

Cultural Plan

City of Fort Collins

Cultural Services

August 2008



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Sculpture on cover: East Prospect Entry Way by May and Watkins Design.

Executive Summary

The City of Fort Collins is well positioned to build on its strong history of arts, culture, and science. Today, Fort Collins is brimming with a major university dedicating significant resources to its University Center for the Arts, more than 80 arts, culture, and science organizations, a model art in public places program, a commitment to historic preservation, and an increasing investment in cultural venues from museums to theatres. There are a large number of new initiatives underway, from the University Center for the Arts to the Poudre River Arts Center, from Fort Fund to UniverCity Connections, from Beet Street to the TriMedia Film Festival, from the Fort Collins Museum and Discovery Science Center partnership to renovating the Lincoln Center. The accumulation of accolades for Fort Collins as one of the “best places to live” in the country is due, in part, to the foundation of arts, culture, and science established here, and the quality of life it provides today and into the future for residents and visitors.

The strong history, new initiatives, and changing nature of the region set the stage for the development of a Cultural Plan for the city. The City of Fort Collins Cultural Services Department and Arts Alive laid the ground work and established a vision:

“To identify Fort Collins as a uniquely creative community and a destination for arts, culture, and science that enriches the lives of our citizens and visitors, and serves as an economic engine.”

Through a community cultural survey, cultural assessment and inventory, educators survey, cultural planning forum, and meetings with local arts, culture, and science organizations, leaders, and citizens, the Cultural Plan sets fourth six goals to move towards the vision.

The Cultural Plan goals include:

1. Develop the right mix of cultural facilities to meet the needs of the community and to make Fort Collins a destination attraction.
2. Develop an Arts Council to promote and support the business of the arts.
3. Build Fort Collins’ identity as a cultural center and destination by increasing the visibility of the arts, culture, and science activities in Fort Collins.
4. Develop sustainable funding, public and private, to support arts, culture, and science programs.
5. Employ arts, culture, and participatory science to improve Fort Collins’ quality of life, strengthen the local economy, and increase tourism.
6. Ensure availability of arts education programming to our youth through future community arts centers, collaborations between schools and arts groups, training and resources for teachers, and funding.

The City of Fort Collins' Role

The goals of the Cultural Plan are community-wide, and each contains a series of recommended strategies. Certain strategies are appropriate to be undertaken by the City, while others would be more appropriate for other, non-municipal entities to pursue, like an arts council, non-profit organizations, artist consortiums, or UniverCity Connections.

The primary concern for the City is to develop an environment in which arts, culture and science can be successful. The City's role in developing this environment is to consider future facilities as prioritized in the plan, specifically a new performing arts center, renovations to Lincoln Center, the Fort Collins Museum/Discovery Science Center partnership, Club Tico and future arts and recreation centers in community parks. The City also has the opportunity to lend political backing to the creation of an Arts Council. The City can support and further the goals of this plan through its Cultural Services Department and staff, including the Lincoln Center, Fort Collins Museum, and the Art in Public Places program and through the Fort Fund granting program. By collaborating and partnering with other City departments, initiatives, and non-profit organizations, Cultural Services can help facilitate many aspects of the plan.

A History...

Fort Collins has a long history of enjoying and supporting arts and culture. The original Opera House Block was constructed in 1880-81. The building hosted traveling performers and served as a social center, court room, the scene of political rallies and the venue for high school graduations. City Park and Lindenmeier Lake were destinations for residents to swing to big bands, including John Phillip Sousa. Nearly a century later, the community initiative, Designing Tomorrow Today, set paths for constructing Lincoln Center, a new public library, and expanding the Fort Collins Museum. In recent years, Colorado State University (CSU) opened the University Center for the Arts and will continue to expand this exceptional facility and Larimer County voters invested in “The Ranch” for major arena sporting events as well as shows.



- 1881 Opera House opened
- 1905 Colorado Agricultural College (CSU today) started its first Conservatory of Music with six students, and expanded to more than 100 by 1910
- 1906 Aggie Theatre opened in Fort Collins
- 1941 The Pioneer Museum (now the Fort Collins Museum) opened in Lincoln Park

- 1949 Will Schwartz conducted the first rehearsal of the Fort Collins Symphony Orchestra, the only professional orchestra in Larimer County
- 1958 Fort Collins Children’s Theatre presented its first production
- 1971 The Designing Tomorrow Today (DT2) process was initiated which resulted in the construction of the Lincoln Center, the new main library, and an expansion of the Fort Collins Museum into the Carnegie Library building
- 1973 OpenStage Theatre opened to become the longest-practicing theatrical producer in the region
- 1978 the Designing Tomorrow Today citizens committee raised money to meet the \$2.2 million dollars construction cost of Lincoln Community Center
- 1979 The first Colorado International Invitational Poster Exhibition (CIPE) was organized by the CSU Department of Art's highly regarded graphic design unit
- 1979 Opera was heard again in the halls of Lincoln Center
- 1981 Andy Warhol exhibits at CSU’s Department of Art

- 1990 The Fort Collins Museum of Contemporary Art began operations as the One West Contemporary Art Center. It held its first exhibition in January, 1991
- 1993 A grassroots effort opened the Discovery Science Center Museum – the only hands-on science center in the state today
- 1993 Bas Bleus opened as a 49 seat independent theatre venue, eventually investing in a new riverfront property to expand to 99 and eventually 149 seats
- 1995 The City of Fort Collins started an Art in Public Places program
- 1998 The State of the Arts was sponsored by the Cultural Resources Board and resulted in the creation of Arts Alive Fort Collins in 1999
- 2004 University Center for the Arts opened its first of three theatres
- 2004 Wolverine Farm Publishing produced their first journal of fine literature, poetry, photo-essays, visual art and scathing comics, *Matter 04: Wonder*
- 2005 The Building on Basics (BOB) capital tax was renewed by voters and supported a new Fort Collins Museum/Discovery Science Center and renovations to Lincoln Center, among other projects
- 2006 The Poudre River Arts Center opened as artists' studios and exhibition space
- 2007 Beet Street cultural district hosts its first kick off event in September at Civic Center Park

Today...

Fort Collins is recognized as the Best City to live in America by Money Magazine in 2006, and claims second in 2008.

According to a 2005 public opinion survey conducted by the City and Arts Alive, our community agrees that arts, science, and culture improve our quality of life in Fort Collins and contribute to the education and development of our children. Performing Arts organizations have grown to more than 40. The Museum of Contemporary Art, the soon to be merged Fort Collins Museum and Discovery Science Center, Gardens on Spring Creek, numerous restored historic properties, and a dozen live performance venues add to the growing Fort Collins scene. The vibrant downtown hosts a mosaic of restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and unique retail. Both the newly renovated Oak Street Plaza as a gathering space with tables, chairs, and dancing water and Old Town Square contribute to the heart of the city. More than 400 visual and literary artists, many who exhibit and publish nationally and internationally, live and work in Fort Collins.

