We have long admired the Tacoma community for its arts activism and the Arts Commission for its wide support of the arts community.

J. Glenn Evans for PoetsWest
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Old Town Dock boasts one of the best vantage points in the South Sound, with beautiful views of land, city and sea in every direction. Because of its prominence in so many lives and livelihoods, the dock has stood witness to a staggering number of true stories since it was built in 1873. Family histories, booming industries, important events, Native traditions, beginnings, endings, drastic changes, slow growth, celebrations, tragedies, and a thousand everyday narratives—the stories we tell are as commonplace as raindrops, yet as precious as the water that defines and sustains Tacoma as a city. Droplets by Chandler O'Leary references just a handful of these stories throughout 24 circular medallions (“portholes”) hidden throughout Old Town Dock; visitors are encouraged to look around for the art pieces and discover the beautiful views of the area. The project was completed through the Public Art: In Depth (PA:ID) artist training program.
The arts are the best insurance policy a city can take on itself.

Woody Dumas
Welcome to ArtFull Tacoma! This 5-year strategic plan builds on Tacoma’s vision and values for a creative, cohesive community and flourishing arts and cultural sector. Beginning with this Introduction and the following chapter—Foundation for ArtFull Tacoma—ArtFull Tacoma describes the context and purpose for the plan, and how and why arts and culture are an integral part of Tacoma’s character. Following these chapters, the heart of the plan focuses on the specific strategies and initiatives needed to sustain and grow a thriving, vibrant arts and culture scene in Tacoma.

1.1 WHY ARE ARTS & CULTURE IMPORTANT TO TACOMA?

Arts, culture, and creativity are essential keys to Tacoma’s unique and distinctive identity. Creativity is also the engine of the new economy. The creative sector contributes directly and indirectly to community prosperity through generating economic activity, providing employment, making Tacoma attractive to today’s mobile knowledge workers, and contributing to Tacoma’s quality of life.

Tacoma 2025 (discussed below) affirms the importance of arts to a healthy, prosperous city. ArtFull Tacoma carries forward that affirmation and identifies how the City’s aspirations can be realized.

The work/life calculus for the next generation had shifted. Their parents may have followed a job, a promotion, or corporate marching orders. But the next generation was following their bliss, choosing cool cities and then finding work. The next generation has become very fickle about where they live and work. They want communities that “fit” their values and lifestyle. They want employers that do the same. “Live first, work second” is becoming the defining ethic of the next generation.

Live First, Work Second, Rebecca Ryan, 2007
1.1.1 Tacoma 2025

Focus Area: Arts & Cultural Vitality

*Tacoma 2025* is a strategic plan and vision for the future of Tacoma. It is intended to guide the City (as both a local government organization and a community), and to help the City direct its efforts and resources toward a clearly defined vision for its future that reflects community desires, current and future trends, and bolsters the City’s unique position within the region. Based on extensive public conversations reaching over 2,000 residents, the plan identifies four core values: opportunity, equity, partnerships, and accountability. Rising from the core values, specific focus areas, including arts and cultural vitality, define and emphasize key areas and opportunities for the future.

Investment in a prolific arts scene promotes the four core values of *Tacoma 2025*. Affordable housing and studio space, revitalized historic venues in the theater and dome districts, and a vibrant museum campus encourage access to a broad variety of cultural activities by people from varying walks of life. Contributions and programs for all community sectors offer opportunity to celebrate and foster Tacoma’s culturally rich and varied population. Key partnerships—discussed in more detail in Section 2.1.3 on page 22—strengthen the City’s communitywide work to attract and retain creative residents, stimulate economic development and neighborhood vitality, and encourage a widespread embrace of the community’s ethnic diversity.

*ArtFull Tacoma* supports and implements the following arts and cultural vitality community priorities identified in *Tacoma 2025*:

- **Increase participation in arts and culture.** Tacoma’s impressive arts and cultural scene offers opportunities that can enrich everyone’s lives.

- **Embrace Tacoma’s diversity of people, places, and cultures.** Active celebration of Tacoma’s diversity will help the community succeed economically and socially.

- **Leverage and strengthen Tacoma’s arts and cultural assets.** Tacoma’s excellent collection of arts and cultural facilities and historic buildings provides an economic advantage in attracting residents and investments.
Framework Goals

The Tacoma 2025 Framework is an ecosystem approach to implementing the 2025 strategic plan. It is devised of 5 goals that align with the priorities identified in Tacoma 2025. Council direction, Department Goals, and the Strategies identified in ArtFull Tacoma determine day to day operations that will support Tacoma 2025 as it moves from vision to reality.

Goal 1: Livability. By 2025, the city of Tacoma will be a city of choice in the region, known for connected neighborhoods, accessible and efficient transportation and transit options, vibrant arts, and culture. Residents will be healthy and have access to services and community amenities while maintaining affordability.

Goal 2: Economy & Workforce. By 2025, Tacoma will be a growing economy where Tacoma residents can find livable wage jobs in
key industry areas. Tacoma will be a place of choice for employers, professionals, and new graduates.

**Goal 3: Education.** By 2025, Tacoma will lead the region in educational attainment amongst youth and adults. In addition to producing more graduates from high school and college, more college graduates will find employment in the region. Lifelong learning and access to education will be prioritized and valued.

**Goal 4: Civic Engagement.** By 2025, Tacoma residents will be engaged participants in making Tacoma a well run city. The leadership of the city, both elected and volunteer, will reflect the diversity of the city and residents will fully participate in community decision making.

**Goal 5: Equity & Accessibility.** By 2025, Tacoma will ensure that all residents are treated equitably and have access to services, facilities and financial stability. Disaggregated data will be used to make decisions, direct funding and develop strategies to address disparate outcomes.

