ACT FOR ART
THE CREATIVE ACTION PLAN FOR THE PORTLAND METROPOLITAN REGION

Strengthen our cultural infrastructure
Improve access to the arts and arts education
Invest in creative talent

PRESENTED BY:
Portland Mayor Sam Adams
Metro Councilor Carlotta Collette
Washington County Commissioner Dick Schouten
The Regional Arts & Culture Council
Skyline Consulting Group
We wander in words and in old growth forests, immerse in lakes and symphonies. Bank walls are a canvas of mixed media, and children learn to crawl on art museum floors and stomp through puddles in handmade shoes. The arts are not a luxury here, but an integral part of our everyday lives. Decades of work by talented artists and diverse arts organizations have attracted other creative businesses and individuals, helping position the region as one of the country’s leading centers of creativity. But we cannot rest on our laurels – especially in this economy. Difficult decisions are being made about where to invest, and where to cut. We know that if we want to fully realize the true creative capacity of our region, and reap more extraordinary benefits for years to come, we must be proactive and we must get organized.

Over the past 22 months, more than 1,500 citizens participated in the “Regional Creative Capacity Project,” an assessment of the region’s strengths and weaknesses when it comes to culture, creativity and the arts. This task-oriented Action Plan is the culmination of that effort.

You won’t get too far into this report before you realize there is a significant focus on the need to secure $15-$20 million annually in dedicated public funding for the arts in the region. Public opinion research suggests that it recently has become feasible to ask voters to approve such a thing. Citizens in all three counties are making it very clear that they value creativity, art, culture and arts education – and that requires intentional, sustained investment.

We don’t know for certain what the future will bring, and the specific strategies suggested today may have to change over time, but we are committed to meeting the overarching goals stated in this Action Plan. Over the next five years, scores of organizations and individuals will help us achieve our vision, and they will be shepherded all the while by a new Regional Steering Committee that we have agreed to co-chair.

We’d like to extend our appreciation to everyone who has informed this work to date by serving on a committee, participating in an online survey, attending a Town Hall, or offering other input over the past two years. Now we are ready to roll up our sleeves and get to work. Please join us if you haven’t already.

Mayor Sam Adams,
City of Portland
Councilor Carollo Collette,
Metro
Commissioner Dick Schouten,
Washington County
THE PORTLAND METROPOLITAN REGION’S LAST BIG MASTER PLAN FOR THE ARTS WAS ARTS PLAN 2000, WRITTEN IN 1992. Much progress has been made since then, and we certainly have progressed and vibrant arts community to show for our efforts. But there remains a persistent, systemic problem of inadequate public funding for the arts in our region – a condition that has undermined our creative capacity for far too long. Today’s economic crisis has only exacerbated the situation. Even in this challenging environment – or perhaps because of it – artists and arts organizations are being proactive and creative in serving the community. Confronted with major shifts in audience and donor behavior, most organizations are making prudent budget cuts where they can while engaging their most loyal supporters to meet them half-way. Artists are forging collaborations and sharing resources with each other more than ever before – you can attend the symphony one night and they will encourage you to use your ticket stub to get a discount at the theatre the next. We applaud the arts community’s commitment to serving the citizens of our region even in difficult times. Perhaps this is when we need them the most.

We know that the arts feed our souls, whatever the economic environment. We know our children must continue to learn creative skills. We know that innovation is critical to the success of our businesses. For these reasons and many more, government leaders throughout the Portland metropolitan region have a vested interest in the success of our local arts community.

In June of 2007, Portland City Commissioner (now Mayor) Sam Adams worked with the Regional Arts & Culture Council to assemble 100 arts, business and education leaders and elected officials from throughout the tri-county region (including Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties) to be part of the Regional Creative Capacity Project. Working in committees facilitated by Kathleen Cosgrove of Skyline Consulting Group, participants identified the broad creative needs of the region and helped quantify the extent to which citizens value arts and culture.

The Creative Capacity committees collected input from local artists, business leaders, educators, and creative professionals to identify the broad creative needs of the region, and ultimately developed a series of recommendations for moving forward. Through town hall meetings, on-line surveys, and roundtable discussion groups, more than 1500 individuals participated in the vetting of the recommendations that are outlined in this report.

In addition, science focus groups and telephone surveys in the Spring of 2008 revealed strong and consistent support for arts and culture across the tri-county area.

