

Regional District of North Okanagan  
Greater Vernon Advisory Committee  
9848 Aberdeen Road  
Coldstream, BC

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JAN 31 2012  
REGIONAL DISTRICT OF  
NORTH OKANAGAN

Dear Members of the Committee

We are aware that the Vernon Public Art Gallery (VPAG) recently asked the Greater Vernon Advisory Committee (GVAC) to invest in the arts, specifically in regard to both operations and capital construction for the Gallery. As a voice for the business community of Greater Vernon, I am writing on behalf of the Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce to encourage your investment in the Arts.

The Arts are an economic force in our society. According to a recent University of Victoria Study, Arts and Culture contributed \$170 million to their local economy in 2010. "At a time when economic recovery and employment are at the forefront of local, provincial and national strategies, these figures speak volumes about the importance and necessity of investing in the arts – not only for our quality of life, but for our ability to thrive economically," Mitchell Krieger, vice-president of the ProArt Alliance.

One of the points identified as an impediment to prosperity at a recent Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce board retreat was the lack of jobs for, and the retention of, our young workers. One area that our municipalities could invest in to support youth employment and career path development is in our local infrastructure, specifically Arts and Culture.

With our current municipal investment, funding of the Arts locally equates to about one third the average of their provincial counterparts. We need this to change and with organizations such as the Vernon Public Art Gallery who have been a part of our community's fabric for over 65 years, we need to recognize the valuable role they play in the economic and social well being of our community.

Therefore we fully support VPAG's request for ongoing funding and encourage committee and councils to provide capital investment in infrastructure for a new public art gallery.

Yours truly,  
Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce



Ken Macleod  
President,

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