### 1.1.2 Creative Economy

Creative economy refers to activities, policies, and programs that are specific to those individuals and businesses that employ creativity and innovation within the community. They can include graphic designers, fashion designers, galleries, music venues, photography and print shops, instrument dealers, and artisan businesses that exist in Tacoma. Tacoma’s creative economy also envolpes arts nonprofits such as Tacoma Art Museum, The Grand Cinema, Tacoma Symphony Orchestra, Museum of Glass, Broadway Center for the Performing Arts, and many other museums, theaters, and creative enterprises.
Many of Tacoma’s arts and cultural economic activities occur in and around downtown, where there is a concentration of design services businesses, museums and artists’ resources (see map above). Other notable clusters are the collection of artists in the Point Defiance area and the Sixth Avenue Business District. In the Downtown, there are clear concentrations of assets emerging in and around the Museum District and the University of Washington Tacoma campus.
1.1.3 Livability

Art, culture, and creativity reflect Tacoma’s spirit and values—they are its pulse. The transformative power of art is critical to strengthening neighborhoods, building infrastructure, and fostering positive social change in the city. Creative human expression inspires community members and attracts visitors. Celebrating cultural and religious identity brings people together. Music can stir emotions. Art can challenge residents to see the world in new ways. Festival and events can educate communities about each other. From cultural heritage to contemporary art, human creativity in Tacoma embodies the past, present, and future. In turn, these strengthen social relationships, civic engagement, and neighborhood vitality.

Access to substantive arts and cultural experiences—such as the Asia Pacific New Year Celebration and Tacoma Studio Tours—enriches the quality of life for both residents and visitors of Tacoma. Whether experiencing the arts as a creator and artist, as an art lover, or in a passive capacity, a vibrant cultural sector that fosters a creative, cohesive community fosters inspiring personal experiences, illuminates the human condition, and offers meaningful ways for individuals and communities to engage with each other and those around them.
1.2 ARTS & THE CREATIVE ECOSYSTEM

ArtFull Tacoma is anchored in the idea that arts and culture are created and consumed as part of a dynamic ecosystem within the community. Principles of a flourishing creative ecosystem reflect:

- **Access**: many different points of entry to make and experience art
- **Prosperity**: artists can live and make a living in Tacoma
- **Diversity**: a variety of artforms are expressed and experienced by a wide range of people
- **System Integration**: arts are integrated into systems (infrastructure, community partnerships, civic engagement)
- **Risk taking**: tolerance for ambiguity and controversy

The city’s natural setting, built environment, economic vitality, historic resources, and demographic diversity all impact individual artists and creative workers, nonprofit cultural organizations, arts-related businesses, educational art programs, and other creative entities. Supporting all of these formal and structured creative entities are the thousands of people who attend and support arts activities throughout the city.
Tacoma can fulfill its mission by working broadly and deeply with all elements of the ecosystem. ArtFull Tacoma therefore is not just about funding programs or public art or special projects; ArtFull Tacoma is about facilitating, cultivating, and strengthening the existing and ever-changing ecosystem in Tacoma that ultimately creates and drives art, culture, and the creative economy.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

1.3.1 Enhance & Expand Existing Programs

Throughout the Tacoma 2025 visioning process, participants voiced strong support for cultivating and strengthening the existing Tacoma arts scene. ArtFull Tacoma builds on this sentiment through increased accessibility, especially for students and youth, preservation of local heritage resources, and improved visibility. The Arts Program currently has a robust offering of funding programs, public art, and special projects. Existing programs are discussed in more detail in Section 2.1.2 on page 16.
1.3.2 Strengthen the Role of the Arts as an Important Economic Driver

Communities that invest in the arts reap the additional benefits of jobs, economic growth, and a quality of life that positions the communities to compete in a 21st century creative economy. What makes the economic impact of arts and culture organizations unique is that, unlike most other industries, they introduce large amounts of related spending—such as meals, ground transportation, and souvenirs—by their audiences. All of these expenditures have a positive and measurable impact on the economy.

Economic Impact Overview

In 2011, the City of Tacoma’s Arts Commission participated in a national study called Arts & Economic Prosperity IV. The study documented the economic impact that nonprofit arts and culture organizations, and their audiences, have on the economy, both locally and nationally.

According to the study, the nonprofit arts and culture sector is a $64.72 million industry in Tacoma, one that supports 1,735 full-time equivalent...
Nonprofit arts and culture organizations, which spend $34.86 million annually, leverage a remarkable $29.86 million in additional spending by arts and culture audiences (not including cost of event admission).

Tacoma’s study results are based solely on actual survey data collected, not on fiscal projections. In the City of Tacoma, 44 of the approximately 116 total eligible nonprofit arts and culture organizations identified by the Community and Economic Development Department responded to the survey—a response rate of 38%. Figures given in the study results are based solely on the information provided by these 44 organizations. Data was also collected from 1,045 event attendees during 2011 through an audience-intercept methodology. The 44 nonprofit arts and culture organizations that responded to the detailed organizational survey reported that the aggregate attendance to their events was 1.2 million in 2010.

**Employment**

From 2009–2014, creative occupations have grown at a compound annual growth rate of 4.9%. Graphic designers are the top creative occupation and have the highest average growth rate at 13.3 percent since 2009.

In terms of wages, top earners in Tacoma metro are art directors (see table at left). Though graphic designers are the top occupation and the fastest growing, their average wage was lower than that of architects, curators, producers and directors, and editors.
In terms of employment and the arts at the national level, estimates have found that for every job created from new demand for the arts, an additional 1.62 positions are also created.1 This job multiplier occurs because artists use various supplies and services, such as specialized manufacturing, in the process of creating their work.

