and OAC budget not lost if not all spent in the year). We would note this allocation is still very low *per capita* for a city of this size, and compared to other many Canadian cities of any size. There needs to be a commitment on the part of Council to stay the course for 4 years and preferably 8. Mississauga cannot “do culture” overnight. In fact, it needs to be “cultured”. We have to allow time for our youth to grow up over an 8-year period, and then ensure we can retain them into adulthood, and not just import new residents.

Within the lifetime of this plan, we should see a generation who have grown up in Mississauga holding cultural positions in the City and in the Arts. The great demographic change over the last 30 years is slowing and now our public culture is stabilizing. Our youth (many of whom participated in the BC21 Visioning) should be expressing themselves and should be cultivated by the \$3.00 *per capita* that will be reached in 4 years. It is in the City's best interest to foster cultural activities and appreciation in order to create the next generation of board members and philanthropists.

We propose a new measurement in the annual Report Card (per recommendation # 33): The number of residents aged 30 years and under who are employed in Mississauga in the cultural sector.

The terminology of “allocation” vs. “actual transfer” needs to be defined and a metric derived. Use of the term “investment” in the 12th metric under #33 (Report Card, p71) is ambiguous and needs to be clarified in this sense.

2. Mississauga Arts Stabilization Fund: For clarity, and in keeping with Recommendation #27 regarding the new name of the Office of Arts and Culture, this should be called the “Cultural Stabilization Fund”. There should be no doubt who may benefit from this fund.

3. City contribution to the Stabilization Fund: Change the word “arts” to “cultural”. What further commitment will the City need to make in coming years – how will this be determined and ensured, e.g. during uncertain economic times? How can this be measured as an appropriate contribution / percentage? (see note under #1). The initial \$300,000 will not be enough for this objective and as a point of comparison note that \$300K was given to the Gay Pride Parade in Toronto recently.

4. Roundtable re Stabilization Fund: Absolutely, and with a greater clarity of the purpose of the Fund. At the Master Plan stage, this should be clearly stated.

5. Information sessions with the cultural community re the Stabilization Fund: Yes! and again, ensure clarity.

6. Mayor's session with corporations re the Stabilization Fund: We find the phrase "Fortune 500" to be somewhat elitist and exclusionary, to no benefit. We think the sentence should read: "... to brief representatives of corporations headquartered in Mississauga and other selected corporate representatives on the benefits of the cultural stabilization program...."

We would note it is in the City's best interest to invest in Culture: a city that is alive with culture attracts great corporations and their employees to expand the tax base and make these kind of ongoing corporate contributions.

7. and 8. Museums; Heritage Planning under OAC: These 'org chart' recommendations closely mirror what we said in our original submission. There should be a bottom-up, as well as a top-down, annual evaluation of the impact of the reorganization of the identified departments into the Office Of Arts & Culture, to verify the effectiveness of this change. Further, the current organization chart prohibits certain City staff from sitting on some subcommittees where they could arguably serve important advisory and informational roles: these prohibitions need to be reviewed and amended where possible.

It is also essential that Heritage Planning staff be given physical proximity to the Planning and Building staff with whom they work.

[8.2] The Art Gallery of Mississauga should be given its own section and Recommendation as well. In a city the size of Mississauga, we should have a professional gallery with juried shows in addition to profiling local artists. Extending the reach into the community through satellite galleries will enhance the positioning and promotion of the rich artistic cultures of Mississauga. Themed shows should be mounted that highlight the diversity of our citizens. In order to do this, a dedicated and realistic budget must be allocated through a formalized business plan with a succession component.

9. Additional Heritage Planning: Hear! Hear! This is long-overdue. How will this be determined and ensured? The effectiveness and adequacy of this expenditure needs to be measured as well. We propose a new measurement in the annual Report Card (per recommendation # 33): % of development applications reviewed; the number of building demolitions which occur due to poor timing (i.e. lack of Heritage Planning staff to deal with development applications); number of Heritage Impact Statements generated (should be able to increase in reflection of an infill phase in the City); number of listings and designations achieved as our City's built inventory ages; increased cultural landscape assessments. Right now, due to inadequate staffing, the process is reactive, instead of proactive, and the 30-90 day statutory period to complete assessments is resulting in lost opportunities.

10. Additional Museum staff: Ditto, and extrapolate from above. Also, it needs to be explicit that we want and need more museums.

11. Scope of the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC): HAC is a volunteer committee appointed by Council, which has developed its own citizen-driven mandate and vision. The OAC should support, rather than direct, the work of HAC, and the Committee should report to Council regarding its needs in order to fulfill the existing and any expanded mandate.

