

HC
117
.Y8
.C85
1987

DRAFT

YUKON DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

YUKON ENERGY, MINES
& RESOURCES LIBRARY
P.O. BOX 2733
WHITEHORSE, YUKON, Y1A 2G8

Y U K O N · 2 0 0 0

Building the Future

Yukon
Government

Cultural Industries Strategy

A Progress Report ■ April, 1987

Dance, theatre, music, arts and crafts, literature, film, painting, photography, sculpting and a variety of heritage-related activities give Yukoners many cultural opportunities - both as spectators and participants.

And while the Yukon's cultural identity has been altered by people who have moved here, the Yukon is fortunate to have an indigenous culture which goes back thousands of years. Indian culture today is alive and evolving.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the directions and options available to promote the economic opportunities that could arise from cultural activity in its many forms.

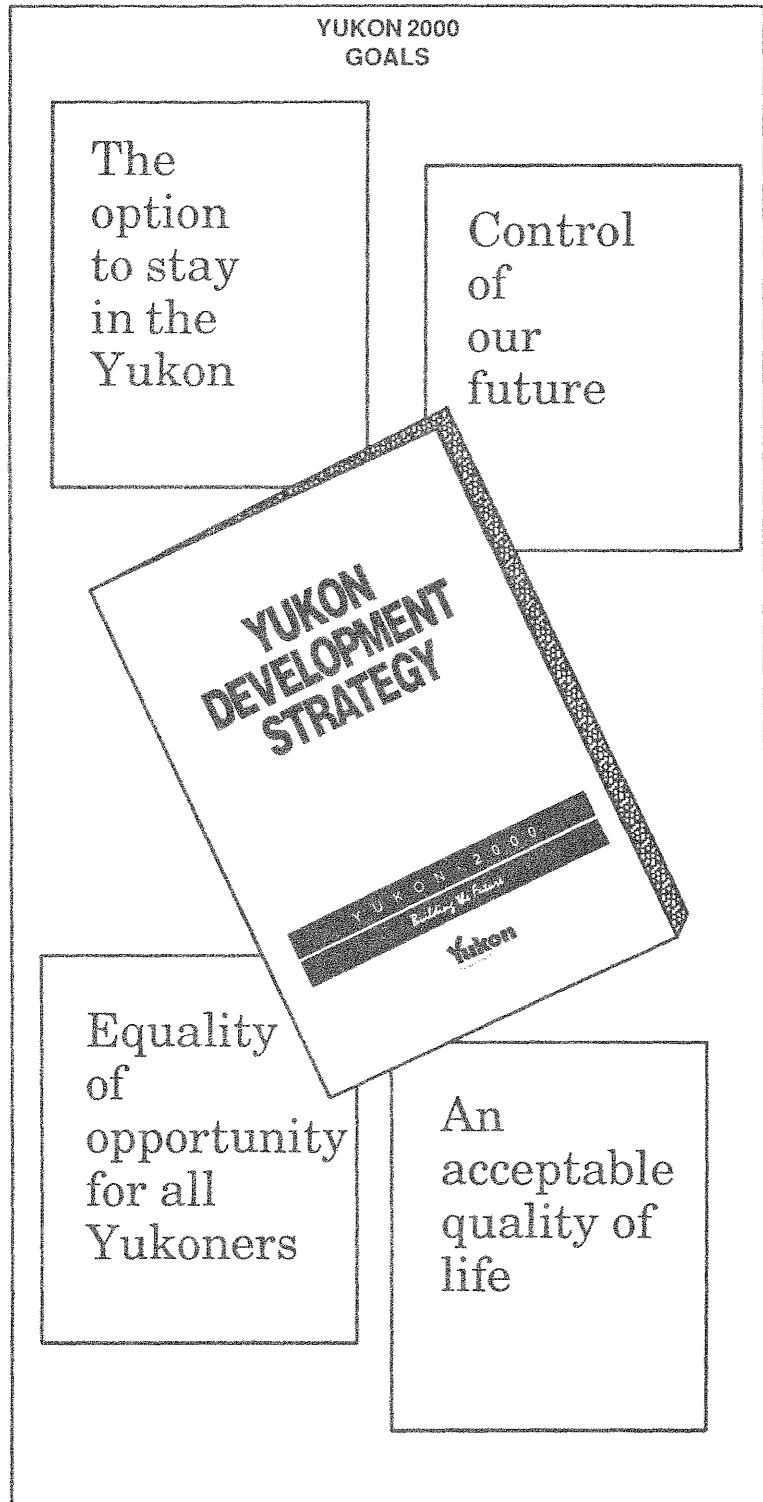
Cultural policy is often considered along with social policy. However, cultural policy is so closely tied to cultural industries that this strategy could not ignore the relationship between the two in the directions and options discussed here.

The growth and development of those involved in cultural activities is vital to the future of cultural industries in the territory.