Qualitative Benefits of the Creative Economy

The jobs, wages, and number of businesses related to the arts depict one portion of the larger picture of what the arts mean to Tacoma. The city’s arts and culture assets help establish Tacoma’s unique, marketable brand identity that distinguishes it from other communities in the region, which is useful for attracting both residents and businesses. Additionally, a creative economy promotes synergies between different professions within and outside of the artistic realm, such as science, engineering, and software development. Creative industries generate innovative products and services; supply services and products that support innovation in other fields (e.g. software development) and, as heavy technology users themselves, drive demand for new information and communication technology.2

Arts and culture are also important drivers of economic development. In addition to supporting the city’s various museums and performance venues, tourists contribute to Tacoma’s economy by dining at local restaurants and shopping. Research has found that people who travel to experience culture/heritage typically spend more during their trips than those who travel for other reasons ($1,319 versus $820).3 Beyond producing jobs related to tourism, a creative economy encourages entrepreneurial activity that can lead to patent development and create a culture that helps foster businesses in the copyright industries, such as software, film, and other media. Homegrown enterprises serve the dual function of creating local job opportunities and also attracting other businesses to locate in the city. This is important to Tacoma, where close to 70% of residents worked outside of the city in 2013.4

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A city that elevates the importance of art and artists may experience other benefits, including increased community attachment. Community attachment is defined as a strong, enduring emotional connection to a place, characterized by community pride and optimism about the community’s future. People tend to be more attached to aesthetically pleasing places, and public art installations and creative place-making are essential elements to nurturing such places. Greater levels of community attachment are positively correlated with local GDP growth, suggesting that more highly attached residents are likely to be actively invested in their community’s growth.

1.3.3 Mandate for the Plan/5-Year Action Plan

*ArtFull Tacoma* thinks big.

The heart of *ArtFull Tacoma* is a compelling set of strategies to enhance and expand the impact of arts and culture programs in Tacoma and position art as an economic driver for the city. This means integrating the current creative ecosystem, building on what the City has learned and on where it has succeeded, and identifying areas of strategic action to foster a healthy, accessible environment in which the creative ecosystem may thrive. The Plan is a 5-year action plan, a roadmap for achieving clearly defined goals, strengthening the City’s vision, and addressing current or upcoming issues.

*ArtFull Tacoma* is also a natural extension of the proactive steps the City has taken to make Tacoma an attractive place for creative industries, such as activating vacant commercial areas through Spaceworks Tacoma and public spaces through the Tacoma Murals Project. In addition, long-term citywide planning efforts, including the current Comprehensive Plan update and *Tacoma 2025*, have incorporated arts and cultural vitality as key to Tacoma’s brand and self-image.

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1.4 ORGANIZATION OF THIS PLAN

ArtFull Tacoma is divided into four main chapters. Chapter 1 considers the importance of Tacoma’s creative ecosystem on the overall health of the city—such as livability and economic success—as well as the purpose of and regulatory framework in which the plan will operate.

Chapter 2 describes the City’s current role in supporting Tacoma’s creative ecosystem—including existing funding opportunities, programs, and services—and key partnerships which strengthen the system of support. The chapter also includes a brief discussion of Tacoma’s unique characteristics which serve as a foundation for the city’s creative future, and a summary of outreach efforts used to establish a framework for ArtFull Tacoma.

Building on stakeholder input and lessons learned in Tacoma and other cities, Chapter 3 identifies five major strategies and 20 supporting initiatives intended to enhance and expand the impact of arts and culture programs in Tacoma, and position the arts as an economic driver for the city. The strategies and initiatives incorporate the current creative ecosystem—building on what the City has learned and on where it has succeeded—and identify areas of strategic action to foster a healthy, accessible environment in which the creative ecosystem may thrive.

Finally, Chapter 4 includes a list of references and acknowledgments for ArtFull Tacoma.
Whenever you see people doing art, whether they are amateurs at a swing dance class or a professional painter, you invariably see them trying to get better. "I am seeking. I am striving. I am in it with all my heart," Vincent Van Gogh wrote.

David Brooks, New York Times Editorial
2.1 WHAT IS THE CITY’S ROLE IN THE ARTS?

The City of Tacoma provides leadership, policy, programs, and services that contribute to a healthy, vital creative ecosystem. The City welcomes creative individuals and industries through funding programs, education opportunities, and arts supportive citywide policy; enhances the physical environment through the commission and maintenance of public art, sensitive design of public facilities, appropriate review of the design of private development, and preservation of its heritage in historic buildings; and promotes community through sponsorship of festivals and support for home-grown community events.

2.1.1 Arts Commission

The Tacoma Arts Commission supports the ecosystem of the arts in Tacoma through funding, public art, community programming, technical assistance, stewardship, and advocacy. They encourage the development of the local arts community through the administration of arts and cultural funding programs, managing the City’s public art collection, and producing a variety of public programs that enhance and contribute to Tacoma’s local economy.

The Commission’s primary responsibility is to create policies to support the ongoing development of arts programs and projects in Tacoma.

From innovative programs like Spaceworks to the funding provided through grants, The Arts Commission has presented vital resources that directly impact the growth and development in Fab-5’s programs. We feel grateful to have an Arts Commission that provides such generous support and sees the value in the work that we do. It’s through the hard work and community invested interest of those individuals that allows art to become a changing force within our city.

Kenji Stoll, Fab-5
Its main programs include the funding of artists and arts organizations to provide services for the citizens of Tacoma, and oversight of the Municipal Art Program.

The Commission is a 15-member volunteer commission made up of Tacoma residents who are arts advocates and artists. Commission members are appointed by the Tacoma City Council following an application and interview process.

2.1.2 Current Programs & Services

Municipal Art Program & Public Art

Tacoma’s diverse public art collection can be found incorporated into the fabric of the City’s infrastructure in virtually every neighborhood. The collection tells the City’s stories, provides interest in neighborhoods, creates identity, establishes community presence, and reflects the many talents of artists. Proper stewardship and maintenance of the collection reflects the City’s commitment to quality.

The benefits of public art are many: it can transform eyesores into amenities, enliven design, provide way finding, become a landmark, encourage community dialogues, and create spaces and places where people want to visit and stay.

In March of 2000, the City of Tacoma reinstated the Municipal Art Program that dedicates 1% of construction costs from public capital projects to the creation of public art.
Funding Opportunities

- **Arts Anchor Fund**: operating support for Tacoma’s larger arts institutions who “anchor” the cultural community through exhibited stability and excellence.

- **Arts Projects**: an annual program that supports a diversity of grassroots arts projects throughout the city.