12. Review of the roles of heritage organizations: It appears this pertains to the roles and interactions of the "Heritage Four". That being the case, the word "library" should be changed to "Canadiana Room", and the entire sentence be rephrased explicitly as: "...facilitate a review of the roles and responsibilities among the Heritage Four: Heritage Mississauga, Museums of Mississauga, the Heritage Advisory Committee and the Canadiana Reading Room." There already appears to be good cooperation amongst these 4 groups! Perhaps the Heritage Planning group's liaison with Heritage Mississauga and HAC needs to be explicitly clarified.

13. Celebrations and Festival Strategy through non-funding methods: Yes. It is not enough to throw money at these groups (per increased funding). Content generation needs to be supported.

14. Transfer of above to OAC: This is an 'org chart' recommendation to be worked out within the Community Services Dept.

15. Cultural Infrastructure policy: This recommendation is not measurable and it is unknown what Council would be committing to with this statement. This raises the question as to when anything will actually happen (Presumably, this means no budget and programming reflecting the Policy would be in place until January 2011!). Related directly to our situation in Port Credit, the possible public adaptive and cultural re-use of the Post Office property, which the City intends to designate once it is transferred to non-federal ownership, could not even be evaluated for public acquisition under the terms of this recommendation – the P.O. will be on the market again as soon as Fall 2009. There are other properties in the City, e.g. the small-arms factory in Lakeview and the Fusion building in Clarkson, which require timely decision-making. And the need for more museums is one of the urgent requirements.

See also #40.2 below regarding built heritage policy.

We are uncertain why "Library Services" appears at the bottom of the chart directly below this recommendation (p62). Our understanding is that a **Libraries Master Plan** is being created separately as part of the Future Directions 2009 Master Planning process, just begun. It should be made clear which process will comprehensively affirm the role of libraries in our community, especially since the public will be involved with the latter.

16. Capital funding of cultural infrastructure: We are unsure what the word "quantum" means in this context, and want to know what Council is committing to.

17. Cultural development in Mississauga: We believe this single sentence needs to be rephrased as: "That cultural development in Mississauga should be City-oriented [rather than *community driven*] and cultural-sector [rather than *neighbourhood*] focused." This really is the crux of the matter. This is what will lead to a City-wide identity. The preamble in this section (p63) states: "There appears to be no rationale for cultural facility distribution overall within the city – as there is for branch libraries, parks, schools, recreation centres and other community amenities. Further, there appears to be no rationale for how cultural resources might be deployed in individual neighbourhoods either as amenities or as contributors to a critical mass of complementary uses which create a desirable destination."

The solution to this question is in effect the **Culture Master Plan**. It has yet to be written, but as a general principle we would suggest that the City cannot use a *per capita* or geographic distribution algorithm, as must be done for standardized and equalized services such as neighbourhood schools and libraries, etc. Spreading money out around the whole City will dilute the initial effort to create momentum and a significant cultural destination. This will also take political resolve – in this case we must think like a City, not like a collection of Wards. See comments under #36 Pilot Project.

Success should not be tied to formulaic Ward distribution (per the 8th metric on the Report Card - p71) but rather:

- a) the # of centres of excellence and/or
- b) the number of established cultural nodes, wherever they may be.

As stated below, perhaps the Ward approach could be taken with regard to #40 - Public Art.

18. Cultural infrastructure development capacity by 2010: This recommendation supports our contention made under #17, above. As this section states: "Cultural facilities don't just come to a

community, they have to be built through community leadership....” We suggest the phrase “community development model” be replaced with “cultural node model” to reflect the OAC guidance that can be brought to the goal of developing cultural centres of excellence as justified and supported by the communities themselves. Culture grows through evolution rather than engineering, and therefore, so must the facilities that house such endeavours.

19. thru 23. Advocacy, administration and budgeting by the OAC: Of course; though ‘org chart’ and budget specifics are not provided – what is Council approving? Regarding #22 – 23 (10-year forecasts), see notes under #15, 17 and 18.

24. Separate study of the LAC: We understand the Living Arts Centre was excluded from the terms of reference for the Arts and Culture Master Plan Review for very specific reasons, but as stated in the preamble to this section of the report (p65), the LAC is “a central and critical piece of the cultural infrastructure of Mississauga.” We would anticipate that findings in the LAC study may affect previous recommendations e.g. regarding the 2011 capital budget. This follow-on study of the LAC should be completed expeditiously, to enable the entire Master Plan to then move forward cohesively. Perhaps other major cultural facilities (e.g. Meadowvale Theatre) should also be included in this study. Jumping ahead, in our discussions it was felt that the LAC should be supported by the City to the extent that it can be a success; otherwise, do not support it.