Now work is underway to identify the organizations and structures that will have an important role to play in achieving the goals set forth in The Action Plan. A new Regional Steering Committee of civic leaders from throughout the tri-county region will oversee its implementation and revisit the final objective of securing public support for arts and culture.

Percentage of those polled that would be willing to pay $1 per month to support additional dedicated funding for the arts.

Percentage of people polled stating that opportunities to enjoy the arts and creative learning is essential to their families and their family.

SUMMARY

ARTS SUPPORT

SOURCES

Average arts organization funding

FUNDING NEED

PUBLIC INTEREST

PORTLAND REGION

Earnings Income 46%

Foundations 14%

Corporations 6%

Local Gvt. 20%

Federal Gvt. 1%

State Gvt. 1%

Individuals 30%

NATIONAL SOURCES

Average arts organization funding

Corporations 7%

Foundations 13%

Individuals 21%

Funding Needs

$15-20 million

Public funding to support the region’s $319 million nonprofit arts and culture industry. (Current amount is 4.2 million.)

WHO’S WHO

ARTS PLAN 2000

The nation’s first regional cultural planning process (including Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties.) www.can.org

The Portland Development Commission is the development planning agency for the City of Portland, PDC.


Creative Services Sector

Includes local arts and cultural organizations, architecture, advertising, and creative design firms; film, radio, and television production companies; art supply stores; and art schools.

Regional Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC) provides grants, workshops, and other services for artists and arts organizations in Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties. www.merc-facilities.org

American for the Arts and Dun & Bradstreet: *Arts-centric businesses as calculated by Americans for the Arts and Dun & Bradstreet: number of arts-centric businesses* in the region in 2008, employing more than 18,000 people.

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STRENGTHEN OUR CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

WHERE WE ARE:

A REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE of civic leaders in Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties is being established to monitor the progress of The Action Plan over the next five years. Portland Mayor Sam Adams, Metro Councilor Carla Colin, and Washington County Commissioner Dick Schubert will co-chair. The Regional Arts & Culture Council (RACC) will serve as administrative support.

THE CREATIVE ADVOCACY NETWORK (CAN) has been formed to protect current levels of funding for the arts, and to build the grassroots effort and legislative research necessary to ultimately help secure dedicated funding.

RACC AND NWBCA are collaborating with arts organizations to align strategies, achieve efficiencies, cross-promote each other’s efforts, and develop stronger advocacy messages to meet our short-term funding challenges as well as the long-term dedicated funding objective.

THE REGION is becoming increasingly well known for its galleries and music scene, art festivals and creativity conferences.

RACC AND GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES are developing an inventory of performance and exhibition venues in the tri-county area.

ARTISTS AND ARTS ORGANIZATIONS report a dearth of venues that seat 100-250 people, and several have identified the need for an 1800-seat venue. Several of the region’s venues are not ADA accessible.

SOME ARTS ORGANIZATIONS cannot afford the Portland Center for the Arts (PCPA) because both they and the buildings are undercapitalized. The significant ongoing costs of maintaining these public facilities are being passed on to tenants.

SEVERAL CITY CENTERS are developing an inventory of performance and exhibition venues in the tri-county area. These public facilities are being passed on to tenants.

Portland Mayor Sam Adams, Metro Councilor Carla Colin, and Washington County Commissioner Dick Schubert will co-chair. The Regional Arts & Culture Council (RACC) because both they and the buildings are undercapitalized. The significant ongoing costs of maintaining these public facilities are being passed on to tenants.

... To link creativity, innovation, and a vibrant economy by supporting diverse cultural offerings in all disciplines throughout the tri-county region.
WHERE ARE WE:

MAN Y EXAMPLES of free and reduced-cost opportunities exist throughout the region. From free museum days for children or families to performances in parks, our region’s arts organizations are stretching dollars to provide more arts access. Many arts organizations participate in discount programs including the Work for Art “Arts Card,” which gives cardholders 2-for-1 tickets at hundreds of local arts events each year.

PERCENT FOR ART programs as managed by RACC are among the state’s most respected public art programs in the country. City of Portland and Multnomah County are at least double the national average, and other jurisdictions and quasi-governmental agencies also have percent-for-art programs. RACC and Travel Portland have collaborated twice on producing a public art walking tour brochure, and RACC has created an online searchable database.