- **Tacoma Artists Initiative Program (TAIP)**: a biennial program to support the creation of high quality work by Tacoma artists working in all disciplines. Artists share their talents with the community through free public components.
Education

- **Arts EnviroChallenger**: provides free relevant educational opportunities for K-5 students in Tacoma Public Schools that integrate visual arts and science to increase access to and quality of arts education and science education and raise student awareness of environmental practices. [Key partners: Environmental Services; Arts Impact]

Programs & Activities

- **Spaceworks Tacoma**: a joint initiative of the City of Tacoma and the Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce designed to activate empty storefronts. The initiative makes no- and low-cost temporary space available to artists, fledgling creative entrepreneurs, organizations, and community groups by placing them in unused commercial properties. [Key partners: Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce]

- **Tacoma Arts Month**: each October, Tacoma celebrates Tacoma Arts Month—31 days dedicated to showing off the very best about our community. The month is brimming with hundreds of arts and culture programs and there is something for everyone to enjoy: music, dance and theater performances; visual art exhibits; literary readings; lectures; workshops; film screenings and cultural events. [Key partners: local artists, arts organizations, businesses, funders, media outlets]

- **AMOCAT Arts Awards**: annual awards recognize those in the community who provide distinctive contributions to the arts. The honorees work hard to support and build the community by innovating in artistic excellence.

- **Tacoma Murals Project**: joins artists and communities through the collaborative process of mural-making to create powerful artworks that can transform public spaces, neighborhood identities, and individual lives. [Key partners: Neighborhood and Community Services; Public Works]

- **Tacoma Poet Laureate**: showcases local literary artists who actively contribute to and advance Tacoma’s literary community in meaningful ways through readings, performances, workshops, presentations, publications, and special projects.
In my case I had no knowledge of starting a business and I would recommend the training to anyone in my situation. Being a part of Spaceworks moved my idea from wishful thinking to a solid plan.

Spring 2014 Creative Enterprise Training Program participant
Programs and Activities

**artTown TV Show:** A cultural documentary-style TV show exploring Tacoma’s emergence as a major creative hub in the Pacific Northwest. The series offers segments featuring diverse perspectives on a variety of creative disciplines. (Key partners: Art Department, TV Tacoma)

Tacoma Art & Culture on Click! On Demand: collaboration with Click! Cable TV to air film and music content created by or featuring funded organizations and artists, Spaceworks Tacoma participants, and local cultural venues. (Key partner: Click! Cable TV)
• **National Arts Program**: annual City of Tacoma employee and family member visual art exhibit and awards event providing employees a chance to showcase their creative side and build employee morale.  
  [Key partners: The National Arts Program]

• **Marketing & Communication**: variety of efforts to support, highlight, and build awareness of arts in Tacoma.  
  [Sample efforts: TacomaArt listserv; TacomaArts Blog; Facebook; newsletters]

• **Special Projects**: one-time special events and programs that capitalize on timely programming of community organizations and help build momentum.  
  [Sample projects: Pop-Up Art Putt; Metal-Urge]
2.1.3 Key Partners & Partnerships

The City of Tacoma recognizes it cannot support arts, culture, and creative industries alone. Much of the City’s work is communitywide and is far more effective in concert with educational institutions, nonprofits, community groups, and businesses.

Key partners and partnerships include:

- Artist Trust
- Arts & Culture Coalition of Pierce County
- Arts Community
- Arts Organizations
- ArtsFund
- Broadway Center for the Performing Arts
- Cultural Institutions
- The Greater Tacoma Community Foundation
- Local Colleges and Universities: University of Washington Tacoma, Pacific Lutheran University, University of Puget Sound, Tacoma Community College
- Metro Parks Tacoma
- Museums
- Pierce County Arts Commission
- Pierce Transit
- Sound Transit
- Tacoma Housing Authority
- Tacoma Public Library
- Tacoma Public Schools
- Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce
- Theaters
2.2 WHAT MAKES TACOMA A SPECIAL PLACE FOR THE ARTS?

Tacoma is...

- Diverse, welcoming, innovative, and full of edge and a we-can-do-it mentality.
- Authentic, genuine, and unpretentious.
- Full of natural beauty, historic buildings, distinct neighborhoods, and a vibrant arts community.
- Welcoming to new artists, creative industries, and anyone with a good idea.

These are all words used to describe Tacoma’s character with respect to the arts. Stakeholders and the general public alike described these as characteristics that they love about Tacoma and hope will be preserved and enhanced as part of a growing and vibrant arts scene. ArtFull Tacoma builds on this foundation as a starting place and vision for Tacoma’s future in developing strategies and initiatives for a vibrant arts and culture future.

As a resident, I don’t recall ever experiencing such a strong sense of community in any of the other places that I’ve lived. I’d always yearned for it, but until now, had yet to find it. Amongst many, many other things I’ve experienced over the past year of living here, your appreciation for the arts and dedication and support for the local artists largely contributes to my having found “my place” in Tacoma.

Shannon Johnson
2.3 CREATING THE PLAN

The ArtFull Tacoma strategic planning process began in October 2015 with a series of conversations with the public, City staff, and interested stakeholders from virtually all sectors of the community, including artists and representatives from creative industries, education, non-profit arts and cultural organizations, real estate and tourism industries, and many others. In focus group discussions, participants contributed to a rich and lively series of conversations focused on propelling Tacoma’s creative future. Strengths, gaps, and opportunities for new collaborations and activities emerged as key priorities for consideration. Key themes are summarized below:

What assets does Tacoma have?

- Tacoma is a welcoming community for newcomers, including artists and creative industries
- Tacoma pride, a small city with a collaborative spirit that is independent, not corporate
- We are authentic—the citizens of Tacoma create the culture and are willing to invest in their city as evidenced by support for parks and schools
- We have a deep academic community and depth and breadth in the creative class
- We are a city rich in diversity, which extends to an ownership composition of small, independent businesses
- We are rich in cultural facilities, organizations, and programs
• We are affordable, both housing and commercial space
• Our historic character is inspiring and inviting to artists and creative industries
• We have strong local arts and political leadership
• We are authentic, genuine, and inclusive; arts are not seen as elitist
• We are a compact, walkable downtown; a density of arts organizations within walking distance facilitates collaboration

What gaps does Tacoma have?
• Arts facilities and programs are not equitably distributed throughout the neighborhoods
• It can be hard for young adults to find a way to get engaged
• Schools and school funding for the arts—developing cultural knowledge and interest in a new generation
• We do not have a civic arts organization to bring all of our different efforts together under one umbrella
• Financial resources have been inadequate to support a sustainable arts community
• There are not enough connections to creative and innovative industries, who are we missing?
• We have a narrow view of arts and don’t see the intersection of art, science, and technology
• There is a lack of awareness of the richness of the art and cultural offerings in Tacoma—knowing where to go to find information
• Gentrification is a challenge now and in the future
What should we do?