25. Five-year review of the Master Plan in 2014: We suggest instead a “Periodic Process Evaluation” be conducted internally, to look beyond the trending of the metrics in the annual Report Card. It is valuable to check with the big picture and identify fresh opportunities and potential gaps, but without the cost of a Master Plan Review. We suggest the dates of May 2010 (coinciding with the first Report Card), May 2014 and May 2018. See notes under #1 above, concerning evaluation of the first 4 years of *per capita* funding increases, and a further 4 years to evaluate the impact on home-grown employment and opportunities.

This Master Plan Review is the third study in seven (7) years. The cultural community and interested citizens are a little weary. This Master Plan needs time to evolve and “set” before the disruption and uncertainty of yet another review. The annual Report Card (per #33) should be adequate to determine the need for fine-tuning within the broad brush-strokes of this Plan and further strategies that are yet to be developed by the OAC. The next review should be triggered by a clear need (as would be identifiable through the annual Report Card) and not artificially timed. With a “next Master Plan Review” date in place, decisions by Year 4 and certainly within Year 5 are bound to be delayed, and staff will be working to timetable instead of the goals.

26. Interdepartmental Culture Team: Of course. This serves to underscore the fact that Mississauga’s cultural interests must permeate the functioning of all departments for a true identity to be fostered, and coordinated implementation to happen. We state this emphatically. The Pilot Project (#36) will be an excellent test run of this interdepartmental approach (#37).

27. Rename the OAC: We suggest that the new name align with other partners and affiliates. Instead of the “Mississauga Culture Office” which literally sounds officious, bureaucratic and unapproachable, we suggest “Culture Mississauga”.

This would tie in nicely with a future and complementary “Tourism Mississauga” function which we proposed in our original submission.

28. Network of Cultural partnerships: The proposed Arts Stabilization Board. Per #2 above, we suggest the name “Cultural Stabilization Board”. We think discussion of this concept should be presented in conjunction with the Cultural Stabilization Fund (#4). There are a lot of cross-connections being proposed here, with all the inherent management challenges. Terms of Reference and funding

allocations to support this networking needs to be made clear and adequately supported through staffing and meaningfully measured as to effectiveness, which still needs to be defined. There is currently nothing in the Report Card (#33) about partnerships. As implied in the recommendation, quantity is not sufficient.

29. Review of leadership roles and responsibilities in the arts sector: We suggest the word “discussion” instead of “review” and “cultural” instead of “arts”. This should not be a “telling” by the OAC. See note under #44.

30. Cultural resource database: This recommendation should include the phrase “communicate and promote” in addition to “maintain and improve.”

31. Business plan for the cultural database: Of course.

32. Cultural mapping partnership: It appears that “Museums” should be listed in the supporting chart (p70) in place of the first instance of “Mississauga Arts Council” (under the City Stakeholders heading). We believe that “Ratepayer, Community and Special Interest groups” should be listed under a third heading called “Resident Stakeholders”. Citizens need to be represented in the partnership.

33. Annual Report Card: This is an excellent idea, and measurements should be created for most of the Recommendations. This should begin in May 2010. We have noted additional areas where we believe defined parameters would be indicative of progress:

- #1 – cultural sector employment of residents aged 30 and under
- #1; 3 – money allocated vs. actually transferred (clarification required for 12th metric (p71))
- #9 – percentage of development applications reviewed; the number of building demolitions which occur due to poor timing, and other metrics listed under #9
- #17 – cultural development by node/centre of excellence rather than by Ward
- #28 – need to track the number and nature of cultural partnerships
- #40 – public art installations by Ward

The terminology of “allocation” vs. “actual transfer” needs to be defined and a metric derived. Use of the term “investment” in the 12th metric in the chart under #33 (p71) is ambiguous and needs to be clarified in this sense.

34. E-maps application on the cultural database: This should be integrated with #30.

35. Cultural website: Integrate the design and implementation with #30 (and #34) for a seamless and cost-effective user interface.

36. Select a Cultural Node for a pilot project: We see the best hope for short-term tangible results centering on a Pilot Project. As stated at the April 16 public meeting in response to a question, the ACMPR team has worked closely with the Downtown21 Master Plan group, however, DT21 is mentioned only in passing under recommendation #24, regarding the LAC.

