HUDSON ARTS &
CULTURE COUNCIL

# Results of the Survey of Citizens and Businesses

**AUGUST 2024** 



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#### INTRODUCTION

In 2019, Hudson delegated a group of volunteers as the Hudson Arts & Culture Council (HA&CC). One of their tasks was to help develop an arts and culture policy for the town that aligns with the policy of the MRC and related policies at the provincial and federal levels.



In collaboration with Les Arts et La Ville, a para-public organization dedicated to helping communities in Quebec develop arts and culture policies, the HA&CC created a survey to find out which elements of arts and culture are important to the citizens of Hudson. This exercise helped to strengthen our conviction that arts and culture is more than entertainment: it includes such diverse aspects as the natural landscape and environment, language, heritage and history, traditions, recreation, sports and leisure; as well as literature, visual arts, fine crafts, and performing arts.

Thus, a comprehensive survey that includes all of the identified items was created with the goal of tapping into the appreciation, knowledge, and interests of our community. Providing our citizens with an opportunity to be heard will allow for the development of a cultural policy that meets the needs and expectations of the municipality and promotes the recognition and advancement of Hudson's arts and culture within the larger community.

We were delighted to receive a significant number of responses and comments that expressed Hudsonites' passion towards their community. We would like to thank the respondents for their level of participation; these constructive insights will contribute to building a valuable arts and culture policy with significant returns for our community.

**Chloe Hutchison**Mayor, Town of Hudson

Christopher Gobeil
Chair, Hudson Arts & Culture Council

#### METHODOLOGY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

From May 10<sup>th</sup> to June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, Hudson residents and business owners were invited to share their reflections on arts and culture via a survey. The survey was mailed to every household and business in Hudson in both English and French and was also made available online. A total of 437 surveys were received (371 English and 66 French) and compiled using the JotForm online survey software. This report is the analysis of those survey results.

The HA&CC is a group of volunteers appointed by Hudson Town Council. At the time of publication, the sitting members of the HA&CC comprise:

- Christopher Gobeil (Chair)
- Lynda Clouette-Mackay
- · Cam Gentile
- Genevieve Grenier (Secretary)
- · Jamie Nicholls
- Anile Prakash (Treasurer)
- · Kalina Skulska
- · Clint Ward

The HA&CC would like to thank the following people for their assistance in the completion of this project:

#### Chloe Hutchison

Mayor, Town of Hudson

#### **Reid Thompson**

Councillor responsible for arts and culture, Town of Hudson

#### Laura McCaffrey

Communications Coordinator, Town of Hudson

#### Elizabeth Wainwright

Director, Culture and Recreation, Town of Hudson

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Les Arts et la Ville/PIVO

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Translator

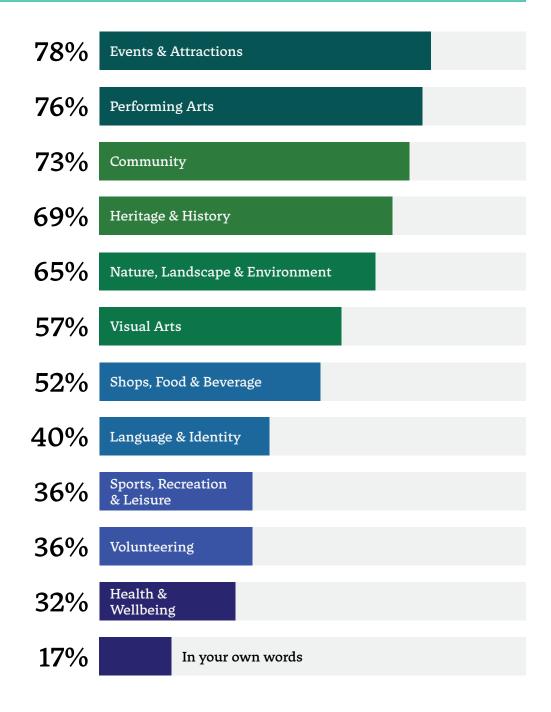
#### Genevieve Grenier, Karen DeLorme and Stéphane Hogue

Front and back cover photos



photo: Karen DeLorme and Stéphane Hogue

#### 1. IN YOUR OPINION, HOW DO YOU DEFINE CULTURE IN HUDSON?



<sup>\*</sup>Please note that throughout this report, some totals may equal more than 100% per question.

This is because respondents were given the option of selecting more than one response.

#### IN YOUR OWN WORDS: 1A.

"The shared values, beliefs, and practices that can be passed on to future generations through education and experiences."

« Côté musical, Hudson est bien choyée pour une si petite ville. Du côté conférences, théâtre, en français, je crois qu'il n'y a rien. »

"Culture is what defines a community, our artists are endemic to the quality of life."

"Caring community, forest bathing, nice venues, music/plays."