• Preserve affordability so that the creative community can thrive
• Focus on relationships and recognize the importance of small continuous changes over the long term
• Support and promote grass-roots efforts—maintain authenticity, spontaneity—pump art out to the community—use spaces in the neighborhoods
• Infuse art and artists into all aspects of the community—connecting communities to the arts, problem solving, supporting creative solutions, social action
• Build relationships at all levels of the school system—ignite youth to be involved in the arts
• Emphasize integration of art into everyday life, not something special outside of normal life
• Build on our strong foundation of arts organizations and facilities
• Support young artists—provide opportunity for people who don’t have the resources to create
• Be approachable and reach out to new audiences—consider “Study Abroad Downtown” involving people in their city
• Nurture and support events and festivals—they plant seeds and allow work to be seen in a new way
• Provide more arts in neighborhoods, outside of downtown, balance art programs geographically, demographically and in types of art
• Support diverse perspectives in opening up art to people who haven’t thought about art before
• For diverse populations, bring some of the story to life, tell the story that hasn’t been told
• Promote equity—you can’t be who you don’t see
• Build up financial support to expand programs and services (consider microenterprise grants)
• Understand that wealth comes in knowing and having the platform to share—in sharing, have to respect each other’s cultures
The innovative cities of the coming age will develop a creative union of technology, arts, and civics.

Sir Peter Hall
Northwest Sinfonietta Community Collaboration

Soul Salmon at the Swan Creek Library & Literacy Center

Spaceworks | Concrete Market

Fab-5 LIFE Program

Fern Hill mural by lead artist Kelda Martensen

Spaceworks | Scott Scoggin at the Old Post Office
The City has also invited ideas through the website, receiving thoughtful comments from 24 individuals. Their thoughts are briefly summarized below:

How can Tacoma help strengthen our local creative economy?

- Have centers for creating art, learning the craft, more exhibition, and performance space throughout the city
- Support low-cost opportunities to experience art
- Keep supporting Spaceworks!
- Require a % of capital costs to be assigned to art in private projects
- Dramatically increase affordable housing compatible with artist needs
- Make owning and running a small business easy and affordable
- Have a vibrant and generous street art scene
- Designate and promote an art district
- Help arts groups understand the arts audience in Tacoma
- Foster professionalism in local artists

What should the City’s priorities be in supporting arts in Tacoma?

- Getting more involved with Tacoma Public Schools to advocate for the arts for students and families!
- Establish an art college
- Support local artists by providing affordable studios and performance and exhibition space
- Promote community identity and place-making through art
- Supporting Cultural Access WA!
- Find more diverse funding streams for every art form
- Provide a covered, visible from the street, year-round public space for visual and performance artists; make art immediately available to the community
- Provide capacity support to smaller arts organizations

In large part, these discussions, suggestions, and recommendations, together with review of other city plans, such as Tacoma 2025, have informed the strategies and initiatives that form the heart of ArtFull Tacoma.
A Ric Matthies print at the Wayzgoose Letterpress Festival
3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the heart of the 5-year action plan, providing a roadmap for achieving clearly defined goals, strengthening the City’s vision, and addressing current or upcoming issues. Five major strategies and 20 supporting initiatives are identified to enhance and expand the impact of arts and culture programs in Tacoma and position the arts as an economic driver for the city. Recommended strategies are based on stakeholder input and lessons learned in Tacoma and other cities. They incorporate the current creative ecosystem—building on what the City has learned and on where it has succeeded—and identifying areas of strategic action to foster a healthy, accessible environment in which the creative ecosystem may thrive. The five strategies are described briefly and listed with corresponding supporting initiatives in the table on the following page.

The remainder of the chapter includes a detailed description of strategies and initiatives, and identifies potential benefits, recommend actions, *Tacoma 2025* framework goals addressed, and partners for each initiative. Together with the information presented in previous chapters of *ArtFull Tacoma*, this chapter is intended to help stakeholders and City decision-makers identify key actions to achieve the City’s vision for the arts.
3.2 ARTFULL TACOMA AT A GLANCE

Strategy 1: Grow and sustain the creative economy.

Art, culture, and design enrich people’s lives, enhance communities, and provide educational and emotional experiences. The City of Tacoma has long recognized this intrinsic value, as well as the significant economic contribution of the arts and creative enterprises. Strategy 1 will support Tacoma in reaping the full benefits of its creative people and creative industries, and help raise the profile of artists in the local community, expanding the reach of artists and increasing local awareness and participation in arts and cultural events.

Strategy 2: Promote equity, diversity, and inclusiveness through the arts.

Arts and culture have the power to change hearts, inspire social change and make our community strong. But too many—including communities of color, immigrants and refugees, and people with disabilities—experience disparities in access to the arts. Strategy 2 supports equitable access to the arts and the right to express our diverse cultures through the arts as a top priority.

Strategy 3: Use public art to create active, accessible, and welcoming public places.

Great public places are where friends run into each other, cultures mix, celebrations are held, and social and economic exchanges occur. Public art is one component of creating active, accessible, and welcoming public places, serving to animate public spaces and contribute to community identity and heritage. Strategy 3 describes how art and design can contribute to great public places.

Strategy 4: Strengthen Tacoma’s creative ecosystem.