The ideas emanating from DT21 are focused and specific, with a commitment to action on the ground within the short term, inspired and indeed mandated by the massive public input during the Visioning process for the City’s new Strategic Plan. Tying in a cultural pilot project to the exciting street-oriented plans for the initial focal area of the Downtown 21 project (e.g. a themed cultural garden) will enable a synergy of effort, expenditure and outcomes, with the components of civic identity, tourism, heritage and land-use planning, transportation (active and transit) and community amenities already understood and integrated into the Downtown Plan by the DT21 consultants.

Port Credit (and we believe Streetsville) will manage just fine in the interim, and will undoubtedly be designated at some point as the cultural nodes they already are, once the pilot project proves a success and stays up and running (surely the goal). Port Credit and Streetsville have strong BIAs, engaged citizens and mainstreet, natural and public realm infrastructure conducive to both programmed and spontaneous public culture. We would note that during the Port Credit District Policies review and creation of the *Directions Report* (Oct. 2008), there were discussions about converting the boat storage areas in Port Credit Harbour Marina into galleries, restaurants, small theatre and retail shops.

The pilot project at the City Centre is the “tough one” and lacks all the above advantages, but is the best opportunity to yield tangible results soonest, while achieving multiple objectives. Citizens will certainly be engaged after the fact! At last, Mississauga may begin to realize itself in a meaningful way, with the downtown a germinating source of pride and identity to residents City-wide. All else will spring from that, and we are relaxed enough about Port Credit’s place in the City to desire other strong destinations to be created. As stated in our previous submission: connect the cultural hubs with transit and active transportation modes.

[36.2]. Community Improvement Plans: We very much support this entire section, including “Form Based Zoning” which melds the issues of cultural development and public realm. It is especially important to “preserve and adaptively reuse heritage and industrial buildings” as stated in the supporting chart, as these are sometimes opportunities that must be pounced on, or otherwise they turn into missed opportunities (e.g. the Port Credit Post Office). This is the kind of detail that we appreciate in this Master Plan, and we believe it should be tied to its own separately-numbered recommendation.

37. Pilot Project Advisory Group: See related notes under #26 and #36.

38. Parking Strategy: All three (3) potential pilot project locations should be assessed on this basis as soon as possible, as this is a problem now in Port Credit, Streetsville and the City Centre.

39. Signage Strategy: Same comment as for #38. We further suggest that privately-owned digital signs and billboards facing public roadways and gathering areas be accessible (e.g. up to 20% of the annual posting) at no cost to cultural and non-profit groups as part of the signage approval process.

40. Public Art Coordination: This is where the objective of: “community driven and neighbourhood focused” cultural development must certainly be employed (per #17). As well, the broader Public Art objective needs to be met through the *Framework* cited for the City as a whole. Public Art is an excellent place making tool, but there needs to be a well planned and structured framework for the art to showcase. Public art needs to stand the test of time and be memorable. A Public Art ‘framework’ should help to define public art opportunities throughout the city and thread some of them together. It would be inclusive of architecture, civic spaces, gardens and infrastructure.

We believe the new role of Public Art Coordinator as defined here has already been pioneered and boldly accomplished by Joanne Foote, Parks Program Coordinator in Community Services, who has undertaken projects regarding graffiti, murals, and tree stump carvings, for instance, all with attention to very distinct community contexts. Bravo!

A Report Card item (under #33) for public art should be established to track the number of community-oriented projects developed by Ward.

[40.2] Historic built form: A single paragraph appears under recommendation #40 (p76) which seems lost in the shuffle between discussion of public art and public infrastructure. It’s both! We believe this should have its own section and recommendation, which would serve as the City’s stated position on built heritage assets, and support the Vision for Heritage.

We suggest the formal inventory and mapping exercises include historic architecture, civic spaces and landscapes so that the public has a better understanding of the significance of these buildings, places and spaces in the city's 'cultural' past. This type of inventory would serve to inform future decisions about use and programming opportunities.

41. Artful public infrastructure projects: BRAVO! A must! Specific provision needs to be made for 'civic open spaces'. Many important park spaces in the urban environment are not 'natural', but will benefit especially from artful design (e.g. the parkette at the SE corner of Dundas and Hurontario).