## "A sense of belonging to the community."

"A town that celebrates visual arts and music, attracts local and out of town talent."

### « Mise en valeur du patrimoine. »

« Communauté anglophone / clubs privés – golf – tennis – marina. »

"Culture is the art, language and look and feel of a community. It is the story we tell that defines us as a community."

"Diverse and active, involving the community."

« Évènements culturels et préservation. »

"Availability of parks and recreational facilities. Family and individual offerings and spaces that promote the arts - music / lit/fine arts/crafts/floral design etc."



photo: Hudson Village Theatre

#### 2. WHAT ELEMENTS OF A CULTURAL EXPERIENCE DO YOU ENJOY?

"Arts, music, performances, outdoor activities, nature, atmosphere of small, relaxed and welcoming town."

# "Opportunities to volunteer."

« L'aspect créatif et rassembleur.
La découverte de nouvelles choses ou façons différentes de présenter. La beauté que cela éveille en nous.
L'inspiration que cela crée. »

"Connection to the past, present and future, as well as to the community and nature. Elicits reflection on society, life and myself."

"The combination of culture and community. It makes Hudson a special place." "Heritage & history of which there is a lot in Hudson. I love learning about the local buildings and stories."

"The sense of community, togetherness, and the ease with which it's possible to create bonds and make new discoveries."

"Improving my 'culture générale', learning, preserving through enacting our culture."

« Le côté historique et la préservation du patrimoine. Le charme architectural des bâtiments, les paysages et l'environnement naturel. »

"I love seeing my neighbours and friends gather together to enjoy our lovely town for whatever cultural event is occurring. It's awesome to enjoy the event together. Such fun!"

« Lorsqu'il y a un respect du voisinage. »

"Seeing what artists are creating; discussing art with friends; creating art with family and friends; being entertained."

#### 3. WHAT ELEMENTS OF A CULTURAL EXPERIENCE BOTHER YOU?

"Nothing really, but it often feels that everything happens at the same time. It would be good if there was a central calendar and if all the groups could discuss their events (planning) in advance so there is less overlap."

« J'aimerais qu'il y ait plus d'évènements ou de pièces de théâtre en français.»

"I would like to see Hudson youth more included in having a voice in town plans and encouraged to represent their peers and ideas. This could be a leadership development position funded by the town."

"We have a lot of visual artists in the area and I believe their work would be highlighted if they had permission to indicate that they have a studio. I've travelled through many small towns and would only know there were artists there because of their signage."

## « Que la communauté anglophone n'est pas inclusive de la communauté francophone. »

"It bothers me when a cultural event is too self-serving and selfpromoting on the day. It bothers me when a large event is made unsafe but not closing off the street from vehicular traffic."

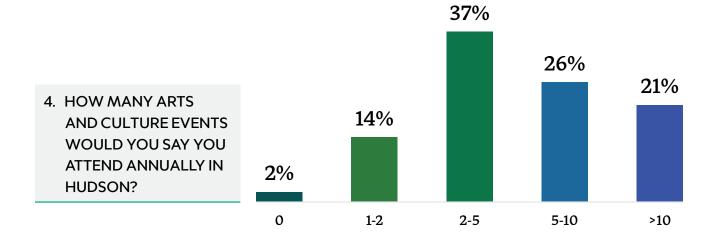
« Pas assez d'information avant l'évènement. »

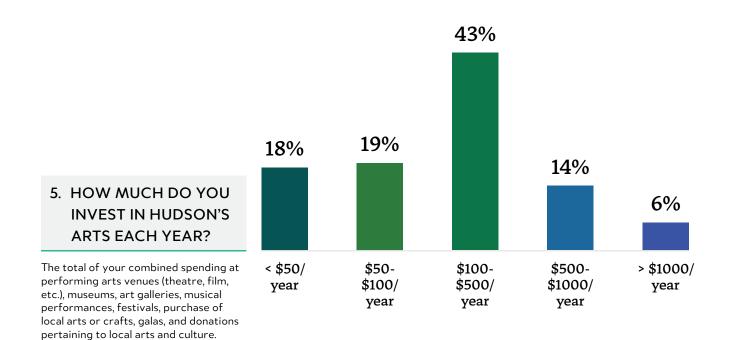
"When the event advertisement is in French only. Hudson is at its best bilingually."

