**Council Direction:**

Not applicable

**Information:**

Arts Hamilton is Hamilton’s official arts council, with a mandate to serve and represent the entire arts community in Hamilton. Founded in 1969, Arts Hamilton has provided the impetus for many positive developments in the arts community since its inception.

The Board of Directors of Arts Hamilton has launched an organizational assessment to examine Arts Hamilton’s effectiveness in providing leadership in the arts sector. There has been significant change and growth in the Hamilton arts community over the past decade, but it does not appear that Arts Hamilton has kept pace with these changes.

The Arts Hamilton Board has hired Janis Barlow and Associates, an arts management consulting firm, to lead the organizational assessment. It includes interviews with key stakeholders, a review of the organization’s mandate and operations, and a consideration of different models for arts umbrella organizations. This work is funded by the Ontario Arts Council and the City of Hamilton. Councillor Farr is the Council representative on the Board, recently replacing Councillor McHattie. The City’s Manager of Arts and Events attends Board meetings as an observer and advisor.

During the assessment process, Arts Hamilton is operating in a limited manner, offering committed programs and led by an interim Executive Director on a part-time basis. The
organization has sufficient funds to operate during this interim period. However, funding needs and sources for 2011 are uncertain, pending the outcomes of the organizational assessment, which will be known in early 2011.

As with all sectors in a community, the Hamilton arts sector requires effective leadership from within to maximize opportunities for strategic growth and development. The Culture Division is pleased to be supporting the Arts Hamilton organizational assessment, at a time when the potential of the arts in Hamilton to thrive and to serve as an engine for community growth and renewal has never been greater.