



## Committee of the Whole Report

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**Report Number:** ED2025-007

**Meeting Date:** June 3, 2025

**Title:** Phase Three (3) Cultural Centre Workplan

**Description:** Cultural Centre Workplan including next steps and budget for Phase Three (3) Implementation

**Author and Title:** Donna Goodwin, Economic Development Officer – Arts and Culture  
Rebecca Mustard, Manager, Economic Development

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### Recommendations:

**That** Report ED2025-007, **Phase Three (3) Cultural Centre Workplan**, be received for information; and

**That** this recommendation be brought forward to Council for consideration at the next Regular Council Meeting.

**Department Head:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Financial/Legal/HR/Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chief Administrative Officer:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Background:**

The Kawartha Lakes Cultural Centre project is a shared vision of the community and municipality. This is a transformational project that has been developed with extensive public engagement to strengthen the creative economy and celebrate arts, culture and heritage in Kawartha Lakes.

At the November 19, 2024 Council meeting, Council received the Cultural Centre Phase Two (2) Report and requested staff return by the end of Q2, 2025 with the next steps and implementation plan for the Cultural Centre Phase Three (3):

### **CR2024-652**

**That** Report ED2024-044, **Phase Two – Cultural Centre Feasibility Study Findings**, be received;

**That** the Cultural Centre Feasibility Study and its Appendices attached as Appendix A and B to Report ED2024-044, be endorsed;

**That** Staff be directed to proceed to Phase Three (3) of the Cultural Centre Project, being site selection and design to develop the Cultural Centre, located on municipal water/wastewater services with a municipal operating model supported by hybrid governance model as detailed in the Task Force findings attached as Appendix C to Report ED2024-044;

**That** Staff report back to Council by end of Q2 2025 for Phase Three (3) next steps and implementation plan; and

**That** Council thank the members of the Cultural Centre Feasibility Study Task Force for their participation on the Task Force, being David Morrison, Christina Charpentier, Patrick Murphy, Tim Wiesner, Lisa Graves, and Laurie Dillion-Schalk and disband the Task Force.

**Carried**

This report addresses the November 2024 Council direction.

## **Rationale:**

Following the Council meeting in November, Staff continued to move this project forward. During Phase 2, Green Municipal Fund funding was received to evaluate the

feasibility of incorporating net zero design and construction into the Cultural Centre project. This technical work, based on the work completed in Phase 2, is scheduled to conclude in Q2, 2025, and will provide net zero recommendations that can be applied to a future Cultural Centre build.

Staff have also continued to engage the Kawartha Lakes community updating project information on Jump-In, and offering information sessions at the 14 library branches across the municipality.

This report marks a significant shift in the Cultural Centre project moving from **Feasibility** (Phases 1 and 2) to **Implementation** (Phase 3 Site Selection and Design, and, Phase 4 Construction). The intent of Phase 3 is to position the Cultural Centre project for construction (Phase 4). To do this, Staff have consulted with Divisions across the municipality and developed the following framework for implementing Phase 3:

1. **Site selection and acquisition:** Phases 1 and 2 identified specific site criteria for the Cultural Centre including accommodating the building space requirements, proximity to cultural partnerships, curb appeal, municipal servicing, context, scale and massing. This site criteria will be used to guide land acquisition. The Realty Services Division will bring forward a report to Council requesting direction to secure a site in Q3, 2025, and a future report to enter into negotiations to purchase.
2. **Building and site design:** Phase 3 includes the architectural work for the building and site design. This work will incorporate GMF net zero design features into the site design and construction requirements. Completing this work will position the project to proceed to Phase 4 Construction. This work will require the engagement of consultants.
3. **Governance and operating model refinement:** Phases 1 and 2 laid the foundation of governance and operating models for the project. Phase 3 requires a fulsome refinement of this work, decisions regarding the final governance model and an operation plan that is able to be operationalized upon completion of construction. This work will include refining community and guild participation in the operations of the Cultural Centre. This work will be lead by staff and require the engagement of consultants.
4. **Fundraising and financing framework:** Phases 1 and 2 identified several grant opportunities and offered initial input on fundraising opportunities specific

to the capital build. Phase 3 requires the development of an actionable framework to launch the fundraising and financing work. Based on previous work, it is anticipated that while the majority of construction costs will be absorbed by the municipality, there is substantial opportunity for obtaining government grants and community fundraising to contribute to the project. This work will be led by staff and require the engagement of consultants.

5. **Indigenous Consultation and Engagement:** Several First Nations and Metis have shared an interest in being engaged in Phase 3 of the Cultural Centre project.

Phase 3 site selection and acquisition is underway, and will continue following this Council report. Based on previous municipal site acquisition and building design projects, it is anticipated that the scope of work identified above will take between two (2) and four (4) years to complete. Staff appreciate the interest of the cultural community for this work to proceed as expediently as possible, and will endeavour to continue the project's momentum with a strategic approach.

### **Other Alternatives Considered:**

Council requested Staff to report in Q2, 2025, with the next steps and an implementation plan for Phase 3. This report addresses that recommendation, therefore no other alternatives have been considered.

### **Alignment to Strategic Priorities**

The Cultural Centre project implements Council's strategic priorities in the 2024-2027 Kawartha Lakes Strategic Plan:

1. A Vibrant and Growing Economy:  
Build economic development initiatives to support and expand existing businesses, attract new businesses, and expand local employment opportunities:
  - Complete the Cultural Centre Feasibility Study and assess recommendations for the preferred operating model and site location for a Cultural Centre
2. Good Government:  
Provide accountable government and responsible management of resources:

- Secure and advocate for provincial and federal government funding for municipal infrastructure and service delivery needs, and critical community infrastructure and project investments
- Ensure municipal assets are well maintained and well managed

## **Financial/Operation Impacts:**

The Cultural Centre Phase 3 budget includes costs of site acquisition, building and site design, governance and operating model refinement, fundraising and financing framework, and Indigenous consultation and engagement.

The financial capital cost and operational impacts of the Cultural Centre project was first projected in the Phase 1 Report, and further refined in the Phase 2 Report. The Phase 2 report estimated a capital construction cost range of \$34.9 million for a reused/renovated building with no below grade parking to \$46.1 million for a new building with below grade parking. This is a 2024 estimate which will be updated.

The Cultural Centre Phase 3 project was identified in the 2022 long-term capital budget to amount of \$2.46 million, forecast for 2025. Since 2022, a number of different factors have influenced the anticipated cost of the project including the conclusion of Phase 1 and 2 feasibility studies, the identified need to acquire a property, the introduction of potential net zero construction and operating considerations identified in the Green Municipal Fund project, the rising cost of construction, changes in provincial legislation, economic uncertainty, and the use of consulting services for scoped elements of project management. The forecast impact of these factors is an additional cost to Phase 3 of approximately \$4.9 million.

An updated financial forecast of the capital cost of the Cultural Centre project will be discussed through the 2026 capital budget deliberations. This updated financial forecast will include costs related to Phase 3 (Site Selection and Design) and Phase 4 (Construction).

## **Consultations:**

Chief Administrative Officer  
City Solicitor  
Director, Community Services  
Director, Corporate Services

Treasurer  
Manager, Records and Archival Services  
Manager, Building and Property  
Manager, Realty Services

**Attachments:**

None.

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**Department Head:** Leah Barrie, Director Development Services