Since 1989, the City of Fort Collins has supported cultural events through the Fort Fund granting program. In 2008, Fort Fund, administered by the Cultural Resources Board, granted \$236,096 to 59 applicants in support of more than 90 cultural events.

Fort Collins served as a subject community in both the 2003 and 2007 Americans for the Arts "Arts & Economic Prosperity" studies. The latest study provides compelling new evidence that the nonprofit arts are a \$15.9 million industry in Fort Collins – "one that attracts audiences, spurs business development, supports jobs, and generates government revenue." Total economic impact grew by \$6.6 million from 2003 to 2007. Data shows that attendees to nonprofit arts events spend an average of \$16.69 per person, per event, above the cost of their admission or ticket. Non-local arts attendees spend an average of 53% more than local attendees. Compellingly, the number of non-local attendees doubled between the two studies, to 23% in 2007.

In February 2004, the Fort Collins City Council appointed a group of community representatives to develop a set of recommendations intended to address the economic vitality and sustainability of Fort Collins. Members of the "Economic Vitality and Sustainability Action Group" (EVSAG) were carefully selected to represent a broad and diverse range of community interests and perspectives. The group met continually for four months and created a report and recommendations. Since that time, two additional advisory groups have been formed, EVSAG II and EVSAG III to continue the work and recommendations of the original advisors. The 2004 EVSAG document identifies the need to diversify and broaden our economic sectors and offers as a strategy investing in efforts to highlight our community's cultural activities and identify Fort Collins as a "Cultural Destination".

The city also completed a Strategic Employment Opportunities report in 2006 to help craft the region's economic development strategy by identifying what types of industries to target for growth and retention. The report identified six industry clusters, including "Uniquely Fort Collins" which focuses on businesses whose products and operations contribute to the eclectic,

innovative, and high quality of life in Fort Collins, specifically through artistic and cultural entertainment, recreation, and hospitality.

The Cultural Resources Board, through the support of their City Council liaison, reframed its role by developing an overarching goal “to serve as a catalyst in making Fort Collins a cultural center and destination.” This goal highlights the ability of art and culture to impact economics, in addition to the inherent quality of life and societal impacts.

The City of Fort Collins’ Art in Public Places program is celebrating 12 years, and the completion of more than 60 projects. The success of its integrated approach is gaining regional attention and becoming a model for other communities.

These efforts, along with the Downtown Development Authority’s Beet Street economic initiative to “provide year-round world-class cultural programming in a breathtaking physical environment,” have elevated arts and culture as an economic driving force in the eyes of the community leaders.

More projects are in the queue. City Council forwarded the Building on Basics (BOB) capital tax renewal to the voters, who approved the tax and the prioritized list of projects. The list included funding, in part, an innovative partnership between the Fort Collins Museum and Discovery Science Center to create a new, state-of-the-art museum. Renovations were also funded through BOB for Lincoln Center which has been the hub of performing and visual arts in the region for nearly 30 years. A large music venue on the Oxbow along the Poudre River, a raptor center, an expanded Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Beet Street Chautauqua-like program and amphitheater will, in the future, bring even greater attention to Fort Collins as a destination for arts, culture, and science.

In November 2006, the Colorado Council on the Arts convened an Arts Learning Task Force charged with developing a vision for arts learning and drafting policy recommendations for the agency’s role. The vision is to increase the number and quality of arts learning opportunities for students, pre-school through college, as a means to achieve the fullest expression of creativity and innovation for Colorado in the 21st century. Poudre School District continues to show its commitment to arts, culture and science through dedicated whole-child curriculum specialists and ensuring opportunities are offered in every school.

Colorado State University’s new University Center for the Arts opened its first phase in the fall of 2004 in the old Fort Collins High School, and is creating state-of-the-art performance, museum, and education spaces to support high quality arts education.

In fall of 2006, the UniverCity Connections initiative began. UniverCity is a collaboration convened by the Community Foundation of Northern Colorado, and driven by the City of Fort Collins, Colorado State University, the Downtown Development Authority, and over 100 Fort Collins citizens. UniverCity Connections challenged the community to come together, imagine a great future and make that future a reality. Arts and Culture is one of eight task groups that developed action items and continues to meet to initiate implementation of the action items.

FUTURE...

The Cultural Plan is guided by an ambitious and expansive vision for the role of arts, culture, and science in the quality of life of Fort Collins and economic development.

OUR VISION

To identify Fort Collins as a uniquely creative community and a destination for arts, culture, and science that enriches the lives of our citizens and visitors, and serves as an economic engine.

- Elected officials and business leaders will elevate awareness and support art, culture and science to a place of prominence.
- An Arts Council will be named and funded to serve as an umbrella organization to promote and support the business of arts, culture, and science.
- Fort Collins will be a hub of cultural opportunities supported by cultural facilities that best serve the community and its visitors – from museums and performing venues, to arts education centers and festival grounds.
- Our nonprofit art, culture, and science organizations will thrive and grow creatively by being financially stable through sustainable funding.
- Our community will be a destination in the state for those seeking unique and interesting cultural, artistic, scientific, and outdoor experiences.

The UniverCity Connections process confirmed this vision through the Arts & Culture Task Group's vision statement: "The arts, the participative sciences, the preservation/ communication of Fort Collins' history, working together represent a culture of clean industry that enriches the lives of our community's citizens, visitors and serves as an economic engine that has the potential to make Fort Collins a world-class cultural destination."

GOALS OF THE CULTURAL PLAN

1. Develop the right mix of cultural facilities to meet the needs of the community and to make Fort Collins a destination attraction.
2. Develop an Arts Council to promote and support the business of the arts.
3. Build Fort Collins' identity as a cultural center and destination by increasing the visibility of the arts, culture, and science activities in Fort Collins.
4. Develop sustainable funding, public and private, to support arts, culture, and science programs.
5. Employ arts, culture, and participatory science* to improve Fort Collins' quality of life, strengthen the local economy, and increase tourism.
6. Ensure availability of arts education programming to our youth through future community arts centers, collaborations between schools and arts groups, training and resources for teachers, and funding.

* Throughout this document, the term "culture" will be used to fully describe arts, culture, history, humanities, and participatory science organizations and activities. Participatory science references those activities regarding hands-on, informal science experiences provided by organizations like the Discovery Science Center and the Rocky Mountain Raptor program. It is not intended to represent formal education or research organizations.

