City of Kawartha Lakes

Cultural Master Plan 2026 – 2036

Public Workshop

April 15, 2026

Kawartha Lakes Jump In

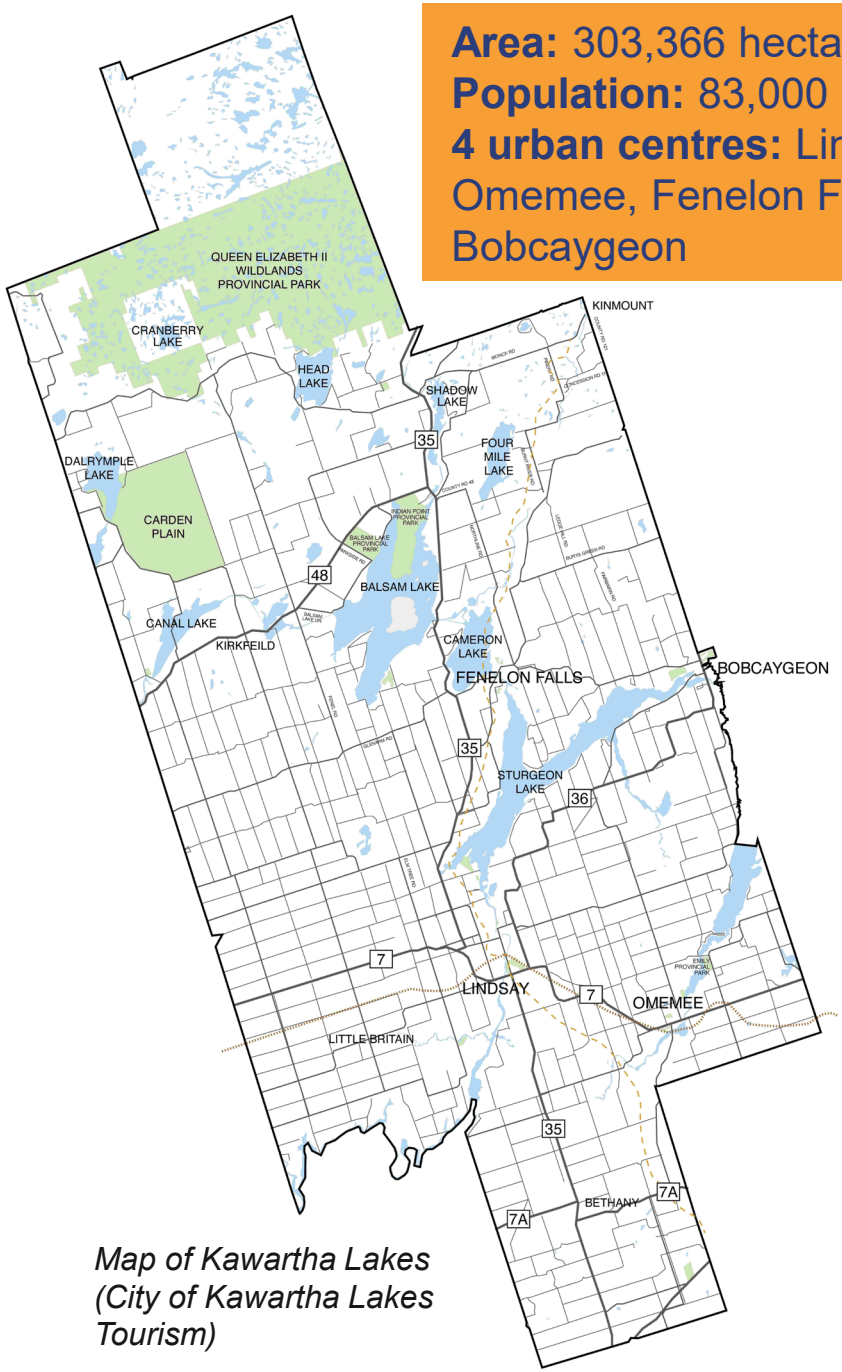
TCI Management Consultants

The Planning Partnership

Objectives of the Cultural Plan Refresh

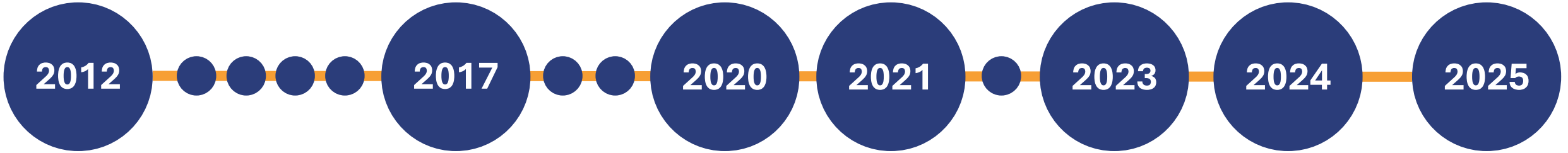
- Review, assess, and update or refine the vision, strategic priorities, and objectives of the current CMP (2020-2030).
- Include the investments made by Council and the community since 2020
- Recognize the changing landscape of culture in Kawartha Lakes influenced both locally and more broadly and associated challenges and opportunit
- Reflect the community's values and priorities
- Consolidate municipal cultural initiatives into a strategic document to guide a vibrant cultural program
- Greater focus on the commercial side of the creative sector: film and TV; sound recording; creative desigr (not a major focus of the 2020 plan)

Area: 303,366 hectares
Population: 83,000
4 urban centres: Lindsay, Omemee, Fenelon Falls, Bobcaygeon



Map of Kawartha Lakes (City of Kawartha Lakes Tourism)

Policy Context: Chronology of Plans



2012

Heritage Master Plan

Official Plan

2017

Sport & Recreation Strategy

2020

Cultural Plan, 2020-2030

2021

Destination Development Plan

Public Art Policy

2023

Public Library Strategic Plan, 2023-2025

2024

Heritage Conservation District Plan

Culture Centre Feasibility Study

Strategic Plan, 2024-2027

2025

Economic Development Strategy, 2025-2029

Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2025-2040

Archaeological Resources Management Plan

Asset Management Plan, 2025-2035

Growth Management Strategy, 2025-2051

Structure of the Current Cultural Master Plan 2020-2030

Priority One: Build Cultural Sector Capacity

Priority Two: Address Local Factors Inhibiting Cultural Sector Growth

Priority Three: Improve Cultural Spaces and Places

Priority Four: Expand Cultural Sector Funding Options

Priority Five: Develop Cultural Products Based on Authentic Local Culture

Priority Six: Collaborate and Build Partnerships

Priority Seven: Strengthen Cultural Promotion and Marketing

Significant Positi
of Arts and Cultu
Kawartha Lakes

Ontario Arts Council defines seven core domains as comprising the ‘creative sector’



Significant Positive Impact of Arts and Culture in Kawartha Lakes

in Central Ontario Region (which includes Kawartha Lakes) impact of this sector is:

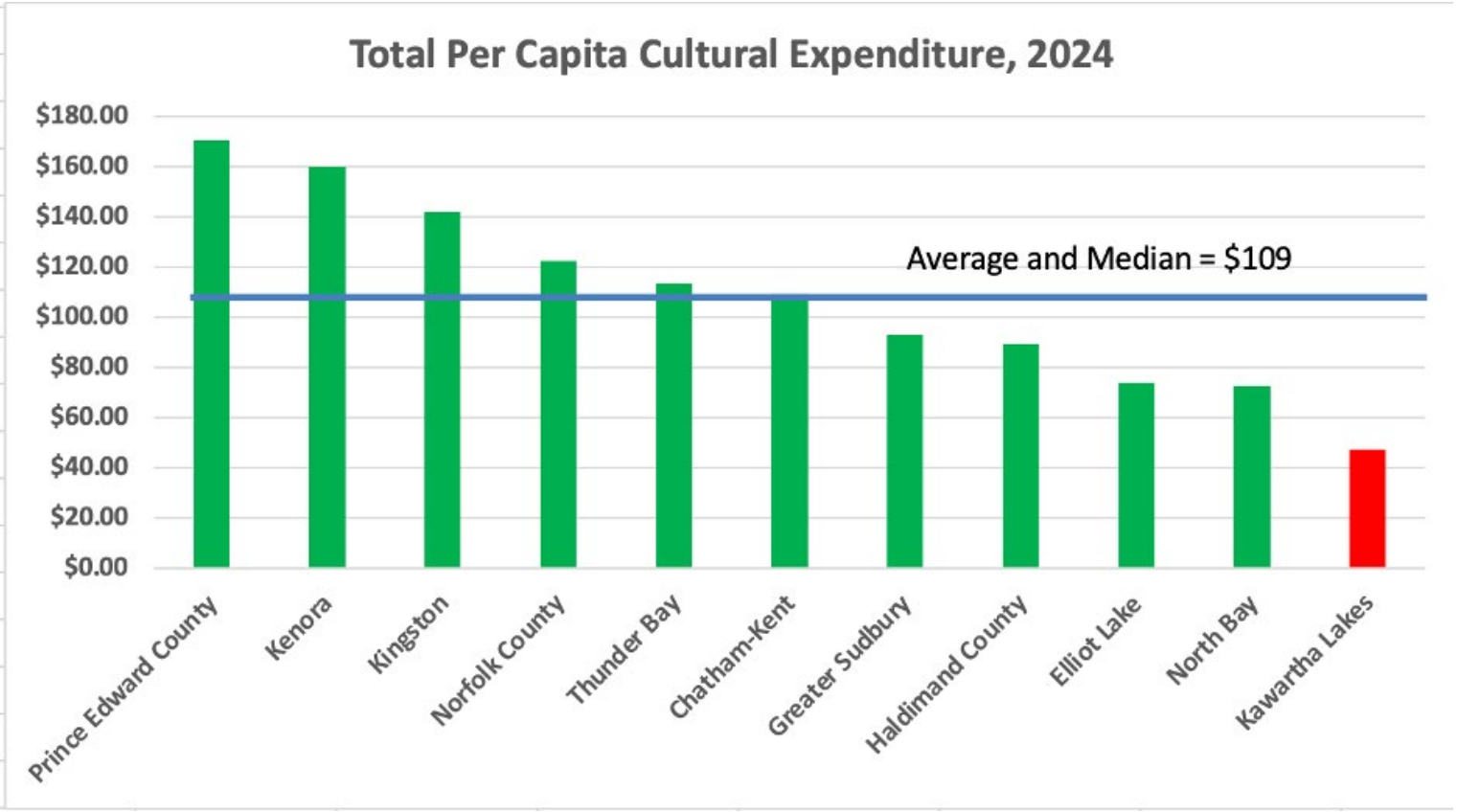
- ✓ $1.1 billion in GDP
- ✓ 15,900 jobs
- ✓ plus associated wages and taxes

estimating for Kawartha Lakes, impact of the sector is:

- ✓ nearly 1,000 jobs
- ✓ $67 million in GDP
- ✓ plus associated wages and taxes

Benchmarking: 10 Ontario Communities

Financial Information Return (FIR) data reveals that Kawartha Lakes ranks **among the lowest of comparable communities for Cultural Expenditures per capita**



10 Ontario communities of similar scale to Kawartha Lakes:

- Greater Sudbury
- Chatham-Kent
- Norfolk County
- Haldimand County
- Prince Edward County
- Elliot Lake
- Kingston
- Thunder Bay
- North Bay
- Kenora

Benchmarking: 10 Ontario Communities

However, Kawartha Lakes is mid point when looking at the total revenue budget for the benchmark set in 2024, from Financial Information Return data as well as the per capita revenue figures.

Municipality	2024 Revenue Base ($millions)	Per Capita Revenue Base
Thunder Bay	$699.3	$6,391
Kingston	$710.0	$5,146
Greater Sudbury	$857.0	$5,079
Chatham-Kent	$513.0	$4,867
Kenora	$65.5	$4,401
Norfolk County	$295.1	$4,236
Kawartha Lakes	$322.2	$3,946
North Bay	$201.9	$3,784
Haldimand County	$193.8	$3,762
Prince Edward County	$97.6	$3,649
Eliot Lake (2023)	$34.7	$2,986