A strong creative ecosystem is a vibrant constellation of individuals, audiences, programs, civic interests, and social needs woven together through deep and lasting relationships. It recognizes the power of many perspectives and skills to inspire and shape the future. Strategy 4 describes opportunities for strong partnerships to help promote a healthy and vibrant creative ecosystem and a flourishing community.
Strategy 5: Optimize performance and capacity of arts programming, services, and operations.

Strategies 1 through 4 identify ambitious and far-reaching initiatives that the City and its partners can take to establish Tacoma as a center for the arts. Strategy 5 seeks to ensure that the City has the capacity to implement these initiatives through a range of measures related to improved communication, staffing, organizational structure, and funding.
The most striking fact about the creative economy is that creators are the nucleus of the economy. Their ideas, creativity, talent and entrepreneurship are what make it possible for producers, publishers, distributors and retailers to generate value.

European Grouping of Societies of Authors and Composers, 2014
Grow and sustain the creative economy.

Art, culture, and design enrich people’s lives, enhance communities, and provide educational and emotional experiences. The City of Tacoma has long recognized this intrinsic value, as well as the significant economic contributions of the arts and creative enterprises.

Strategy 1 and supporting initiatives will help Tacoma reap the full benefits of its creative people and creative industries, and help raise the profile of artists in the local community, expanding the reach of artists and increasing local awareness and participation in arts and cultural events.

What is the economic value of THE ARTS?

What the arts contribute to the U.S. economy

$698 Billion

Number of workers in the arts and cultural sector

4.7 Million

Total compensation of arts and culture workers

$334.9 Billion

Total capital investments in arts and culture

$105 Billion

Contribution to GDP from copyright-intensive industries

$869 Billion

Number of additional jobs created for every 100 from new demand for the arts

62

- 70% of investments from entertainment originals, such as movies, TV shows, and books
- 50% in the arts sector

An artist who creates is much like a company with employees, expenses, taxes, and turnover.

Laurence Jenkell, visual artist and sculptor
The City of Tacoma’s investment in arts and culture over the years has paid off. By supporting the restoration and maintenance of City owned cultural facilities, contributing to the development of museums, resurrecting funding for public art, and funding numerous artists and arts organization activities, Tacoma has become a vibrant center for arts and culture.

During the heart of the great recession, the non-profit arts and culture industry provided a $65 million economic impact to the City of Tacoma. In Tacoma, people spent more money on and around arts and cultural experiences than 2/3 of other cities our size. A more recent study conducted by ArtsFund in 2014 proved that cultural organizations are big business in our region—“the activity of nonprofit cultural organizations and their patrons in King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties generated $2.4 billion in the WA state economy and created 35,376 jobs, $996 million in labor income, and $105 million in taxes.” (www.artsfund.org/programs/2014-economic-impact-study).

With 6 museums within walking distance, a thriving theater district, and a growing creative class, Tacoma is poised to be a desirable destination not solely for arts and culture patrons, creatives, and makers, but an attractive community for businesses to develop and relocate.

Those who are familiar with the arts in Tacoma recognize the area’s offerings as richly diverse, accessible, intimate, and authentic. The challenge for Tacoma is to share this story regionally and nationally to attract new audiences, new businesses, residents, and more creative energy.

Promoting Tacoma as a center for the arts will improve the external perception, increase the visibility of Tacoma, and attract new money, so that Tacoma can continue to grow and sustain its creative economy.
Benefits

• Cultural organizations and activities attract tourists and outside investments
• Tacoma will have increased positive visibility
• An active arts and culture scene attracts businesses and residents looking to relocate

Actions

• Leverage the arts and cultural assets in Tacoma marketing materials and promotions.
• Partner with the Arts & Culture Coalition of Pierce County, Travel Tacoma, and Metro Parks Tacoma to leverage marketing opportunities and resources that increase visibility of the arts & cultural attractions in Tacoma.
• Maintain investment in City-owned cultural facilities and adjacent rights of way and systems that support attractive and inviting experiences for visitors.
Spaceworks Tacoma is an innovative program that strategically addresses economic development and community revitalization. Launched in 2010, this joint initiative of the City of Tacoma’s Arts Program and the Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce is designed to activate empty storefronts and vacant spaces in Tacoma with art and creative enterprise. Property owners temporarily donate their vacant spaces and program participants transform them into dynamic points of interest with creative businesses, site-specific art installations, special short-term projects, and pop-up events.

Spaceworks is much more than space. It is a rigorous training program that provides creative business people with the skills to be successful and it is paying off. Seventy five percent of businesses that participate in the training program and find retail spaces have gone on to become lease-paying tenants; some poised to purchase their own buildings and many celebrating five years in business. In recent years, Spaceworks has become a master lease holder and manager of co-working spaces that provide affordable space for artists and creative businesses.

Since its inception, Spaceworks has transformed vacancy to vitality in over 40 spaces by supporting 87 creative small businesses, creating 82 jobs, curating 125 streetside art installations, and generating a multitude of community arts events.

In 2016, thanks to a generous grant from JPMorgan Chase, Spaceworks is completing a strategic plan to strengthen the organization, identify new levels of service, pilot services to Tier 2 businesses looking to grow and scale, and identifying potential creative growth industries.

This initiative supports the dynamic growth and sustainability of Spaceworks Tacoma as a tool for community and economic development.
**Benefits**

- Growth and sustainability of creative businesses
- High quality and diverse retail, exhibits, and experiences
- Activation of underutilized storefronts and spaces

**Actions**

- Support the implementation of Spaceworks’ Strategic Plan.
- Continue the development of business training to help scale and grow successful creative businesses.
- Identify creative growth clusters within Spaceworks Tacoma alumni and support through training, resources, and space.
As Tacoma’s creative economy grows through the efforts of the Arts Commission, Spaceworks, artists, makers, creatives, arts organizations, and others, it is important to identify potential growth clusters to invest in that may result in high paying jobs, visibility for Tacoma, and new money.