PURPOSE AND PLANNING METHODS

The purpose of the planning process is to work together as a community to ensure that arts, culture, and science thrive in our community and provide excellent quality of life, become an integral part of our unique community identity, and help drive the local economy and tourism.

The impetus for a cultural plan evolved from multiple conversations that were taking place around Fort Collins' arts, culture, and science community.

- ◆ Arts Alive brought together a group of community leaders to begin discussions on developing sustainable funding for the arts and culture in Fort Collins.
- ◆ The City of Fort Collins identified the need to renovate and expand current cultural facilities.
- ◆ The Downtown Strategic Plan was published and noted a new performing arts facility as a strategy.
- ◆ The Economic Vitality and Sustainability Action Group brought forth recommendations and identified several strategies addressing arts and culture and the downtown.
- ◆ The Downtown Development Authority embarked on a visioning process around the Beet Street Chautauqua-like programming for Fort Collins.
- ◆ Americans for the Arts published *Arts & Prosperity: Economic Impact of the Arts II and III*, in which Fort Collins was a case study.
- ◆ Discovery Science Center began planning for relocation and joined forces with the Fort Collins Museum to realize a new, merged institution.
- ◆ Many other organizations were seeking new or expanded facilities, such as the Rocky Mountain Raptors, Center for Fine Arts Photography, Fort Collins Museum of Contemporary Art, etc.

With these initiatives and others, it became apparent that a plan was needed to better understand the needs and interests of the community and to begin a collaborative process in identifying and prioritizing those needs. The ultimate goal of the cultural plan is to understand what the community expects and needs from arts, science, and cultural activities and organizations, to open a dialogue among the various groups to develop a shared vision for the future, and to create a plan for meeting and sustaining those needs. The Cultural Plan should ensure that the arts, culture and science thrive in our community adding to our excellent quality of life, become an integral part of our unique community identity, and help drive the local economy and tourism.

METHODOLOGY

A small working group was formed to organize the activities of the planning process. Those activities include:

- Cultural Assessment – Using demographic information, and municipal and community strategic plans, data was gathered on the community and its cultural programs and facilities.
- Cultural Inventory: An inventory of organizations, facilities, venues, and assets was developed.

- Research Analysis: plans and studies developed by the City of Fort Collins were reviewed and analyzed for content, strategies, or recommendations pertaining to arts, culture, and science.
- Community Cultural Survey (March 2005) – A statistically valid telephone survey was conducted by Dr. Diane Gaede of the University of Northern Colorado to gauge the value arts, culture, and science have within the community. Fort Collins residents strongly believe (95%) that cultural arts programs are enjoyable, contribute to the education of children, and are important for the community even if they do not attend. The Survey also asked how residents spend their leisure time, how many events they attend, what type of activities seem most important, etc. (See Appendix)
- Educators Survey – Arts Alive surveyed Poudre School District teachers to gauge the level of arts education in our community and identify potential gaps and needs.
- Community Cultural Planning Forum – This event brought together over 100 community leaders and representatives from the various science, cultural, arts, heritage, and nature organizations and coalitions in Fort Collins. The topic of discussion was the role these organizations play in our community and how to advance our unique and authentic cultural experiences as an economic engine. Attendees provided input, which informed the development of the six goals in this plan.. Results were shared with attendees as well as the Cultural Resources Board, organizations such as the Downtown Development Authority and the Fort Collins Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- Engaged Pfeiffer Partners and Webb Management Services to research and develop a Cultural Facilities plan to identify the right mix of existing and future facilities that can be supported and used by the community. Webb Management interviewed more than 60 community members and performed extensive audience, market, and facility research. (See Appendix)
- Provided updates to City Council on the cultural planning process, how arts, culture and science can aid in economic development, and the Cultural Facilities Plan.
- Outreach to Organizations - met with science, cultural, arts, heritage, and nature organizations and discussed the results of the Community Cultural Planning Forum. The results of that discussion pushed the Cultural Planning effort to focus more specifically on sustainable funding issues, facility needs, and marketing efforts.
- Advisor meetings: a group of approximately 20 Fort Collins community leaders were convened to discuss the future of funding for culture, arts, and science in the community. A similar group was assembled of Loveland community leaders. Both groups have met several times to discuss this important issue and provide input and feedback.

- UniverCity Connections: The UniverCity Connections process involved over 100 citizens. The action plans developed by the Arts and Culture Task Group informed this document, and the Task Group provided direct input into the Cultural Facilities Plan.

ACTION-TO-DATE

Through the November 2005 Building on Basics (BOB) tax renewal, the City dedicated funding to pursue a formal Cultural Facilities Plan. The facilities plan began in November of 2006 and was completed in April 2008.

The Building on Basics (BOB) tax renewal also is funding, in part, a new facility for the Discovery Science Center and the Fort Collins Museum, and renovations to the Lincoln Center.

An SCFD Task Force has begun serious investigation into the creation of a Scientific and Cultural Facilities District in Larimer County to provide sustainable funding for cultural organizations.

Through the encouragement of the Cultural Resources Board, the Fort Collins Convention and Visitors Bureau launched a cultural calendar on its web-site www.ftcollins.com and a regional marketing campaign focusing on arts, culture, and science is underway. Through Beet Street's collaboration, the calendar now has the capability to automatically update other calendars, allowing organizations to only enter their information once.

A Consortium of performing arts organizations have begun a cooperative marketing effort to negotiate joint advertising space through the Coloradoan newspaper on a monthly basis.

Arts Alive has established a directory of artists, arts organizations, and support services on their website, www.artsalivefc.org.

Cultural Services consulted with the CCA Peer Assistance Network regarding an Arts Council; Arts Alive is preparing a survey and business plan; and the Cultural Resources Board evaluated state-wide research on potential Arts Council services.

FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH, SURVEY, CULTURAL CONFERENCE, AND INTERVIEWS

CULTURAL STRENGTHS:

Many cultural organizations: Fort Collins has more than 80 arts, culture, and science organizations, 40 of which represent the performing arts.

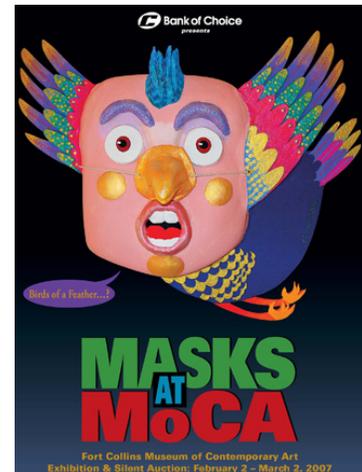
Performing Arts Presence: Fort Collins is well known for its performing arts, and several troupes continue to receive regional acclaim.

Major University: CSU opened the University Center for the Arts, showing through bricks & mortar their continued commitment to the arts and arts education.

