

Preliminary report

CITY OF KELOWNA Mayor's Youth Forum - Spring 2008

Overview and summary

The Mayor's Youth Forum is an opportunity for local youth (grades 10 through 12) to share their thoughts and ideas about local social planning issues. The focus of the fifth forum, held May 9, 2008, was on Arts and Culture (A&C) as it relates to the needs and desires of local youth.

This age cohort has a strong interest in A&C with the largest activities being music lessons/performance, dance and visual arts. The demand expressed was for more variety of productions, make it easier (transportation, cost, marketing reach) for youth to participate and cater more to youth in terms of production themes and design. One of the surprising findings was the breadth of interests; while many references were made to wanting more sport-fest-like events, there was also a strong interest in theatre, a broad range of musical performances and carnival/amusement entertainment.

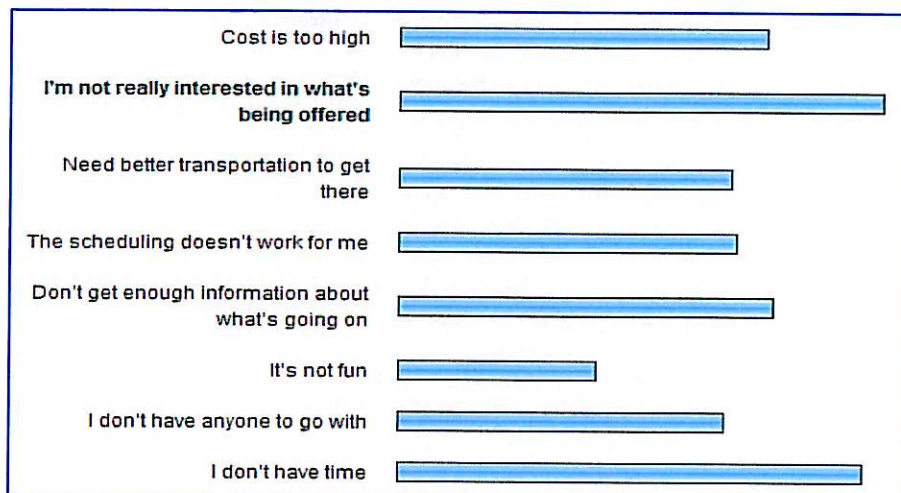
Methodology in brief

1. Steering committee met between January and May 2008.
2. The leadership teams at each of the seven high schools participated in unique art presentations from local artists and completed feedback surveys about the experience.
3. About 500 on-line surveys, including representation from all high schools, were completed collecting feedback about current A&C and desires for the future.
4. 50 youth took part in the full day forum May 9th at Kelowna Community Theatre to learn more about A&C as it related to community health, event planning from local experts and to experience creating a youth designed event.

Findings

1. The main barriers to participating in more A&C activities were (based on 500 surveys):

- not interested (events aren't catering to youth)
- don't have time (competes with school, sports, etc)
- don't get enough information (marketing doesn't reach them)
- scheduling, wanting someone to go with
- cost issue
- transportation (most requested locations to be served were, from most to least: Rutland, Mission, Westside, Lake Country, Glenmore)



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2. Events experienced by youth in other communities that Kelowna 'needs' (based on 500 surveys):

- Festivals: arts, exhibits, better museums
- Carnivals, Amusement
- Theatre: musical, Shakespeare, opera
- Wakefest-type, music festival
- Concerts: jazz, blues, Symphony, local bands

3. Reaction to A&C now and what do youth want Kelowna's A&C to be like in the future:



Our reaction now	What we want to say
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No venues • Outdoor festivals are outdated • Not accessible, downtown-focused • Lack of European culture • Selective, conservative, 'forced' • Hidden, needs exposure • Growing, 'up and coming', full of potential • Need more opportunities (ie: scholarships, public grants) • More art centres centralized • Boring, needs to be new and exciting • Repetitive, conformity, seasonal • Ignorance of what art is • No chance or opportunity (for youth) • Parks Alive could be better • Hard for young people to find things to do • Not unified • Feels like a retirement town • Some well funded events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh, new and exciting • Vibrant • Open to everyone • Varied culture • United multiculturalism • Open minded • More demographically suited • More venues • Availability • Acceptance/tolerance • Less stereotypical • Alive/active • Cater to everyone • More things to do • Unique