SOME INCENTIVES EXIST for public developers to utilize art as a marketing tool.

After a 7-year hiatus, Community Murals are again being created in the City of Portland, but the permitting and review process is still overly cumbersome for many mural artists. The region’s arts organizations are conducting a wide variety of effective arts education programs that have restored some of the arts education activities that schools can no longer afford to provide on their own.

YOUNG AUDIENCES maintain a comprehensive directory of arts education programs and artists residency programs in the region that are available to schools.

RACC IS PLANNING The Right Brain Initiative in 20 schools, training teachers, artists and arts organizations to work together to integrate theater, music, dance, and art into other K-8 standard curriculum subjects including reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. It systemically changes the arts education delivery system in our region to help ensure that every child has access to meaningful, ongoing arts learning experiences.

THE REGION is home to many outstanding education programs for arts and design. Pacific Northwest College of Art, The Art Institute of Portland, Portland State University, Oregon College of Arts and Craft, The University of Oregon, Maryland University and many other institutions of higher learning have established significant programs.

OUR VISION

To enrich the quality of life for our community and inspire innovation by integrating the arts into our schools and the daily lives of all who live and visit the Portland region.

ART IN SCHOOLS

Making art and culture accessible to all is a top priority. Accessibility can be addressed in many ways, but it begins with ensuring that every child has access to a complete education that includes arts learning experiences.

When children are taught the value of art and artists, they are more likely to see themselves as artists. In schools where art is integrated, students are more likely to have higher math, science, and social studies scores, and more likely to stay in school. A high-quality arts education delivers benefits that extend far beyond the classroom.

GOAL

INCREASE ACCESS TO THE ARTS AND ARTS EDUCATION

IMPROVE ACCESS TO THE ARTS AND ARTS EDUCATION

Identify and promote available arts opportunities in the public and explore opportunities to expand public art programs in the region.

RACC Conduct an ongoing inventory of free and reduced-cost arts events, and promote these events among participating artists and coordinators throughout the region. RACC assists arts organizations to establish the arts community’s goals and strategies for improving access to the arts. Support collaborative grant writing efforts that support these goals.

RACC & The Right Brain Initiative: Promote affordable family arts experiences in the region to families and students participating in The Right Brain Initiative.

RACC and Parks & Recreation Complete comprehensive listing of free and low-cost arts events and arts learning experiences. Evaluate cost and benefits of current partnerships (eg., Free Oregon Cultural Association, City of Portland, etc.)

RACC: Develop and implement a multi-year marketing campaign to promote the Work for Art “Arts Card.” Explore the feasibility of an “Arts Sampler Weekend” in future brand Work for Art while promoting new audiences for arts organizations.

Steering Committee: Identify extent to which additional public funding will create more access for the citizens of the region.

RACC: Complete online database of public art collections with descriptions, images and map links.

Result by ’14: Increase in free and reduced cost arts experiences and cultural activities.

Other jurisdictions: Collaborate with RACC to create a centralized master database of all public art in the region.

RACC: Establish best practices documents for other local jurisdictions considering percent-for-art ordinances.

RACC and City of Portland Explore additional incentives for public art policies in the tri-county area in the general for art programs.

RACC and Government Entities: Spread awareness about tax incentives for community murals, create a larger roster of lead muralists and artists with mural experience and encourage hiring of local artists first.

RACC: Secure more grants to fund the deferred maintenance and repairs that are still needed for much artwork in the collection.


Source: Regional Arts & Culture Council

1980s 1.0% 1.33% 2.0% 1990s TODAY

Amount of all publicly-funded capital construction projects that must be set aside for the creation and maintenance of public art through City of Portland and Multnomah County’s percent-for-arts ordinances.
Invest in Creative Talent

Strategy

 Eliminate barriers and support the basic needs of artists and other creative professionals in the region. RACC, CAM and Creative Industries Sector: Collaborate to survey artists and creative professionals to learn barriers and untold basic needs. RACC and Steering Committee identify and prioritize the challenges facing creative individuals. City of Portland: Establish collaborations between housing organizations and the arts portfolio to identify opportunities for more low/medium spaces and to address other housing needs.

New strategies for helping artists achieve savings on housing and other basic living expenses.