Variety of Museums: Fort Collins' museums are of distinct disciplines: cultural history, contemporary art, historic properties, and the only hands-on science center in the state.

Residents broadly define their cultural life: including outdoor recreation and environmental activities right along with art, culture, and science in their definition of cultural life.

Good mix: most performance, visual and literary art disciplines are represented, creating a vibrant mix of opportunities and experiences.



Creative Artists: more than 400 artists live and work in Fort Collins.

History and Heritage: the community's historic downtown is unique among Colorado cities for its preservation and human scale. Fort Collins claims the inspiration for Main Street at Disneyland. Fort Collins has been designated as a Preserve America Community by Mrs. Laura Bush, First Lady of the United States.

Local Government: elected officials and county officials are aware of the community's cultural resources and their role in impacting quality of life and economic vitality.

Public Funding: through a lodging tax, the City provides support to cultural events through a competitive granting program. The capital tax renewals, including BOB, have supported cultural projects and facilities.

Culture Identified: culture and arts are a defining factor of the Fort Collins community.

Public Art: Fort Collins is one of six Front Range communities to have a 1% public art program, ensuring the built environment supports the creative identity of Fort Collins.

CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES:

Cultural Facilities: The Cultural Facilities Plan states arts, culture, and science are being stifled due to the lack of facilities. The plan outlines 10 different facility recommendations for consideration, including a new performing arts center, renovations to Lincoln Center to accommodate a 600 seat theater, a black box theater, and rehearsal, shop, and administration space.

Umbrella organization: Fort Collins has two organizations, Arts Alive and the Cultural Resources Board, that provide a variety of services to artists. There is a need and an opportunity to expand and coordinate these efforts and provide greater services through an Arts Council that can support and sustain the arts, culture, and science community.

Funding: Funding is inadequate to sustain the organizations that currently exist in Fort Collins, and cannot support the broadening of programming or new organizations. Most of the organizations show an over-reliance on earned revenue and there is a limited philanthropic base.

- ◆ There is a need for sustainable on-going funding for arts, culture, and science.
- ◆ Fort Collins can build on the tradition of giving that has been established by several prominent community members.

Marketing the arts: Next to funding, marketing and visibility are consistently cited as the biggest issues facing the arts, culture, and science community in Fort Collins. Competition for exposure in the local media and the sheer expense of advertising, limit many organizations from reaching audiences. Marketing is focused primarily within Fort Collins even though the region is growing more metropolitan. Collaboration in marketing would help build a strong reputation for all organizations.

Festivals: Fort Collins currently offers festivals like New West Fest and TriMedia Film Festival, but has the capacity to grow additional festivals, like a Jazz festival that is currently being developed. Fort Collins lacks a suitable location to host these events. Having a common, suitable location for festivals can encourage participation, and the growth and development of more cultural events to draw people to Fort Collins.

Professional Arts: There is a good mix of disciplines, many of the non-profit arts and culture organizations rely on volunteers and limited staffing and could utilize additional support, staff, and facilities to grow the professional level of their companies.

Economic Development: Cultural activities can impact economic spending, but can also be used to assist in developing the local economy.

- ◆ Cultural and arts businesses are clean, entrepreneurial businesses that should be encouraged.
- ◆ Cultural Tourism is an ever growing trend and Fort Collins has the opportunity to invest and grow this aspect of tourism.
- ◆ Local artists and creative talent could be invited to help woo new business to the community
- ◆ The “Creative Class” as described by Richard Florida, author of *Rise of the Creative Class: And How It’s Transforming Work, Leisure, Community, and Everyday Life*, is attracted to communities that strongly support arts and culture.

Arts Education: Surveys revealed that arts educators could receive more support in our schools and that opportunities exist for greater collaboration with existing programs outside the schools and with arts, culture, and science organizations.

- ◆ Poudre School District is one of the few districts in the state that has a strong commitment to arts and culture, starting in elementary school and building through the secondary years.
- ◆ Demands on teachers are increasing, and access to art, culture, and science resources and opportunities needs to be streamlined to help interested parents and teachers.
- ◆ There are more opportunities for the local arts, culture, and science organizations to connect and partner with schools in providing educational opportunities.
- ◆ Funding is vulnerable for arts, culture, and science programs due to on-going budgetary issues. Funding is needed to assist in developing and continuing to provide arts education at a consistent level, and accessible throughout the community.
- ◆ Reduced school budgets, testing requirements, and schedules limit the number of field trips students can take each year.

University and Community Cooperation: Many opportunities exist for collaboration within the areas of arts, culture, and science. The recent UniverCity Connections process attests to a new feeling of cooperation between the University and the City. Both can greatly benefit by cooperating and delivering great cultural opportunities to the community, students, faculty, and visitor.

Information and Services: Communication among the various groups could be greatly enhanced through improved infrastructure, and organizations are in need of support services, such as marketing and accounting assistance.

Volunteer assistance: Many organizations enjoy excellent volunteers, and Fort Collins has the Volunteers of America organization and the 211 program under the United Way. However, organizations require increased volunteer assistance in the form of highly active board members, professionals in law, accounting, and business administration providing pro-bono services, to day-to-day assistance.

GOAL 1

Develop the right mix of cultural facilities to meet the needs of the community and to make Fort Collins a destination attraction.

BACKGROUND

- A 2001 campaign to build a new library, expand the Fort Collins Museum, and build a new performing arts center failed.
- The Downtown Strategic Plan (1.2) states landmark buildings and public art can be used as gateway markers, and features that will create interest and delight within streets and public spaces.
- A new performing arts/community center was identified as the “top civic project priority for strengthening downtown...and should be constructed within the next 5 years” in the Downtown Strategic Plan, February 2004.
- A majority of the community believes that additional cultural facilities are needed (Community Cultural Survey).
- The Lincoln Center performance spaces are booked to capacity. Many dates are taken by rehearsals and set construction due to the lack of alternative rehearsal and shop spaces. This deficiency in space and dates is artificially limiting the growth and potential of many organizations.
- Numerous organizations have outgrown their current facilities or are in need of relocating.
- City Council recognizes the need to better understand the future facility needs of arts, culture, and science. The 2005 Building on Basics capital tax renewal included dollars towards a new joint facility for the Fort Collins Museum and Discovery Science Center; renovations to Lincoln Center; and a cultural facilities planning process.
- Cultural Facilities Plan recommends 5 cultural facilities, 5 performance facilities, and infrastructure recommendations.
- The DDA engaged an architectural firm to complete a feasibility study for a downtown amphitheater.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 The Cultural Facilities Plan (attached in its entirety in the Appendix) recommends five cultural and five performance facilities:

A. Cultural Facilities Recommendations (not in priority order)

1. Club Tico Renovation: The facility is in poor condition, but provides affordable space for dance events, classes and other events. Renovating the facility will increase and diversify use for recreation, arts programs, and community rental space. Improvements should include retractable seating that permits both performance and social dance settings.
2. South-Side Community Arts Centers: Arts and cultural opportunities are concentrated on the north side of the City, while population is more dense and growing on the south side. Developing two distinct community arts centers on the south side in concert with future recreation facilities at Fossil Creek and Spring Canyon Community Park locations, would improve neighborhood quality of life and help balance artistic opportunities.