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Youth are interested

The youth delegates enjoyed the forum and saw real value in dialogue, such as these, with their age cohort. They were also very receptive to learning from local entrepreneurs and A&C planning experts. They reported that the value for them included:

- higher appreciation of A&C and what is involved (planning, costs, committee work, research, permits, risk, etc.)
- learning why arts and culture are so important to a community and the breadth of A&C
- learning about commercial A&C from local entrepreneurs
- learning about events that are already happening
- how to plan an event
- recognizing that this element of social planning is important to youth and important for our community

Youth see real value

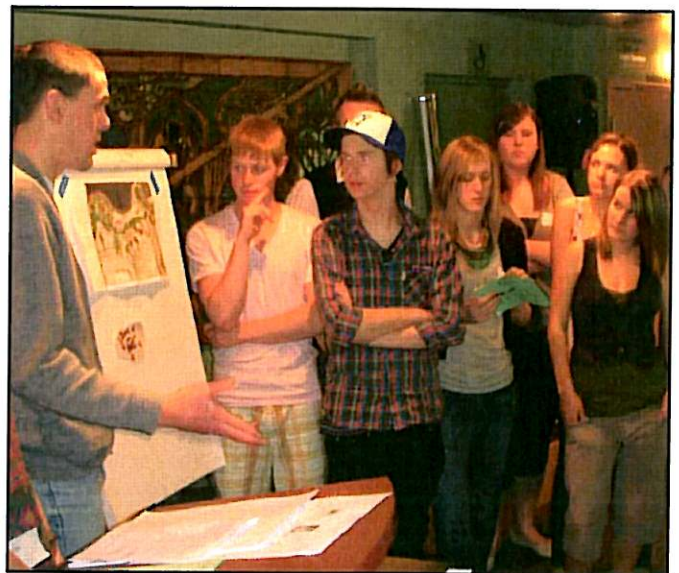
Youth delegates reported overwhelmingly in favour of the forums as a way to share their ideas and to learn and be more connected to civic planning. The benefits they reported included:

- a chance to speak out
- sharing of ideas with others
- youth learning to take initiative
- feel more connected to what is happening in the City
- gives a new perspective
- it's enlightening

Desired future topics for Kelowna Youth Forums

Desired topics for future forums cover a wide spectrum of topics from the environment to development planning and more on Arts and Culture:

- food in Kelowna, agriculture
- youth activities, recreation
- environment, water quality, pollution
- global issues, world hunger
- arts and culture: more murals in the city, music, venues, entertainment
- youth city council
- development, infrastructure, housing and zoning, roadways, architecture
- youth and the legal system
- sports, health and fitness
- homelessness
- seniors
- boating
- crime





YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Presentation to Kelowna City Council
Mayor's Youth Forum on "Culture Matters"
Monday, May 26th, 1:30 PM
City Council Chambers**

AGENDA

- 1. Introduction and general overview**
 - Development Manager, Recreation Parks and Culture - Reid Oddleifson
 - 2. Present overview of the forum, participation, partnerships, and results**
 - Marathon Communications – Linda Abbott-Simons
 - Introduce youth leaders
 - 3. Presentations by Youth Leaders**
 - Youth from the Steering Group will share their knowledge and experience from the "Culture Matters" youth forum
 - 4. Information on future forums**
 - Development Manager, Recreation Parks and Culture - Reid Oddleifson
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Youth Advisory Committee:

Committee Members: Mayor Shepherd, Councillor Rule and School Trustee Nicholl

Steering Group: Reid Oddleifson, Sheila Olcen, Linda Abbott-Simons, and Hugh Culver

Youth Steering Group: Max Walker, Stephanie Martens, Geoff Harris, Rebecca Desarlias, Shane Hickey, Reyna Zaremba, Ellen Campbell and Kirsty Rancier