In this era of extraordinary change and globalization, many acknowledge that creativity and innovation are now driving the new economy. Organizations and even economic regions that embrace creativity generate significantly higher revenue and provide greater stability into the future. Based on ideas rather than physical capital, the creative economy straddles economic, political, social, cultural and technological issues and is at the crossroads of the arts, business, and technology. It is unique in that it relies on an unlimited global resource: human creativity. Growth strategies in the creative economy therefore focus on harnessing the development potential of an unlimited resource and not on optimizing limited resources (as in traditional manufacturing industries).

Key role of cultural and creative industries in the economy, Hendrik van der Pol Director, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Canada

It is important to identify and focus on clusters of excellence and creative entrepreneurship that have the capacity to catalyze and grow, involve a cross-sector reach, and have capacity to pay good wages.

For example, the film industry relies on writers, actors, directors, musicians, filmographers, lighting specialists, costumers, site developers, and other production staff. In addition, there is post-production editing and distribution. The jobs are high-paying, relying on strong skill sets. Each film, commercial, or TV show impacts the local economy by hiring local talent when it is available, renting spaces, eating food, and staying in hotels. The added bonus is visibility to our community.

Another example is the maker community. Tacoma’s roots are industrial. Over the past decade, it has grown a tremendous number of talented artists, designers, and makers who channel these roots into the creation and manufacturing of a wide range of amazing products. Glass-blowers, letterpress artists, furniture makers, and apparel designers are making their mark locally and nationally by producing high-quality, authentic products. In 2016, Tacoma was selected among 13 cities nationally to...
participate in the ETSY Maker Cities initiative designed to bring makers together with government entities to identify ways to grow the industry, advance manufacturing capacity, increase visibility, and strengthen the overall creative entrepreneur system.

**Benefits**

- Strengthened competitive edge for artists and creative businesses
- Living wage jobs for creative industries
- Connection to patrons and customers outside of Tacoma
- Creates critical mass and a shared pool of talent

**Actions**

- Identify opportunities and incentives to grow the film industry.
- Implement initiatives to grow and sustain the Tacoma Maker community resulting from ETSY Maker Cities Summit.
- Identify other potential growth sectors such as “creative tech.”

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**Case Study | Tacoma Manufacturing**

*Tacoma Manufacturing Company strives to create and maintain sustainable jobs for the community by providing training in the sewing trade. They are a small team of designers and crafts people who help guide others through a world of product development from ideation to a production ready package. The team uses a mix of modern and old-time processes that allow them to make the highest quality goods, sourcing materials from as close to home as possible. All of their products and services are completed in Tacoma.*

*ETSY Maker Cities champion a new model for economic prosperity, one that puts people at the center of commerce, promotes sustainable production, and empowers people to build creative businesses on their own terms.*
Building capacity through training and professional development for our artists and arts organizations is essential to building a thriving community. Over the years, the Arts Commission has provided a wide range of training and technical assistance to provide artists and arts organizations with tools to access services, build capacity, and be competitive in the market. In the past six years, three very focused and intensive professional development programs were implemented to advance the success of and opportunities for artists:

- **Public Art: In Depth (PA:ID)** trains artists to be locally and consequently regionally competitive as public artists.
- **Tacoma Murals Project** trains artists to work with communities and translate their artwork into large-scale outdoor murals.
- **Spaceworks Tacoma** trains artists and creatives to develop and sustain thriving businesses.

The Arts Program must be responsive to both the needs of the arts community and the goals for the City when developing training, technical assistance, and professional development opportunities.

This training and professional development initiative supports capacity building for artists and arts organizations and responds to all levels of need from beginning to advanced.

**Public Art: In Depth (PA:ID)**

PA:ID provides Tacoma based artists, who already have a serious studio practice and wish to develop artwork for the public realm, with the training and experience necessary to be competitive when applying for public art projects locally, regionally, and nationally.

The free training for artists includes a combination of four day-long workshops over the course of four months, field trips, hands-on experience, mentorship, and peer discussion sessions. Artists selected to complete a public art project receive mentorship, guidance, and support from concept through dedication of the project.
**Case Study | Artha**

The Artha Project is a privately funded platform for the advancement of careers in the visual arts. It is the group’s mission to provide direct, real time support to enterprising artists and curators who demonstrate a deep commitment to the professional development of their creative practice. Central to this mission is their by-invitation only residency program, located in Long Island City, providing artists with the resources, education, and support they require to prosper in today’s creative economy. Artha works beyond the traditional model of the artist residency by offering individualized mentorship to its artists from distinguished art professionals and its unique group of sponsors—a group comprised of private individuals passionate about art as a community.

**Benefits**

- Increased access to opportunities by more artists and creatives
- Strengthened competitive edge for artists and arts organizations
- Opportunities to provide relevant training related to local and national trends and initiatives to artists and arts organizations

**Actions**

- Develop Public Art: In Depth II in partnership with Metro Parks Tacoma and others.
- Partner with service providers locally, regionally, and nationally to provide training and increase local artists’ and arts organizations’ awareness of and access to broader resources.
- Partner with Office of Equity and Human Rights to support training for arts organizations regarding cultural competence and undoing institutional racism.
- Identify and implement short-term training and skill building for emerging artists and arts organizations to increase knowledge and access to opportunities.
Access to and affordability of spaces throughout the city that allow for creative use is essential to maintaining and growing as a vibrant, authentic community and supports the strategy to make Tacoma a “Center for the Arts.” As cities grow and the economy strengthens, artists, cultural spaces, and creative businesses are often forced out due to rising rents. Ironically, the very activities that anchor communities, create interest, engage citizens, attract visitors and ultimately more investment, are lost.

Nationally, the availability of affordable spaces for the creative community to work, live, and exhibit is consistently identified as an essential component of a vibrant community. Put simply, cultural space is critical to sustaining the presence of creative individuals, organizations, and businesses as a resource for Tacoma’s economy, vitality, and livability.

Both traditional (theaters, museums, dance studios) and non-traditional venues (parks, churches, coffee shops) who encourage opportunities for creative expression and can provide opportunities throughout the city should be encouraged and sustained. To be effective in meeting the needs of the creative community, affordability should be maintained over the long-term and affordable spaces for artists to live, work, and present distributed equitably throughout Tacoma.