3. Studio and Exhibition Space: With a waiting list at the Poudre River Arts Center facility, plans for FCMOCA to remove rental studio space as they expand their facility, and anecdotal evidence that large numbers of visual and literary artists work at home, there is a growing need for rented studio, exhibition, and gathering space. New construction or adaptive reuse of downtown warehouse space near existing museums is suggested.
4. Science and History Satellite near the Lindenmeier Site within the Soapstone Natural Area: The facility would include exhibition space, a performance or film screening room and research facilities that could be run in collaboration with Colorado State University. Such a facility will provide an internationally distinct cultural facility with potential to attract significant cultural tourism.
5. Shared Administrative and Production Space for Local Arts Organizations: A centralized space for shared administrative and production space of approximately 20,000 gross square feet. Such a facility would include shared administrative offices with cubicles, partitioned space, and conference rooms for rental by the hour. Other shared, rental resources should include large scene, costume, and prop shops with the possibility of small, flexible performance space.

B. Performance Facility Recommendations (listed by size)

1. Black Box Theater 99 -150 Seats: There is an unmet demand for quality flexible space for theater, dance and music performance. The Mini-Theater at Lincoln center lacks many of the technical and acoustical features that local groups desire and its rental schedule remains booked. A new black box theater could be accommodated off the west corridor in Lincoln Center or in approximately 9,200 gross square feet of space elsewhere.
2. 500-800 Seat Theater: A large gap exists in the local facility inventory for a mid-sized performance space between 500-800 seats. Productions that require this size performance venue are too large for the Lincoln Center's Mini-Theater and too small for the large performance hall. Concepts for retrofitting the Lincoln Center large performance hall to a 700 seat facility have been provided in the attached Cultural Facilities Plan.
3. 1,500-1,800 Seat Performing Arts Hall: Lincoln Center's 1180 seat performance hall has seating and technological deficiencies that prevent large scale shows. A 1,500 – 1,800 seat center with rehearsal and support spaces could be newly constructed with an approximate gross square footage of 96,000. A state-of-the-art performing arts center would be capable of successfully presenting touring Broadway, live symphony, ballet, opera, and popular entertainment.
4. 2,500 Seat Hall: A 2,500 seat venue would help Fort Collins dramatically raise its arts profile and become a cultural destination. The Bohemian Foundation's interest in developing a large scale music venue would fulfill this need and would attract substantial touring music shows and other types of entertainment.
5. Outdoor Event Venue: A centrally located downtown location for outdoor performances, festivals, farmers markets, or community gatherings would fill an outdoor venue void. A basic program outlines a need for approximately two acres for a 5,000 seat facility. Up to 1/3rd of those seats could be housed in a sheltered indoor / outdoor pavilion and the remainder located on a terraced lawn and/or plaza setting.

1.2 Review and prioritize the recommendations from the Cultural Facilities Plan, determine potential funding mechanisms, timelines, and partnerships to fulfill the plan.

A. Highest Priority Facilities are considered the following:

1. The highest priority facility continues to be an 1800 seat new performing arts center in the downtown. Land was purchased for this facility through voter approved capital tax. The site is the Northwest corner of Mason and Mountain, which would position the facility along the future Mason Corridor. The timeline of the Downtown Development Authority's proposed amphitheater requires the City to determine its position on pursuing this facility.

2. Lincoln Center, coming up on 30 years of service, is in need of renovations. The facilities plan recommends that Lincoln Center eventually contain the following:

- Black Box Theater
- 500-800 Seat Theater
- Shared Administration, Rehearsal and Production space

These changes would need to be phased in, and the creation of the 600-800 seat theater would be dependent on the construction of the new 1800 seat performing arts center.

B. Secondary and more long-term priorities are the following:

1. The cost for renovating Club Tico should make this project more feasible in the short-term, and would need to be prioritized within the Recreation Department's needs, with consideration given to its cultural uses.

2. The South-Side Community Arts and Recreation Centers are considered a long-term goal, and can be addressed at the time when the City decides to pursue and fund future recreation centers.

3. The Science and History Satellite project will need to be considered by the new Fort Collins Museum and Discovery Science Center merger and determine how this project fits into the long-range plans for the new entity.

C. The new 1800 seat performing arts center will require both public and private funding.

1. The City would need to determine its interest and appropriate timing for a potential tax measure to fund the facility.

2. The original private funding feasibility study done in 2000 can be updated to determine current interest from the private sector in funding a new performing arts center.

1.3 The City can support and encourage the development of new facilities as recommended in the Cultural Facilities Plan that have the potential to be built by others outside the municipal government.

A. Support the work of the Bohemian Foundation in constructing a new music venue, which could fulfill recommendation for a 2500 Seat Hall, and any similar private efforts.

B. Support the Downtown Development Authority's Beet Street economic initiative to provide Chautauqua-like world-class cultural programming in and around Downtown, and the necessary infrastructure. The Beet Street initiative provides a framework for packaging cultural offerings to attract regional and national travelers to Downtown Fort Collins. The DDA could be a partner in developing an Outdoor Event Venue to host a variety of events, fairs, and festivals for both Beet Street and the community.

C. Studio and exhibition space could be pursued by the City or other private entities as a creative re-use of existing or vacant buildings, and charge a nominal fee to artists to rent the space.

1.4 Use arts, culture and science facilities to enhance the vibrancy of downtown Fort Collins.

A. As described in the Downtown Strategic Plan (1.2) landmark buildings and public art can be used as gateway markers, and features that will create interest and delight within streets and public spaces. The City has the opportunity to pursue and support the following:

1. Continue to support and employ Art in Public Places to create unique and interesting spaces in the community, like Oak Street Plaza, East Prospect Entry, and the Police Facility.

2. Pursue the Fort Collins Museum/Discovery Science Center at the Lee Martinez Park site, anchoring the Mason Street Corridor on the North, and linking Downtown to North College.

3. Pursue a new performing arts/community facility at the Northwest corner of Mountain Ave and Mason Street, identified as "one of the top locations, given its proximity to the retail/entertainment core, the future Mason Corridor, and existing parking" in the Downtown Strategic Plan (2.1.5).

GOAL 2

Develop an Arts Council to promote and support the business of arts, culture, and science.