"The lack of youth initiatives. It would be neat to see a healthy hang out place for youth. Skatepark, basketball, hangout club, or something the youth ask for."



photo: Anile Prakash





6. HAVE YOU BEEN A VOLUNTEER OR CONTRIBUTOR TO ANY ARTS AND CULTURE **EVENTS AND/OR ORGANIZATIONS IN HUDSON (PAST OR PRESENT)?** 

46% no 54% yes

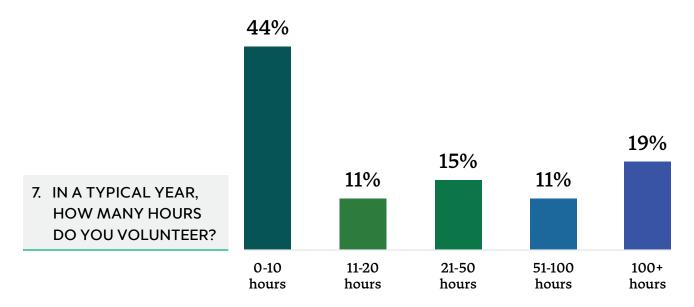




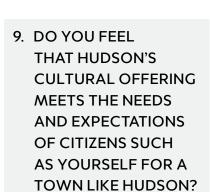
photo: Cam Gentile

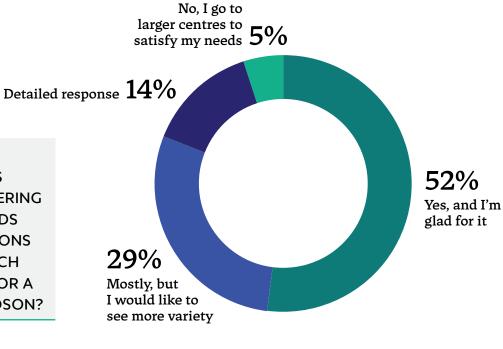
29% yes

71% no



photo: Karen Walker





#### 9A. DETAILED RESPONSE:

"Music fest has been great. I'd like to see a larger scope of art exhibits not just local artists but artists from other parts of the city, provincial and international. Not just paintings but photo exhibits, sculpture etc. Turn our town into a central hub and renowned center for artists and exhibits across the province."

« Non. Pas de bibliothèque en français, pas de théâtre pour les enfants (un petit festival?) Pas de parc d'eau (coût de piscine prohibitif), du coup, je me déplace dans les villes avoisinantes. »

"I would like to see a permanent art center, that would allow guilds. (painting, sculpture, texture, photography, etc.) To find a home to do art exhibitions to take place."

"No, most activities are geared towards seniors and there are not many events/spaces that are for children and families."

"Need more on history and architecture, more visual public arts like what was installed at Sandy Beach and the mural at Benson park."

### « La densité de bons musiciens qui vivent à Hudson est incroyable!»

"Yes, I do but I feel that there are so many more activities that happen that are not well publicized because the venues are small and/or run by volunteers (sometimes older) that are not adept with technology. I would love to see the Town offer a platform where there could be a shared calendar of non-Town related activities."

# « Je dois me déplacer – il est très difficile de circuler à pied lors des activités car il y a trop de monde. »

« Il semble y avoir une augmentation du tourisme depuis 2-3 ans. Je ne suis pas certain si les infrastructures et la sécurité sont suffisantes (routes, toilettes, accommodations). »

"There is so much available and always happening. Keep up the good work."

#### 10. WOULD YOU LIKE TO PLAY A ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURE IN YOUR AREA?

38% yes

62% no



#### 10A. IF YOU RESPONDED YES, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO?

- "I'd like to contribute to programs geared more towards younger folks (safe spaces to practice their art/sport/ discipline as well as learning) and being a person of color I'd like to encourage inclusion and multiculturism in Hudson."
- « J'aimerais éventuellement faire du bénévolat quand mon horaire le permettra, ou participer à une chorale ou un groupe de musique amateur. »
- "Make sure people understand reconciliation and territorial acknowledgement. As well as the history behind it."

- "Continue to volunteer to ensure success and sustainability of our great organizations."
- "Help in the creation of a municipal library. A real library. One that is open 6 or 7 days a week, has tables to sit at and work at. As compared to one that is dependent only on volunteers and for only a few hours per week."
- "Create relationships with art museums/galleries in Quebec and bring their work in summer festivals for Hudsonites and tourists."
- « Promouvoir les arts visuels et la danse chez les enfants. »

### "VOLUNTEER."

"I would like to help promote more events so that people in the surrounding areas know what is happening in Hudson."

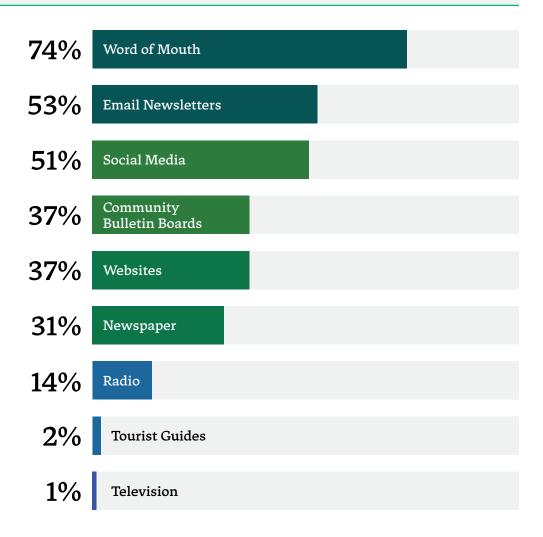
"I'll do anything. Organize, coordinate, seek out new and exciting artists and exhibits to give artists exposure."