Who We've Spoken With So Far

12
City Staff

4
Councillors

18+
Community groups

- Manvers Historical Society
- Kawartha Lakes Museum and Archives
- Manager of Corporate Records and Archival Services
- Lindsay Little Theatre
- Kawartha Art Gallery
- Flato Academy Theatre
- Boyd Heritage Museum
- Kawartha Settlers Village
- Colborne Street Gallery Group
- Globus Theatre
- Colborne Art Gallery Group
- Kirkfield and District Historical Society
- The Grove
- Kinmount Railway Station
- Kawartha Lakes Weavers and Spinners
- Circle of Writers
- Kawartha Arts Network
- Fenelon Falls Arts Committee
- Municipal Heritage Committee

What We Are Hearing So Far

- Need stable funding and reduced reliance on grants and fundraising
- Shortage of spaces and facilities
- Culture must be distributed across communities, not centralized
- Over-reliance on volunteers
- Arts and culture is under-prioritized when compared to other recreation like sports
- Programming gaps (limited programming, lack of year-round activities, few opportunities for families)
- Public art + downtown revitalization to build community identity
- Arts and culture improves quality of life, builds community, supports mental health and aging
- Need better coordination and promotion/marketing
- Transportation barriers among communities

"A priority has to be a physical structure that says "we care about arts and culture"

"What we are doing has an opportunity to make the city more attractive"

What We Are Hearing

Visual Arts

- Small, volunteer-led organizations (Fenelon Arts Committee and Fenelon Station Gallery) with a focus on public art, downtown activation, cooperative gallery space
- Lack of suitable venues, seasonal and inadequate facilities, challenges recruiting and retaining volunteers
- Artists and organizers see strong civic pride and visitor interest but feel under-recognized by the municipality and under-resourced to contribute to/support place-making and tourism



“where would tiny communities be without a desire to build awareness of culture?”

What We Are Hearing

Museum & Historical Societies

- Maryboro Lodge and the Municipal Archives are central heritage institutions with significant City-owned collections, stewards of local stories, records, and artifacts
- Pressures around facility adequacy, environmental control, tools for digitization and interpretation
- Growing demand for research, donations and programming
- Desire to tell the “Kawartha Lakes story” through a Cultural Centre, expanded interpretation, conferences, and events, and to better integrate heritage assets into municipal decision-making and tourism efforts
- Olde Kirk is addressing major accessibility and structural deficiencies, still grapple with aging infrastructure, limited space, operating funding, and tension between upgrades and preservation

What We Are Hearing

Museum & Historical Societies

- Historical societies (like Manvers and District Historical Society at Olde Kirk) operate key local sites often in architecturally significant but fragile buildings
- Volunteer-driven, facing ongoing infrastructure, accessibility, and space constraints
- Need sustained operational funding, support for capital lifecycle planning, and help balancing heritage preservation with modern code and accessibility requirements
- Recognize synergies among the Societies



“want to attract a younger demographic”

What We Are Hearing

Live Theatre

- The Flato Academy Theatre has high utilization, significant annual attendance, large volunteer base, but operates with minimal municipal operating support and tight financial margins
- Grove Theatre has become a major cultural and economic driver
- Globus Theatre recent success in purchasing Lakeview Barn as their permanent venue - attracts is an economic driver in the community
- The Lindsay Little Theatre important to keep its own identity, poor signage, receives some funding specific to Lindsay (CHEST)
- All the theatres highlight capital and facility needs
- Stable, meaningful core funding is needed rather than relying on short-term grants



Summary of Top Themes for What We Are Hearing

1. Population growth presents major opportunity
2. Continuing population diversity
3. Volunteer capacity
4. Funding instability
5. Recognition of the arts as an economic engine
6. Greater focus on the creative economy

Summary Top Themes for What We Are Hearing

7. Recognize all towns and villages in the City
8. Facility needs across the board
9. Breaking down silos
10. Need for planning tools to align with arts and culture needs
11. Champion local stories

Next Steps

- Monitor the project web page for the online survey

jumpinkawarthalakes.ca/culturalmasterplan

- Continue to share your thoughts Kawartha@planpart.ca

- Compile the key components of the Strategy and actions for implementation

Focused Areas of Discussion

1) Heritage and Cultural Facilities
2) Film and Television Production
3) Music Production
4) Live Performance (theatre and music)
5) Visual Arts (including Public Art)

Activity:

Use the worksheets at your discussion table and work together share your thoughts