BACKGROUND

- An Arts Council generally provides the needed infrastructure for organizations and artists to build capacity for sustainability, growth, and creativity. An Arts Council also ensures the promotion, collaboration, business support, and advocacy of arts, cultural, and science organizations and activities, and provides skill, education, marketing, and fundraising support. An Arts Council finds ways to assist the community in taking advantage of all that the arts, culture, and sciences have to offer, from opportunities for youth to major festivals and attractions.
- Fort Collins has two umbrella organizations: Arts Alive and the Cultural Resources Board, but neither is currently fully serving the function of an Arts Council.
- The lack of an umbrella organization is cited as a need in achieving the Cultural Plan goals, the UniverCity Connection Arts & Culture Task Group action plan and the Cultural Facilities Plan.
 - During the Community Cultural Planning Forum, a formalized Arts Council was one of the top action items.
 - The cultural facilities plan consultant states that investment in an Arts Council is critical to preparing existing arts groups for operations within any new planned spaces and to build potential for organizational health, growth, and success.
 - Through the UniverCity Connections process, cultural groups, artists, citizens, and community leaders agreed the formation of an Arts Council was of great importance to the success of the action plans and to the organizations and artists themselves, but also to the community's continued enjoyment of a high quality of life.
- The community believes cultural activities are important to have, even if they don't attend, and those activities are provided by the large number and variety of cultural organizations and artists that call Fort Collins home.
- Many arts and cultural organizations exist with the constant threat of not meeting their budgets, and our community is at risk of losing the enriching cultural experiences and opportunities provided by a varied non-profit sector that we've come to rely on for this aspect of our quality of life.
- Previous arts councils have lacked sustainable funding to allow them to fulfill their mission. Many organizations believe these efforts demand City support and/or leadership to be successful.



RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Develop an Arts Council for Fort Collins that can be sanctioned or politically supported by the City.

A. Engage Arts Alive, the Cultural Resources Board, City's Cultural Services Department, Beet Street, and the Fort Collins Convention and Visitors Bureau in this process. An Arts Council could be founded in a number of creative ways with the support and engagement of these primary entities.

2.2 Research and develop a funding mechanism for an Arts Council in order for it to be sustainable and successful.

A. A sustainable, on-going funding source is critical to the success of an Arts Council. The organization must be seen as supporting arts, culture, and science interests and not competing for funding.

B. Arts Councils are funded in a variety of ways, including city, county, or state government, convention and visitors bureaus, associations, authorities, membership dues, or a combination. It is recommended that the funding be put in place from a consistent, long-term source before enacting an Arts Council.

2.3 Services and support provided by an Arts Council can empower and further develop the cultural cluster.

A. Arts Councils across the state and nation provide a wide range of services and resources. Each community must determine the right mix of services, resources and advocacy that are needed to support and grow its arts, culture, and science industry.

B. Survey the local arts organizations, community leaders, and community members at large to prioritize the work of the Arts Council.

GOAL 3

Build Fort Collins' identity as a cultural center and destination by increasing the visibility of arts, culture, and science activities in Fort Collins.

BACKGROUND

- Visibility is cited as one of the largest issues facing arts, culture, and science organizations.
- Art in Public Places continues to be one of the most visible aspects of the community's commitment to arts and culture, with projects like Oak Street Plaza, the Police facility, and East Prospect Entryway.
- The Fort Collins Convention and Visitors Bureau instituted a new on-line cultural events calendar and a one-time regional campaign around arts, culture, and science.
- The major newspaper is not seen as responsive to promoting cultural organizations.
- Cultural organizations perceive a difficulty in reaching out to audiences in the south and southeastern sections of the community, let alone outside the city.
- Much of the population growth is occurring in the southern part of the city but no cultural facilities exist in those areas.
- Fort Collins has a concentration of arts, culture, and science organizations and performing arts events in particular, but many residents are still unaware of the opportunities.
- City leaders have shown their support for arts, culture, and science as adding to the quality of life and economic development of Fort Collins. This support shows in their commitment to the Lincoln Center renovations, new museum facility, and cultural facilities plan through the BOB capital tax renewal, EVSAG priorities, "Uniquely Fort Collins" encompassing arts and culture, Downtown Strategic Plan listing arts and entertainment as a key component to downtown development, the Beet Street initiative, and UniverCity Connections.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 An Arts Council should work closely with the Fort Collins Convention and Visitors Bureau in promoting the arts, culture, and science as an attraction. The Bureau should include the cultural cluster as an on-going part of its promotional tool kit.
- 3.2 Arts, culture, and science organizations should support and promote Fort Collins Convention and Visitors Bureau's centralized calendar
- 3.3 Develop centralized ticketing or centralized access to better promote the variety of cultural happenings in Fort Collins and allow easy access to tickets. This could be attached to the web portal being developed through the branding efforts.
- 3.4 Arts, culture, and science should be included in Fort Collins' branding efforts. Distribute branding materials and information to relevant organizations and encourage its wide-spread use so brand can be effective.

3.5 A standing committee around audience development and marketing should be formed, ideally under an Arts Council. Audience behavior is changing and audience development and marketing are taking new directions. The Arts Council should assist cultural organizations in understanding and responding to these new trends and develop strategies for diversifying, broadening or deepening audience participation.

3.6 An Arts Council should serve as a clearing house of information about events, tickets, schedules, and cultural organizations. The clearing house should distribute information to the public, media, potential donors, volunteers, and artists. The clearing house function can also allow heightened communication among the various cultural organizations.

3.7 The City should continue to invest in Art in Public Places as a quality of life issue, and as a very visible and tangible expression of the community's commitment to arts and culture.

3.8 Develop and fund a marketing plan for all the arts, culture, and science activities, organizations and artists, and focus on collaborative efforts.

3.9 Construct community art centers as part of future recreational facilities scheduled for construction in parks in the southwestern and southeastern portions of the city. Doing so provides great opportunity for arts participation in the densest population areas of the community.

3.10 Cultivate champions for the arts at every sector of the government and private business (Municipal, County, State, Chamber of Commerce, major foundations and corporations) who:

A. Provide visible and consistent leadership in advocating for the arts and cultural development, funding, integration and support.

B. Publicly accentuate the creative community as a vital ingredient to a sustainable, exceptional quality of life.

C. Engage creative individuals on boards, commissions, appointments and committees.

3.11 Engage the student and faculty populations at Colorado State University and Front Range Community College (FRCC) in arts and culture activities through special promotions.

A. CSU and FRCC students represent 28,000 residents in the community. Consider offering special discounts to students through their IDs or in coupon booklets.

B. Introduce students to arts and cultural organizations and activities at the Ram Welcome Program at CSU and New Student Orientation at FRCC.