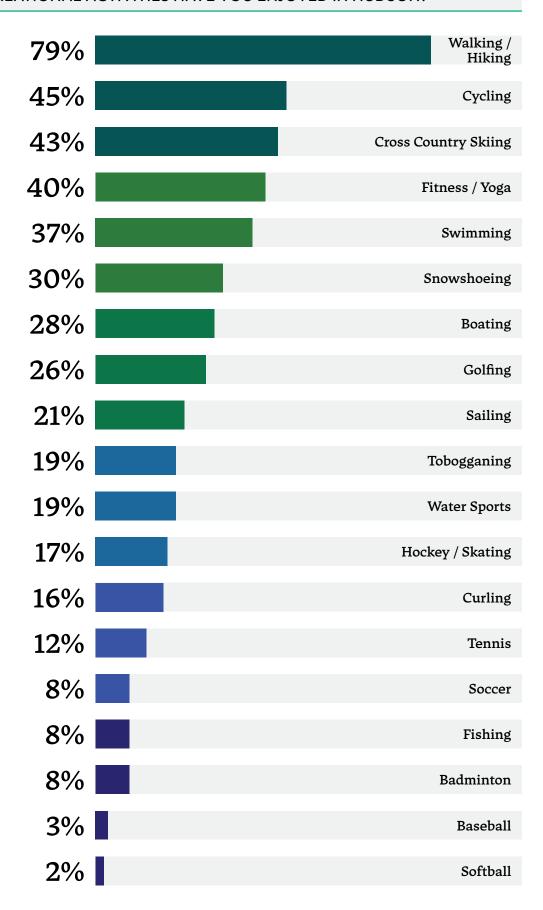
"Help to organize different spoken word events, diverse musical events."

### « Supporter le développement de la culture francophone. »

"Help to highlight agriculture as an important part of Hudson's natural and cultural history. Very sad that we lost the statue of the first Holstein cow. As Hudson becomes more and more developed, we need to keep this history alive. Also protect the natural spaces (Sandy Beach) as cultural gems that are also needed to protect ecological systems on which we all depend to be able to exist on Earth."

#### 11. HOW DO YOU FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN HUDSON?





#### 13. WHAT RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES/FACILITIES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN **HUDSON?**

« Parcs pour enfants et parcs aquatiques (splash pads.) ... On a vraiment besoin de belles structures de jeux modernes et diversifiées pour enfants dans les différents voisinages. »

### "Picklehall"

"More evening exercise classes for those who work during the day as there use to be at community center."

« Il manque des pistes cyclables sur Main. Réhabilitation de la voie de chemin de fer: la transformer en piste cyclables/piste de ski de fond. Ce serait vraiment un atout pour Hudson. »

### "A community indoor pool."

"Group walking/tours."

"Paddleboard and kayak rentals at Jack Layton Park."

"I would love to see regular weekly recreational activities, programs and special events for toddlers, preschool aged children, and elementary aged children offered by the town."

"A skate park, a splash pad, a permanent map put up in a central location (near Town Hall?) with all the trails on it (similar to the map that goes up for the cross country ski trail in the winter)."

"Walking path on Main or old train track."

« Scène extérieur professionnelle permanente, terrain de tennis public, skateparc. »

"I think Hudson should have public tennis courts. It is unacceptable to me that our town doesn't have any and that to play tennis one must join an expensive tennis club where one must wear white clothing to play. We should also have a skatepark for our youth. It has been brought forward by many young people for years and nothing gets done about it. There needs to be more activities for young people/teenagers, the focus and budget is too often aimed at older demographics. An 'urban activity' area with skatepark, basketball court, tennis would be a wonderful and necessary addition to the town."

"Bike paths (cycling) that are clearly marked. Maps of bike paths in the area available and with signs and posts to know where they are."

### « Des meilleures installations pour pratiquer la pêche. »

"Adult exercising equipment in Hudson parks to make fitness activities more accessible both in opportunity and cost."