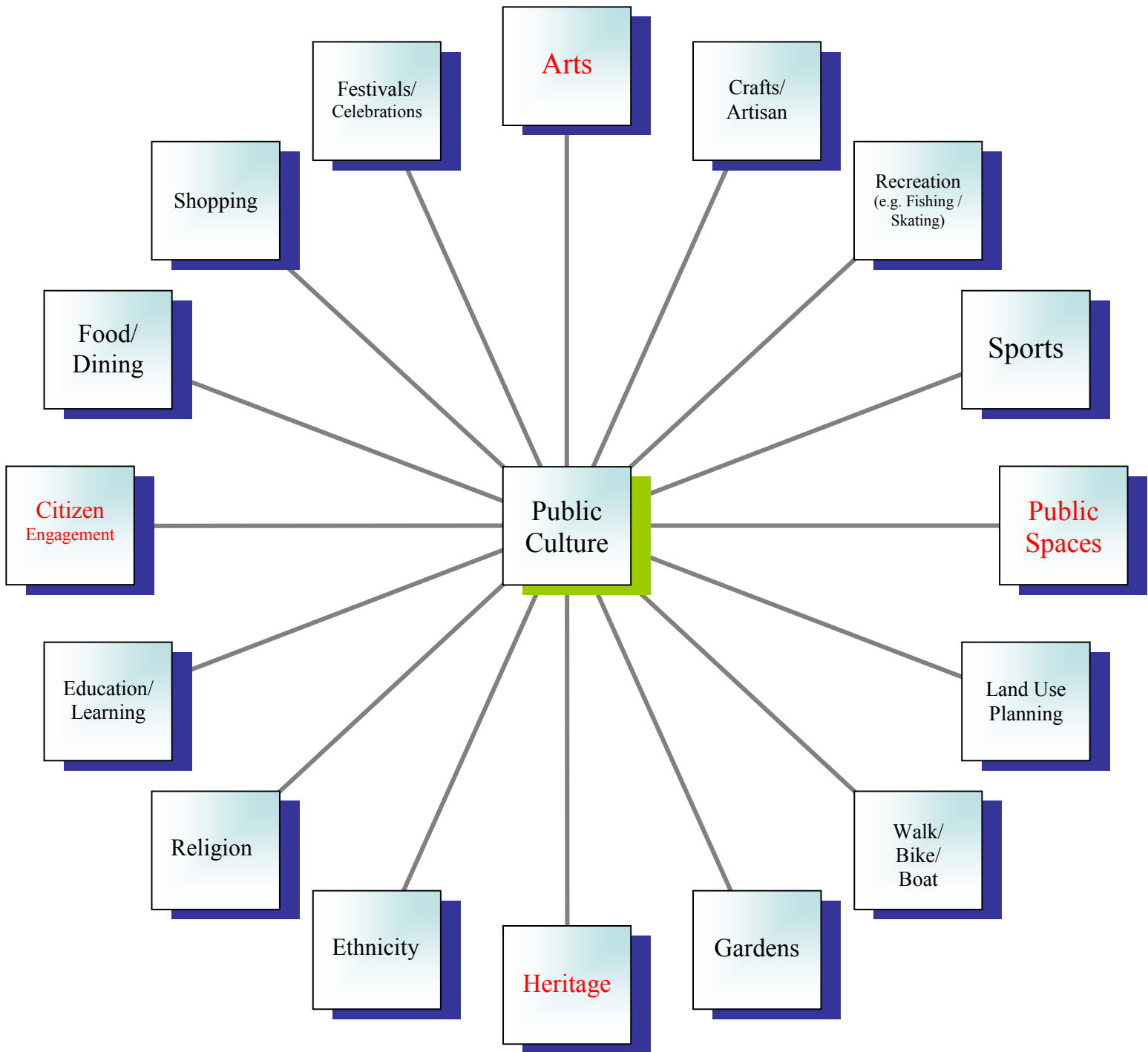
[41.2] Public gardens: We believe this portion (p77) should not be included in Public Infrastructure projects (#41) but broken out as a separate piece and recommendation entitled: **Natural Cultural Heritage**. This will require coordination with the Forestry and Horticulture staff functions as well as artistic and landscape architecture resources.

42. Affordable live/work space for artists: In Port Credit and Lakeview we suggest this issue be looked at by the respective Advisory Panels now in place to advise on the new District Policies for these 2 communities, given that it is very community-specific and a land-use planning mandate. We are unclear what the "project advisory group" is, which is referenced in the recommendation.

43. OAC Promotion of MBEC services: We are unsure why this recommendation is in the Draft Plan. Perhaps MBEC should promote itself, or should this be done through the Mississauga Arts Council?

44. Role of the Mississauga Arts Council: Ties in with the issues raised in #29, and should be incorporated there for clarity.

FIGURE 1: PUBLIC CULTURE IN PORT CREDIT (and MISSISSAUGA)



Heritage:

- Built form (architecture)
- Natural geography
- Mature trees
- Social history
- Artifacts (museums)