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BeautifulCity.ca Alliance

411 Initiative for Change
ACS Student Union
Agents of Change
Art City
Art Gallery of Ontario
Arts Etobicoke
Artreach Toronto
Arts Network for Children and Youth
Artstarts
Artsvote
Canadian Youth Arts Network
CARFAC Ontario
Centre for Information & Community Services of Ontario
Centre for Integral Economics
Chinese Canadian National Council, Toronto Chapter
Dandyhorse Magazine
Elementary Teachers of Toronto
Eva's Initiatives
Evergreen
Fairlawn Neighbourhood Centre
Grassroots Youth Collaborative
Illegalsigns.ca
Kate Henderson Intellectual Property & Trademark
Lakeshore Arts
Lotus Leaf
Manifesto
Mural Routes
No.9 Contemporary Art & the Environment
OpenCity Projects
Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre
Ryerson Students' Union
Scarborough Arts Council
Schools Without Borders
Sketch
Social Planning Toronto
Spacing Magazine
Stunt Creative
Style in Progress
Sunnyside Community Association
TakingITGlobal
The Faculty Of
The Gladstone Hotel
The Remix Project
The Stop Community Food Centre
them.ca
Toronto Arts Foundation
Toronto Cyclists
Toronto Public Space Initiative
Toronto Youth Cabinet
University of Toronto Student Union
Urban Arts
Well and Good Art Space
Why Not Theatre
Youth Action Network
Youth Arts Walk

'COLLECTIONS' ART JAM AND TOWN HALL
Jan. 14th at City Hall. 6-9pm
Committee Room 1

BeautifulCity.ca Asks – 2013 Budget

- 1) An Arts and Culture reserve is established for the purpose of bringing investment up to competitive levels with other major Canadian cities - as per Council commitment in 2003, 2010 and 2011.
- 2) All past and future revenue from the billboard tax, less the cost of enforcing the Signs Bylaw, is placed in the Arts and Culture Reserve.
- 3) Funding is disbursed based on following-through on the priorities outlined in the *Creative Capital Gains Report*, endorsed unanimously by Council in May 2011. (These priorities include a focus on diversity and under-served communities across the city.)
- 4) Reaching \$25 per-capita is phased in over 3 years, starting with 7 million to the arts grants envelope in 2013 with 12.2 million in 2014 and 17.4 million recommended in 2015.

Timeline

- 2012** - Supreme Court of Canada upholds billboard tax.
- 2012** - Youth Arts Walk calls for stable investment in young people and celebrates role of arts and cultural programs in building healthy people and communities.
- 2012** - Ont. Court of Appeal grants City appeal, upholds tax 3-0.
- 2011** - City Council unanimously passes *Creative Capital Gains Report*.
- 2011** - PGM Committee unanimously approves appealing the grandfathering granted by Ontario Superior Court.
- 2010** - Billboard industry launches court case against City of Toronto.
- 2010** - City Council passes 40-1 recommendation to increase arts funding to \$25 per-capita by 2013 (including yes vote from then campaigning Mayor Ford.)
- 2010** - City budget passed with a motion to direct "the GM of Economic Development and Culture to submit a report to Exec. within the current mandate, on possible strategies for Arts and Culture funding in future years, taking into consideration the new revenue stream created by the Billboard Tax and Council's previously adopted Culture Plan."
- 2009** - City Council passed the billboard bylaw and tax at 10.4 million with a 29/12 decision. A motion was also passed that directed allotment of revenue to the budgeting process. This was accompanied by explicit direction from the Budgeting Chief that in no way should this be construed as taking the revenue away from the arts – only that the regular process should be followed in disbursing the funds.
- 2009** - EKOS finds that 70% of Torontonians support a billboard tax to fund art.
- 2009** - 300+ young people assemble in Council chambers for first town hall.
- 2007** - In *Revenue Tools Consultations*, Billboard tax for art achieves a broad spectrum of public support and as the cited as most popular in staff reports.
- 2007** - Council directs staff to report on billboard tax for arts and culture.
- 2007** - Environics finds that 7/10 Toronto voters think that the city should introduce a tax on billboards with revenue directed to public art through the TAC.
- 2005** - Pollara finds that majority support billboard fee to fund more public art.
- 2003** - Council approves the Culture Plan inc. reaching \$25 per-capita by 2008.
- 2001** - Idea of billboard fee to fund art in public spaces first introduced in *Creative City Youth Consultations*.

9 Reasons to Invest the Billboard Levy into Art

Putting the billboard levy into the arts is a big win for Toronto. Council gets to follow through on something it has promised to do and Toronto gets a more vibrant, creative city with no additional cost to the city budget or taxpayer. I invite my colleagues from across the political spectrum to follow through and deliver on our commitments to invest in arts and culture.

Councillor Gary Crawford | Chair, Mayor's Task Force for Arts and Theatres

1. Customer service | 70% of Toronto's citizens support the billboard levy for art across 3 independent polls ([link](#)) . According to a 2012 Market-Pulse survey of 1085 Torontonians, 58% "would be more likely to vote for a city councillor who supports funding for the arts." Only 21% disagree. ([link](#))

2. Follow-through on commitments | Over the past decade, Toronto City Council has made three unfulfilled commitments to enhancing Toronto's vibrancy and competitiveness including the *Creative Capital Gains Report* (Passed by Council, 2011) *Strategies for Arts and Culture Funding* (2010) and *The Cultural Plan for a Creative City* (2003.) The commitments included increasing funding to \$25 by 2008, and then once this was not met, by 2013. ([link](#))

3. Competitively invest in culture | Currently arts investment by Toronto ranks lowest by a wide margin among comparable Canadian Cities (Hill, 2012) and due to inflation, has eroded by over 5% in the past two years. ([link](#)) . According to a Market-Pulse poll from Dec. 2012, 67% of Torontonians agree that "on a per-person basis, the City of Toronto should invest as much funding in arts and culture as other major Canadian cities" Only 15 % disagree. ([link](#)) The average among comparable Canadian cities is \$35 per-capita.

4. Respect citizen engagement | Over a decade of mostly youth-led effort has been put into improving Toronto's shared spaces for citizens and businesses alike. The tax is broadly understood as going to the arts and city beautification as that is what was communicated publicly in Council's original direction, in eight plus public consultations, consultant reports, presentations to Council, press releases and statements and in most staff reports. ([link](#))

5. Unique tax | The billboard tax is not like other disputed taxes. It was introduced independently under Mayor Lastman in 2001 ([link](#)) specifically for arts and culture, is supported by a strong majority and was frequently cited in staff reports as popular.

6. Responsiveness | Over 60+ organizations endorse the idea from across Toronto and there are over 4700+ signatories from every Toronto ward.

7. Enhance diversity | An objective of BeautifulCity.ca and the original spirit of the levy was to balance and expand access to creative expression in public spaces.

8. Value shared spaces | Almost all other forms of advertising subsidize significant cultural content in exchange for the public's attention (e.g. TV includes 45 minutes of educational or entertaining content in exchange for 15 minutes of advertising – newspapers provide about 50/50.) Billboards, however, effectively give only advertising to the public as people have no choice in viewing the messages.

9. Build Toronto | According to EKOS Research, 80% of Torontonians think that government investment in arts in public spaces improves the local economy. ([link](#)) Vibrant public spaces enhance property values, improve safety, boost tourism, give something highly visible back to residents, create opportunities for small business and will help beautify and build the city.