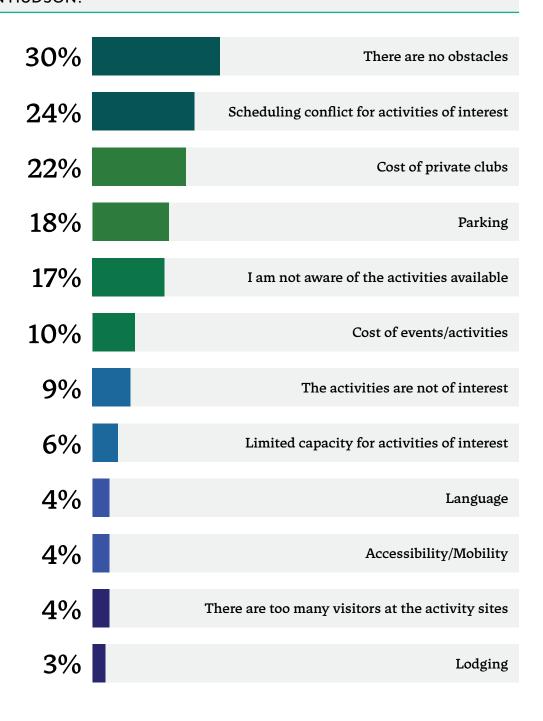
"We need an updated playground and a budget to maintain it for the kids."

# 14. AMONG THE FOLLOWING EVENTS AND DESTINATIONS IN HUDSON, PLEASE IDENTIFY EITHER YOUR AWARENESS OR ATTENDANCE:

I Am Aware	I Have Attended	Event/Destination	
29%	43%	Artistes Hudson Artists	
26%	36%	Benson Park	
19%	56%	The Bunker	
16%	46%	Church Halls: Special Events	
31%	16%	Como Library	
32%	21%	Earth Day Events / Sandy Beach Cleanup	
13%	71%	Finnegan's Market (closed 2022)	
28%	48%	Greenwood Centre for Living History	
42%	14%	Greenwood: Storyfest	
38%	23%	Greenwood: Treasures in the Attic	
32%	43%	Hudson Auto Show	
28%	34%	Hudson British Car Show	
30%	20%	Hudson Chamber Music Series	
18%	65%	Hudson Community Centre	
25%	20%	Hudson Community Choir	
34%	24%	Hudson Country Homes Tour	
21%	27%	Hudson Creative Hub	
32%	23%	Hudson Dog Park	
37%	35%	Hudson Film Festival	
34%	23%	Hudson Film Society	
24%	9%	Hudson Film Society: Opera and Beyond	
13%	11%	Hudson Fine Craft	
38%	18%	Hudson Garden Club Tour	
29%	26%	Hudson Heartbeet Community Farm	
42%	14%	Hudson Historical Society	
16%	13%	Hudson History Garden	
8%	15%	Hudson Labyrinth	
14%	27%	Hudson Legion: Farmer's Market	
14%	19%	Hudson Legion: Special Events	
19%	54%	Hudson Music Festival	
13%	74%	Hudson-Oka Ferry	

19%         26%         Hudson Recreational Facilities           22%         30%         Hudson Players Club           23%         37%         Hudson Players Club: Shakespeare by the Lake           14%         5%         Hudson Puppet Festival           20%         23%         Hudson Studio Tour           17%         71%         Hudson Village Theatre           20%         38%         Hudson Village Theatre: Holiday Pantomime           21%         41%         Hudson War Memorial Library           33%         24%         Hudson Yacht Club: Regatta           24%         Hudson Yacht Club: Regatta           12%         76%         Jack Layton Park           24%         9%         Illume Festival           12%         76%         Jack Layton Park           24%         96         Illume Festival of Birds and Nature           16%         Le Nichoir           22%         16%         Le Nichoir Festival of Birds and Nature           16%         67%         Nova Thrift Shops           32%         36%         Pine Lake           24%         46%         Porchfest           28%         27%         Places of Worship           14%         43%	I Am Aware	I Have Attended	Event/Destination	
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13% 66% Trails (all seasons)	23%	48%	Town of Hudson: Santa Claus Parade	
	10%	51%	Town of Hudson: Street Fair (replaced 2021)	
21% 41% Le Verger de Hudson	13%	66%	Trails (all seasons)	
	21%	41%	Le Verger de Hudson	

# 15. IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT ARE THE MAIN OBSTACLES FOR PARTICIPATING IN ACTIVITIES IN HUDSON?



#### 15A. OTHER RESPONSE:

### "Public washrooms."

"Sometimes unaware of what's happening. Loss of local paper and reliance on word of mouth/social media means some events just aren't properly advertised."

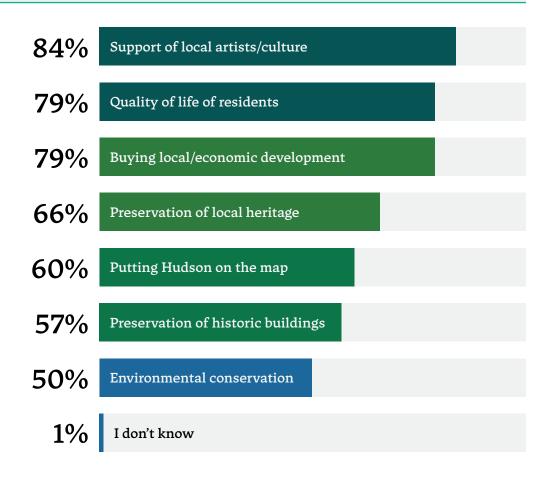
### « Activités anglophones uniquement. »

"Not geared towards children."