3.12 Create a high-end magazine focusing on culture.

A. Engage Lydia's Style Magazine to publish a special issue or an on-going publication.

B. Approach print media to request a weekly culture page in existing publications.

GOAL 4

Develop sustainable funding, public and private, to support arts, culture, and science.

BACKGROUND

- Many of the local arts, culture and science organizations in Fort Collins are on the brink of extinction due to lack of funding.
- Arts and culture organizations rely disproportionately on earned income from ticket or admission sales – as much as 98% for some organizations. The national average is closer to 48%. These figures show a need to build private and public support for cultural organizations.
- There is an opportunity to build cultural philanthropy in our community.
- The City’s Fort Fund granting program established in 1989, disburses funds from a portion of the lodging tax to cultural events as administered through the Cultural Resources Board. The granting program supports cultural events held in Fort Collins, and contributes approximately \$180,000 each year to more than 100 events.
- The community survey shows residents strongly believe (95%) that having cultural arts programs are enjoyable, contribute to the education of children, and believe having these activities are important for the community even if they do not attend.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Research and develop sustained and on-going support for arts, culture, and science organizations and artists to aid in the stability and growth of cultural programming, educational activities, artist development and events that improve the quality of life in our community.

A. Consider creating a Scientific and Cultural Facilities District in Larimer County. The existing SCFD legislation could be used that has shown great economic and cultural opportunity success in the Denver metro area to create an SCFD in Fort Collins and perhaps the region. An SCFD would provide additional on-going operational support to arts, culture, and science organizations through a revenue/attendance formula, assuring that the organizations are contributing economically to the community.

B. Develop a business support network, like a “2% for Culture” program, in which businesses join an elite group of supporters, providing a percentage or consistent dollar amount of their annual earnings to support arts, culture, and science in Fort Collins.

4.2 Actively promote the expansion of philanthropic giving to the arts, culture, and science.

A. Work with the Community Foundation of Northern Colorado to build community awareness and promote private giving to arts, culture, and science.

1. Host a professionally facilitated meeting of key private funders to discuss philanthropy’s role in achieving community goals and how to cultivate the next generation of funders in Fort Collins, potentially through mentoring.

2. Host sessions to share with the community the opportunities and benefits of becoming an arts, culture, and science donor or volunteer.

3. Provide information to financial and estate planners regarding the benefits and opportunities of their clients contributing to arts, culture, and science organizations.

4. Develop and distribute printed materials describing arts, culture, and science organizations and the benefits of contributing to these organizations.

B. Create a designated donor-advised fund managed by the Community Foundation, “Arts Forever Fund,” to which any donor can contribute any amount. The Board of an Arts Council could assist in recommending disbursements from the fund.

4.3 The City should continue to invest in its Cultural Services Department and can consider increasing its support in the following ways:

A. Consider providing funding for a full-time, knowledgeable staff person and/or provide office space to run an Arts Council.

B. Consider developing an events specialist position within the City to support existing community events and to develop new festivals, fairs, concerts, and cultural events.

4.4 Bring the Cultural Cluster together to request state or federal funding in a block instead of small individual requests.

A. Develop an application around a central topic – arts education for example – and create a comprehensive program that involves as many organizations as are willing to participate. Hire a coordinator as part of the grant to oversee the overall project and interact with each organization in achieving their piece.

B. Beet Street, the City, Arts Alive or an Arts Council would be a logical organization to begin pursuing this type of funding.

C. Consider an ombudsman-type position with one or three organizations to help organizations and artists write and secure grant funding.

4.5 The City should continue administering the Fort Fund granting program through the Cultural Resources Board. The Board with its overarching goal “to help make Fort Collins a cultural center and destination” can encourage and even require grant awardees to meet this goal.

GOAL 5

Employ arts, culture, and science to improve Fort Collins' quality of life, strengthen the local economy, and increase tourism.

BACKGROUND:

- The nonprofit arts are a \$15 million industry in Fort Collins – one that attracts audiences, spurs business development, supports jobs, and generates government revenue.
- When a community supports arts and culture, not only is quality of life enhanced, but we also invest in Fort Collins' economic well-being.
- Businesses looking to relocate frequently consider cultural opportunities as a major contributing factor to their decision.
- Cultural tourists stay an extra day and spend 50% more than other tourists.
- Nationally, more money is spent on tickets to performing events than tickets to motion pictures or sports.
- Developing Fort Collins as a cultural center and destination will require concerted marketing efforts regionally and beyond.
- The Economic Vitality and Sustainability Action Group (EVSAG) recommends developing business clusters, a geographic concentration of interconnected companies and institutions in a particular business field. Arts, Music, and Cultural Entertainment and Adventure, Cultural, Educational and Experiential Travel and Tourism are both identified as potential Business Clusters.
- The “creative class” as defined by Richard Florida, is found in a variety of fields, from engineering to theater, biotech to education, architecture to small business. Those who create for a living make up over 1/3 of the American work force and their choices have a huge economic impact. Florida predicts in the future, they will greatly impact how the workplace is organized, what companies will prosper or go bankrupt, and even which cities will thrive or wither.
- Communities that embrace the creative class will have a competitive advantage for attracting the best employees and employers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Strengthen the Arts, Music, and Cultural Entertainment Cluster's ability to attract business and add to the economic engine of the region.

A. Engage the City's Economic Advisor to:

1. Review the EVSAG recommendations and bring together a task group to work towards strengthening the cluster.
2. Determine appropriate strategies for employing the value of art, culture, and science in recruiting and retaining business to the area, such as hosting events for prospects, serving as ambassadors or on recruiting committees.

B. Develop an Arts Council to oversee a number of the recommendations of this plan and serve as an umbrella organization for arts, culture, and science organizations. (see Goal 2) By doing so, the Arts, Music, and Cultural Entertainment Cluster can receive the

support and advocacy it needs to continue to have a positive and increased impact on quality of life and the local economy.

C. Develop a consistent signage system (way finding) to direct visitors and residents to cultural facilities.

D. Extend the life of the Downtown Development Authority, and build the infrastructure required of an arts & cultural district in the downtown. These pursuits can include developing pathways to and from restaurants and cultural venues, new lodging establishments downtown, and continued investment in cultural programming through Beet Street.

E. Within the City's Transfort program, and potentially partnering with the DDA and Downtown Business Association, develop a cultural bus or trolley route that links the various cultural facilities and attractions.

5.2 Attract tourism to Fort Collins through arts, culture and science.

A. Build on the recent success of the Cultural Resources Board and Convention and Visitor Bureau's development of an on-line cultural calendar and regional marketing plan. The CVB is the key organization to reaching out to visitors and tour groups and can:

1. Continue to market the arts, culture, and science cluster regionally and beyond
2. Commit to a cultural tourism strategy in marketing Fort Collins
3. Market the cluster locally to visitors through the hospitality industry.