Directions

1. Recognize culture as an economic activity.

- Drive cultural industries through a culture policy geared towards the development of the cultural community.
- Enhance the opportunities to perform, display and market products.



- Strengthen the links between cultural industries and other sectors of the economy, such as the tourism and communications industries.
- Establish a decision making mechanism in government and in the community to explore and implement policy and programs.

2. Provide government assistance in the development of cultural industries.

- Cultural development is a long term process and requires money and time to develop to professional levels. It also requires continuity in development policy.
- Create opportunities which will facilitate professional development and assist amateurs to make the jump to using their talent professionally.
- Provide development by fostering the exchange between Yukon artists and artists from other areas.

3. Provide marketing assistance to cultural industries.

- Assess the potential for the development of the different aspects of cultural industries.
- Assist in the marketing of commercial products both locally and for export.

4. Treat aboriginal culture separately in recognition of the unique opportunities in this area.

- Indian cultural attractions have a unique market value which could tap the tourist market.



Constraints

- * lack of policy direction from government
- * poor information on markets and marketing
- * inadequate facilities
- * the high cost of materials
- * inadequate training
- * insufficient funds for development
- * lack of operating capital



Options

1. Government, in consultation with the public, should develop a cultural policy which is geared toward the development of the cultural community.

In the course of developing the cultural policy, the following should be addressed:

- a review of government programs and services. This would include an examination of how programs and services can be made more effective and whether they should be consolidated under a single department.
- training for artists. Included in this is training in the areas of artistic development and business management.
- potential funding sources. This includes funding of cultural industries and assistance in helping amateurs make the jump to professional full-time artists once they reach that skill level.
- options for facilities. Joint-use projects, which incorporate workspace for artists along with other activities, and development of incubator malls are two options which should be assessed.

2. Take further advantage of the short tourist season by offering more cultural activities and diversifying what is offered tourists.

Specifically, a summer arts festival should be assessed. The festival could draw tourists to the Yukon while greatly increasing employment opportunities for local artists. The festival should be spread over the entire summer, incorporate existing cultural events, and take place in multiple locations. An important part of the festival should be the celebration of Indian crafts and culture.

The costs could be substantial and include wages, facilities, equipment and promotion material beyond that already produced by the Department of Tourism.

3. Develop marketing support for various Yukon products.

Craft items, sheet music, records, cassettes and scripts are amongst the products which may already have export potential.

Outlets could be encouraged to increase the sale of local artists products, for example by developing a mail order service. Another option is to set up retail outlets in other urban areas. Calgary, to capture the Olympic market, is one potential location. Other large cities with large tourist trades like Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal may also have potential. The government's involvement should be to provide development funds but in the long run these projects should be self-financing.

The development of a cooperative marketing strategy would mean individuals would not have to bear the entire burden of marketing their products.

Such a program would address labelling and packaging, promotional material, including artists' profiles, and licensing. Products specifically identified with the Yukon, and others which could be found anywhere, should be considered in the marketing strategy.

4. In addition to development funds, money should be set aside to build inventories of cultural industry products.

From a retailers' viewpoint, this will assure adequate quantities and a fair and stable price. The individual producers will have some assurance their products will be purchased and they will get a stable income.

5. Form co-ops or initiate cooperative efforts for purchasing and transporting materials.

The will to cooperate on this project should come from industry since industry should know where potential demand for this exists.

6. Commence a project to document Indian history, language and customs on a large scale.

Increasing the marketability of Indian culture will involve rediscovering it in some instances or interpreting it for the market in others. For example, one important project would involve mapping traditional movement patterns between communities and the accepted place names of locations in the Native

languages. Currently, they are known to Indians but unavailable to the tourist market, for example, who only get the non-Native history.

■ Training and Technical Support ■

7. Evaluate the feasibility of a summer art school, along the lines of the Banff Centre, which would provide a focal point for culture and provide training through resident and visiting instructors to local and other artists.

A summer school, for example, could showcase its activities at the festival discussed under markets and audience. The new arts centre in Whitehorse will provide a superb facility for this option.

8. Evaluate the feasibility of a school of Indian art.

An Indian art school, which could give instruction in many cultural areas, would foster indigenous culture. Indian arts and culture are not static but change and reflect the times. Institutions such as this provide a vehicle to exchange ideas and techniques which help develop the arts community. An institute here could become nationally renown.

9. Urge municipal governments to reexamine bylaws for doing business from the home to permit craft production and other non-intrusive business activities.

Many cultural activities have minimal impact on residential areas but fall under rigid zoning guidelines. The cost of this option is minimal but should be undertaken through arts organizations.

10. Urge businesses to provide space for artists to reduce costs in exchange for special breaks on zoning bylaws.

This is done in other cities. This could be achieved through the efforts of arts groups lobbying municipal governments in the territory.