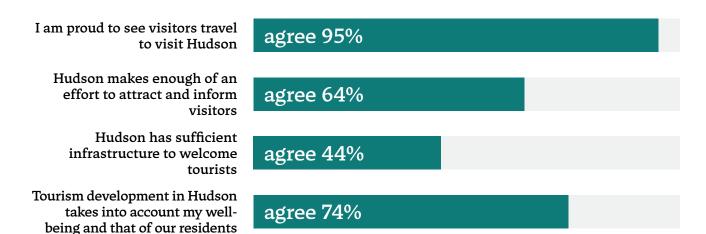
"Private elite clubs too expensive."

"I have missed a couple things not remembering they were on till it was over. More posters/ads would be great!"

#### 16. IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT ARE THE BENEFICIAL OUTCOMES OF A THRIVING ARTS AND CULTURE SCENE IN HUDSON?



#### 17. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE TOWN OF HUDSON IN TERMS OF TOURISM AND WHAT IT HAS TO OFFER?



#### 17A. IN YOUR OWN WORDS:

« Le centre-ville en été est très apprécié... il faudrait développer les activités en hiver. »

"Our waterfront cannot support visitors in terms of management and parking. Parking in general can become difficult if there is an event, and getting to town on foot is difficult given the lack of sidewalks or bike paths on the main arteries."

"Tourism is great as it supports a thriving town, however, the amount of tourists need to be balanced with appropriate infrastructure so as not to overwhelm local use."

"There is a lot of interest in visiting Hudson for our restaurants, theatre and street events. The town could do more to encourage tourists to just walk around town and explore. I think Town of Hudson tourist maps should make a comeback."

### "I love that Hudson is increasingly seen as a great destination for cultural activities."

« Très fière que Hudson soit une destination touristique, « day trip ». Fière que notre ville soit connue pour son attrait, son aspect pittoresque et sa proximité avec le West Island, Montréal et l'Est de l'Ontario. »

"As a resident, I couldn't be happier with what I have at my fingertips. But, in terms of tourism, I don't think it's offering a lot. It's a long drive, yes, the water-front is enticing, but the parking is only free for residents, and there's just not a lot to do for someone coming in for the day, unless they're coming in for a specific event." "We should position ourselves as a destination in a more cohesive way: businesses. cultural events, and the town all working together."

"Tourism in moderation but targeted to support embrace being an art town."

"Great town and I have such pride watching tourists come every weekend to visit!"

« La ville ne supporte pas assez la culture, celle-ci a lieu malgré le manque de support de la ville grâce à la volonté des bénévoles et organisateurs.»

"More activities for families, such as a bike path. Families could rent bikes for the day. Also an outfitter at Jack Layton Park offering kayaks/paddle boards."

"In general, Hudson has much to offer and is a desirable village to visit. Missing is a plaza, a meeting place in the center of town where visitors and residents can gather, rest and spend leisure time."

"I know that Sandy Beach can be an issue in the summer. You want to allow residents and those from out of town to be able to use it but not abuse it."

the arts. Hudson should "There is so much to offer in the town but a bit of a lack of infrastructure and not enough promotion of what the town has to offer."

### "Everyone loves visiting Hudson"

"Would like to see more booths and events in the town core, on the streets, instead of hidden in a park. Create a pedestrian area where people can eat, drink, and visit exhibits at the same time. In the summer, more street musicians, guitarists and classical musicians, buskers, a few information booths, etc."

"There is a central meeting and information place" that is sorely missing from Hudson. A stopping place in the heart of town, for visitors and residents alike, would be lovely."

« La beauté de Hudson réside dans le charme architectural des maisons et le côté naturel de la ville. Quelques bons restaurants et bars. »

"I love it. We now have places for people to stay and events that encourage people to come. However, I would like more parking spaces for the out-of-towners. I wish there were less business operations on the ground floor and more shops. It also makes the Town more attractive to visitors."

"I love the small-town feel that Hudson offers to visitors from all over."

### 18. WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES/WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE/WHAT IS YOUR DREAM FOR ARTS AND CULTURE IN HUDSON? WHAT CULTURAL SPACE WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE IN OUR TOWN/REGION?

"I'm not sure if the town needs more cultural spaces than it has, but maybe the ones that are here could use help with promotion of the organizations themselves. If a new space is needed, maybe it would be a visual arts space as that would compliment what's already here."