B. Position Fort Collins as a cultural hub through the development of expanded cultural offerings, facilities and an effective marketing and advertising campaign.

1. The City's branding initiative, including its multiple community partners, includes arts, culture, and science as key strengths. Materials and information can be broadly distributed to relevant organizations helping the brand be effective.
2. Overall support to existing organizations can help to improve the quality and expand the breadth of programming currently offered.
3. Create a position within the Arts Council, the City, Convention and Visitor's Bureau, or Beet Street as an events specialist to assist with city, community, and nonprofit festivals and events.
4. A community-wide analysis could identify program gaps, and recruit organizations to produce programming to fill the gap. Funding could be sought from Fort Fund.
5. Support the efforts of the DDA's Beet Street to improve quality and breadth of current programming, bring new cultural opportunities to the community, and promote Fort Collins as a regional and national attraction.

5.3 Support and encourage the creative business of arts, culture, and science

A. By continuing First Friday Gallery Walk each month and seeking additional promotional opportunities, Arts Alive and its partners can encourage gallery businesses as part of the Cluster.

B. Encourage the Chamber of Commerce to develop a “Creative Business” committee to allow networking and support for this industry. The arts industry should be considered a target business in the same way the “technology sector” is targeted.

C. Include “Arts Business” as part of the incubator project already existing in Fort Collins. An Arts Council could serve as a resource to assist new business in becoming successful.

D. The City and other entities could offer unused space in buildings for a nominal fee to artists. These spaces could become thriving studios for visual artists and rehearsal spaces for local performers. An exploratory committee should be formed to meet with various entities to discover possible spaces.

E. The City, Downtown Business Association, CVB, and others can encourage and support new local arts, culture, and science festivals. Recent additions include Bohemian Nights at New West Fest, the Irish Festival and the Fort Collins Jazz Experience, but Fort Collins can grow more large festivals that attract visitors and draw attention to a vibrant cultural life. The city also lacks adequate festival grounds and infrastructure, such as transportation and parking. An event specialist could assist groups that would like to upstart a new festivals around arts, culture, and science.



F. The City should continue to invest in its public art program and serve as a resource of artists’ names and contact information to enable the private sector to more easily do the same. These projects employ artists, the local construction industry, and bring attention and economic impact to the community. Public art also expresses the community’s commitment to arts and culture and can aid in attracting the creative class.

G. The Fort Collins Convention and Visitors Bureau could recommend local artists to conference and convention groups seeking entertainment for their meetings. This supports the artist while showcasing the great talent of the community to visitors.

*East Prospect Entry Way by
May and Watkins Design

GOAL 6

Ensure availability of arts education programming to our youth through future community arts centers, collaborations between schools and arts groups, training and resources for teachers, and funding.

BACKGROUND

- Many organizations provide outreach programming for students and schools for a reduced or at no cost.
- Students in 4th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th grades are bused to performances provided by the Lincoln Center performing arts series, OpenStage Theater, the Fort Collins Symphony, Magic in the Rockies, etc.
- FCMOCA, Fort Collins Museum, Discovery Science Center and Avery House cater to elementary students through field trips and outreach.
- Poudre School District adheres to state curriculum standards which include visual and performing arts and music.
- Currently, there is no comprehensive arts education outreach program in Fort Collins.
- While Poudre School District supports arts and culture in the classroom, limited resources make partnerships with non-profit and municipal organizations all the more critical to help provide arts education.
- With the passing of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the arts were written into federal law as a core academic subject in K–12 public schools. The arts maintain their status under the No Child Left Behind Act.
- While the federal government asserts that the arts are a core academic subject, it does not require that states and/or school districts offer programming.
- Arts programs designed for underserved youth have proven to be powerful and effective crime prevention tools.
- Early engagement in the visual and performing arts has great significance on the life of a child because these experiences help create unique brain connections that will have long-term positive impacts on that child's life.
- Students involved in the arts have higher self-esteem and an increased sense of responsibility.
- 93% of Americans agree that arts are vital to providing a well-rounded education for children (May 2005 Harris Poll)
- 97% of Fort Collins residents agree that performing and visual arts and cultural programming contribute to the education and development of children. (Community Cultural Survey)
- “The arts can help students learn how to think in different ways, to use all parts of their brains, to be analytical and to find connections. It is a really important way to make the human brain reach its full potential.” Colorado Lieutenant Governor Barbara O’Brien.



- Research shows that instruction in and involvement with the arts not only motivates students to stay in school, but also helps them develop advanced cognitive abilities essential for success in math, science, and other academic subjects.
- Creative, analytical problem solving will be key to being a leader in the knowledge-based economy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Form an Arts & Culture think tank, as conceived by the UniverCity Connections Arts and Culture Task Group and convened by an Arts Council, made up of a broad range of stakeholders to provide on-going conversation about arts and culture and its ties to education.

A. The group would evaluate local, state, and federal arts education mandates and to what extent they are being implemented locally. The group will identify gaps and resources to fill those gaps and focus on ensuring all community members have access to arts, culture, and science activities.

B. The group has the opportunity to connect with the Colorado Council on the Arts “Arts Learning in Colorado” initiative to further its goals locally.

6.2 Develop a directory of artists, events, and calendars for educators that increases accessibility and opportunity and serves as a clearing house for cultural educational opportunities.

A. Build upon the directory project initiated by Arts Alive.

B. Market the directory to educators, businesses, chamber, CVB, organizations and others and provide information on how artists might be of service.

C. Provide a list of artist speakers, facilitators and teachers willing to visit classrooms.

6.3 Connect artists and cultural and science organizations with students through outreach programming, internships, mentoring, and for credit opportunities.

6.4 Offer credit courses in arts, culture, and science for teachers that help them build their knowledge of arts-based education and its value in the classroom as well as content specific training. Offer in-service days at particular facilities or with organizations that help teachers connect curriculum with arts, culture, and science activities.

6.5 Solidify funding sources for arts, culture, and science education initiatives, including new initiatives as well as past initiatives that were successful but unfunded.

A. After school program for at-risk elementary students and Art Express provided by Arts Alive are examples of successful programs that were unfunded.

6.6 South-side community art centers can directly engage students in art, culture, and science activities.

Appendices

- A) Arts & Economic Prosperity Study 2003
Arts & Economic Prosperity Study 2007
- B) Community Cultural Survey results
- C) Cultural Facilities Plan
- D) Cultural Inventory
- E) EVSAG Report, July 2004
- F) Participants List
- G) Poudre School District Humanities Standards
- H) Uniquely Fort Collins
- I) UniverCity Connections Arts & Culture
Task Group Action Plan