Support Artists

 Help the creative services sector thrive by creating opportunities for artists to network with other creatives, supporters, and consumers. RACC and City of Portland: Launch additional online networking and promotion solutions. RACC: Evaluate feasibility of a travel fund for local artists.

B Network

 Create more cultural consumers and help increase the purchase of locally produced art. RACC and City of Portland: Include creative businesses and creative professionals in technology solutions discussed in strategy 3.B. Collaborative Effort: With additional funding, launch public awareness campaign to promote local artists and encourage the purchase of their work.

Regional Creative Capacity Project Committee Members

Sue Adkins
Jennifer Archuletta
Dave Allen
Robert Austin
Sarah Balak-Smith
Shane Bansz
James Bernard
Jacques Beymer
Rem Budish
Chandra Brown
Dya Calapag
Gian Crocetti
Bob Crossley
David Cohan
Chris Coleman
Kathy Coliar
Carrolle Collette
NC Crowe
Dan Damroths
MaryAnn DeFrenno
Sandrine Dean
Gaila Derb
Rob Drake
Tim Duffy
Scott Eberwein
Mark Eldon
Chris Erickson
David Eira
Brian Ferree
Harrell Fletcher
Victoria Fry
Paul Fughi
Brian Gard
Chris Gobner
Jude Hakanson
Justin Hocking
Kimberly Howard
Tom Hughes
Melissa Jaffe
Norman King
Beverley Kerneker
Frank Loza
Phillips Lowen
Elizabeth March
Gloria Lee
Lori Leyda
Kramer
Andres
Michele Marchetti
Tom Mesley
Jonathan Meuss
Dardis
Kendall
McCauley
Phillips Lowen
Nancy McDaniel
Lewis
Andrew McHugh
Scott McVie
Martin Medeiros
Ken Michaelis
Phillip McPhail
Carrie-Marie Menz
Judith Mervine
Math Fraser
Alice Morris
Lori Patterson
Lori Pejovich
Libba Phin
Lisa Rabin
Linda McCandless
Geronimo Thomas
Judy Tucker
Joe Uhl
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Buy Local

Create more cultural consumers and help increase the purchase of locally produced art. RACC and City of Portland: Include creative businesses and creative professionals in technology solutions discussed in strategy 3.B. Collaborative Effort: With additional funding, launch public awareness campaign to promote local artists and encourage the purchase of their work.

Creative Capacity+.

WHERE ARE WE:

The Portland Region continues to experience one of the country’s highest rates of in-migration among young creatives.

Portland has been working to encourage private development of livable-workspace and other affordable housing solutions for artists.

Artists struggle with many of the same challenges that affect other citizens in our community – finding affordable health insurance, being priced out of their residence, understanding safety codes and navigating permitting procedures.

Artists report that it is not always easy to find consumers or other artists.

Art Sparx was established in the summer of 2008 as an opportunity for artists to meet and mingle on the third Thursday of each month.

Many artists and arts organizations have migrated their calendars and online box offices to a collaborative, comprehensive online calendar system, pdxArt.net.

Artists have identified the need for additional technology solutions to help share information and promote their products and services. RACC and the City of Portland are developing a scope of work for this additional technology.

Cities throughout the region have flourishing gallery scenes, although many artists still cannot secure spaces to exhibit their work.

Through its newsletter and website, RACC serves as a conduit and clearinghouse for technical assistance opportunities that help artists learn to make and market their products and services and run sustainable businesses.

Our Vision

To have public policies that encourage creative expression and contribute to the Portland region as a destination where consumers visit from all over the globe, both physically and virtually, to access top designers and creative talent.

Statewide, Local and Regional


Creative Capacity+. 2007

ARTISTS STRUGGLE WITH MANY OF THE SAME CHALLENGES THAT AFFECT OTHER CITIZENS IN OUR COMMUNITY – FINDING AFFORDABLE HEALTH INSURANCE, BEING PRICED OUT OF THEIR RESIDENCE, UNDERSTANDING SAFETY CODES AND NAVIGATING PERMITTING PROCEDURES.

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FOOD.

SHELTER.

ART.

THE ARTS ARE NOT A LUXURY.
The arts are a necessity for Portland to keep creating, inspiring, innovating and thriving. The arts can, and must, happen here.
Find out what you can do now: theartscan.org