"I'm trying to get involved in the town, but many organizations are so guarded with any change suggestions or willingness to grow. I also find there's such a lack of offerings for people who work remotely in Hudson. The library is never open and doesn't have a desk to even sit at with a laptop."

« Je passe beaucoup de temps dans la communauté soit au yacht club ou au terrain de golf. Le théâtre est magnifique. Les parcs sont beaux. On a tout à Hudson. On encourage les achats locaux lorsque possible. »

"More support for cultural activities with respect to using town facilities (use of parks, better parking arrangements. The community centre is great though by the way). Some kind of storage facilities (perhaps only for summer) at Jack Layton that can be used by groups doing activities in the park. Or, a dedicated, official, space for outdoor performances (music, theatre, dance, comedy etc) with a stage and access to electrical power in a location with decent parking facilities, where it won't disturb residents too much. Jack Layton park is not well laid out and compromised by the boat ramp, parking issues and very close residents."

"I think the city and several Hudson organizations are already doing a lot of good things and look forward to any additions and changes that may come from this survey! Thank you!"

## « Espace de création et diffusion multidisciplinaires démocratique et gratuit.»

"I would love to see more recreational activities for children, including weekly activities for them and themed special events. We are also so thankful for le Spot 55 Plus for seniors. It is an essential component to the town of Hudson to offer weekly recreational activities and special events for seniors." "We're already on the right track. But so much of what happens in Hudson is insular to the people who live here. Bringing people in from the city or other communities (or even other parts of V-S) would be beneficial to the local economy and to our already interesting cultural and artistic offerings. Restaurants should stay open AFTER theatre or films end to welcome patrons of events. More collaboration between commerce/retail and culture."

"More funding but even more importantly, more help to access funding from available sources. The city of Hudson itself as an organization, benefits from its community's efforts to have all these wonderful programs and events, but it does very little itself to contribute to it. Some of these programs struggle so much that they will not survive and the town should do a better job at stepping in to help."



photo: Anile Prakash

"MORE ARTS!! MORE CULTURE!! I think things are great right now, but a lot of it is run privately or with minimal city support. I'd love to see the city playing a stronger role in making this happen, and not relying on the good will of its citizens to ensure that Hudson keeps being the awesome place that it is!"

#### 19. ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS?

"Hudson is such a beautiful place to live. Its small town charm should be careful not to get lost through development of touristic attractions. There needs to be a way to educate on Hudson's history but bring it into this century."

# "I love living in Hudson!"

« Les activités semblent plus bénéfiques pour les commerçants que pour les résidents. On perd beaucoup la qualité vie (« quiétude »). La ville n'est pas faite pour recevoir autant de monde (manque de stationnement). »

"I am very pleased with the direction Hudson is going vis à vis arts and culture."

"We are a town full of artists and musicians - let's show that off and expand on what we have!"

« Étant résidente depuis plus de 30 ans, on constate de plus en plus de jeunes familles. C'est excellent! Assurons-nous de maintenir une offre culturelle intéressante, mais aussi un style de vie pour cette nouvelle génération. »

"We need to have more consideration for our youth. Yes there are a few events/attractions for the very young (egg hunt, santa clause at community center) but for adolescents and teens, we really need to grow in what is needed for them. Years ago the basement of community center was a hub for that age group and they used to do things like Halloween events (where they were the organizers for events for younger children's) They profited so much by being involved. But we need to add what interests them directly too."

# "Hudson is a jewel and does not need to grow. It has to maintain its natural beauty."

"Friendly wonderful town. Lacking facilities, condos, senior residences, for older people who can no longer keep up a property but who would like to remain in the community."

"Outdoor cafés for Hudson's restaurants would be welcome again."

"I LOVE Hudson. But seriously don't know if we can stay forever here, I don't see why we would if there are no activities on a regular basis for kids."

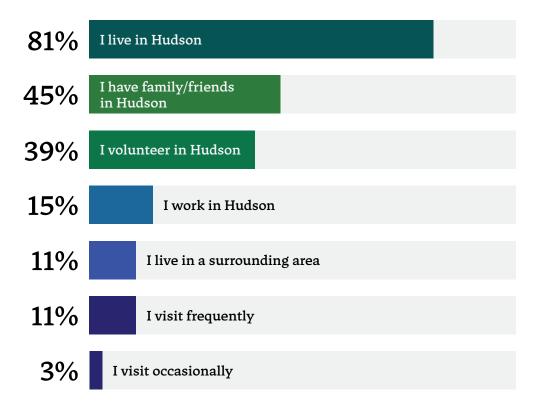
"Proud to say I live in Hudson!"

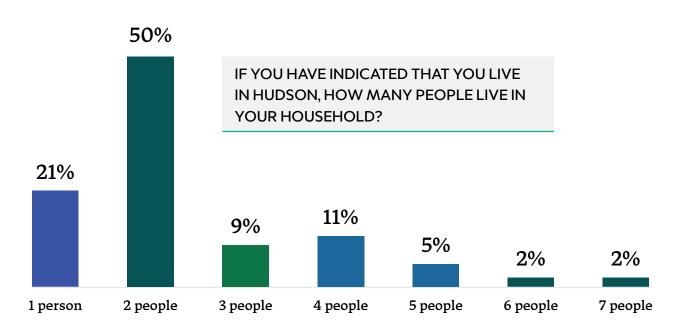


photo: Genevieve Grenier

#### **DEMOGRAPHICS**

#### WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO HUDSON?





### IF YOU HAVE INDICATED THAT YOU LIVE IN HUDSON, WHAT ARE THE AGE GROUPS IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD?

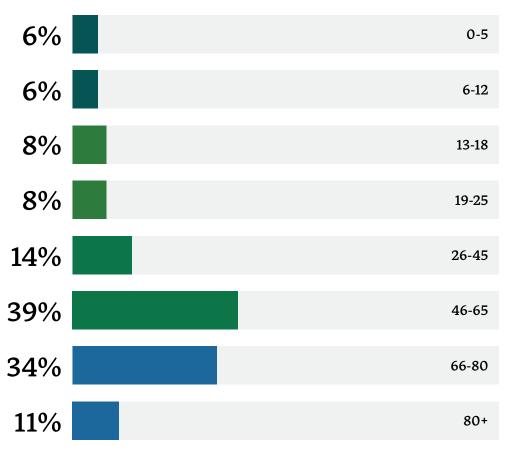




photo: Genevieve Grenier

#### CONCLUSION

The results of this survey provide a distinct snapshot of the community's interest in, knowledge of, and hopes for arts and culture at a specific moment in time. As for next steps, an ad hoc Cultural Policy Development Committee has been established to work on a cultural policy for the Town of Hudson. This report will be provided to that committee to aid in the development of the policy.

Further, the HA&CC feels that the survey and its results will play an integral role in how various cultural entities of the Town of Hudson collaborate moving forward. This global picture of how citizens and those with an interest in the Town see arts and culture can provide community organizations as well as local businesses with valuable information for planning purposes. Working together within the context of arts and culture can allow for a unique approach and, ultimately, a unique offering to citizens, the wider community, and visitors alike.

In the medium term, the HA&CC looks forward to participating in the process of implementing and supporting the arts and culture policy that will be recommended to Town Council by the Cultural Policy Development Committee.

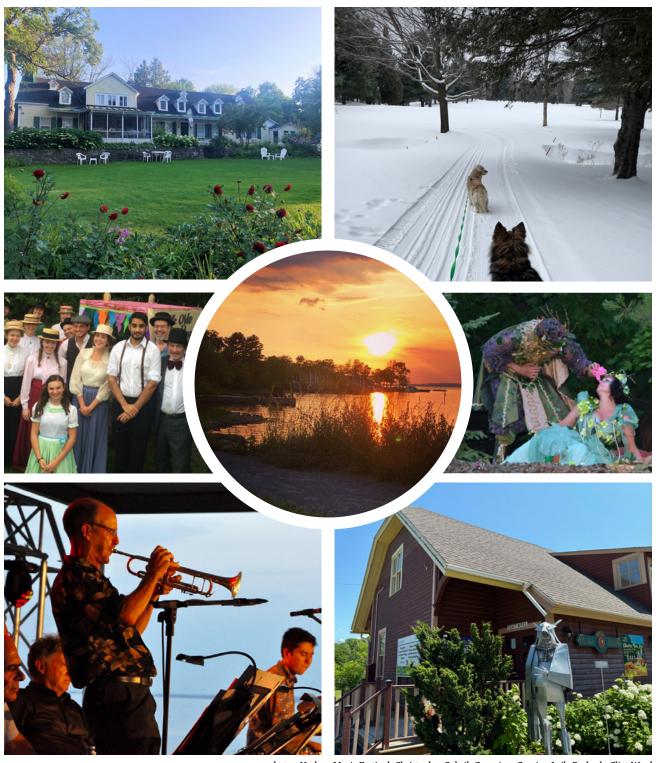
Each member of the Hudson Arts & Culture Council thanks the Town of Hudson for their support, their recognition of the work required to complete the project, and especially for their trust in the process.

With special thanks to all the participants who contributed their time and thoughts to this survey, and also to you, the reader, for your interest.



photo: Genevieve Grenier

"Hudson's culture is distinct, something both familiar and wonderful that you miss when you are not there."



photos: Hudson Music Festival, Christopher Gobeil, Genevieve Grenier, Anile Prakash, Clint Ward