Benefits

- Attract and retain creative individuals in Tacoma
- Maintain a diversity of artists and creative activities throughout our neighborhoods
- Opportunity for sustained vibrancy and authentic cultural expression throughout Tacoma
- Increased access by the community to artists and arts experiences within neighborhoods
Creative Space Tacoma

Creative Space Tacoma is an initiative to raise visibility about the need for the development and sustainability of affordable creative spaces throughout our city. Working with Artspace Projects, LLC with funding from JPMorgan Chase, in 2014 the City of Tacoma and The Greater Tacoma Community Foundation commissioned a survey to determine interest in live/work, studio, and performance spaces. Based on the survey results of 541 respondents, it was determined that Tacoma could currently support the creation of up to 68 new, affordable live/work or other housing units designed for the needs of artists and creatives in Tacoma.

Actions

- Assist developers interested in developing artist live-work/work-live and creative space focused projects such as the Station Artist Lofts and Alma Mater.
- Partner with TCRA and Spaceworks Tacoma to acquire buildings for ownership and siting of creative businesses.
- Communicate live-work/work-live code changes to developers and creative businesses.
- Develop inventory of available public and private spaces for cultural uses.
- Research and identify policies and initiatives that could encourage development and sustainability of creative space and long term presence of artists and creative businesses in business districts/neighborhoods throughout the city.

Local artists worked with the City of Minneapolis and Artspace to preserve nearly 130,000 ft² of space for artists and creative businesses in the historic Bottling House and Warehouse that might otherwise have been converted into market-rate offices or condos. The two buildings now hold 49 studios and feature a two-story atrium suitable for exhibits and events.
Culture is a human right.
As expressed in the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, “Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community.” It is our sacred duty to remove impediments to the exercise of this right and to ensure that the means to exercise this right are available to all. In a cultural democracy, we are obliged to monitor the impact of public and private actions with these duties in mind.

Culture is created by everyone.
The art, customs, creative expressions, and social fabric of every community and heritage contribute to the vibrancy and dynamism of our common culture. Our cultural institutions and policies should reflect this, rather than privileging favorites.

Cultural diversity is a social good and the wellspring of free expression.
Its support and protection require equitable distribution of public resources, particularly to correct past injustices and balance an excess of commercialization. Cultural equity means full inclusion, participation, and power-sharing in all of our communities and institutions.

Culture is the sum-total of public, private, individual, and collective action.
We seek balance so that no sector dominates or controls cultural expression or access to cultural resources. We advocate an arts ecology in which all sectors work together to support cultural development for the benefit of all.

The work of artists is a powerful resource for community development, education, healthcare, protection of our commonwealth, and other democratic public purposes. Indeed, artists’ skills of observation, improvisation, innovation, resourcefulness, and creativity enhance all human activity.
We advocate complete integration of arts-based learning in public and private education at all levels. We advocate public service employment for artists and other creative workers as a way to accomplish social good, address unemployment, and strengthen social fabric. We support artists who place their gifts at the service of community, equity, and social change.

U.S. Department of Arts & Culture Statement of Values
Strategy 2

Promote equity, diversity, and inclusiveness through the arts.

Arts and culture are a reflection of people, all people. Expressions of art and culture have the power to spark conversations, change hearts, inspire social change, and make our community strong. But too many of our residents—including communities of color, immigrants and refugees, and people with disabilities—experience disparities in terms of access to arts and culture. *ArtFull Tacoma* celebrates our city’s diversity as its greatest asset and embraces our multi-cultural and multi-ethnic character. We recognize that equitable access to engage with and express our diverse cultures through the arts is a top priority for Tacoma. *ArtFull Tacoma* embraces and seeks to reinforce the U.S. Department of Arts & Culture Statement of Values (at left).

Creativity is a key to unlocking new strategies for achieving equity and fighting oppression.

Lara Davis as quoted in "The Catalyst: Lara Davis" published in *CityArts* on December 24, 2014

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Taiko drummers at UW Tacoma’s unveiling of the Japanese Language School Memorial
The equitable distribution of and access to the arts means ensuring that opportunities to encounter and participate in the arts exist throughout all our neighborhoods. In addition, it means that all people are welcomed in our arts institutions and public spaces and are reflected in the programming and exhibits.

Understanding that “the arts” means expression in a multitude of formal and informal, traditional and non-traditional approaches—including visual, literary, performing, and cultural—the arts should be recognized and celebrated in all of its forms.

Every neighborhood should have well-designed spaces, public art, and the ability to access art and art services within a localized area. There should be no ’art deserts’ devoid of any art opportunities.

In addition, every citizen should have access to and feel welcomed within arts and cultural institutions, public spaces, and non-traditional arts venues throughout Tacoma.

This initiative is meant to extend efforts to reach new audiences and actively encourage participation; to engage our youngest citizens, teens, and seniors; and reduce barriers to authentic arts experiences created by and for our citizens.

**Benefits**

- More opportunity to increase inclusiveness and meet diverse interests in neighborhoods
- Enhanced community identity, social connectedness, and vitality
- Increased participation in arts and culture
- Greater shared understanding, representation, and respect for Tacoma’s rich diversity of people, places, and cultures
- Continued growth of authentic homegrown events/activities
- Developed visual appeal of neighborhoods
Actions

- Create an asset map to identify where arts and cultural activities and public art currently exist within the city. Include services from partner agencies, private, traditional and non-traditional venues, public art, events, etc.
- Partner with Arts & Culture Coalition of Pierce County to support the expansion of TeenTix in Tacoma and the development of 5 x 5, a program to ensure 5 art experiences for pre-school kids (targeting Head Start).
- Partner with Metro Parks Tacoma, Tacoma Public Schools, and Tacoma Housing Authority to increase opportunities to include public art across the community.

Case Study | Seattle TeenTix

TeenTix ensures equitable arts access for young people ages 13–19. Any teenager can sign up for a free TeenTix pass, which entitles them to purchase $5.00 day-of-show tickets at any partner organization. The program provides opportunities for teens from all backgrounds to engage deeply with the arts, such as arts leadership training in The New Guard: Teen Arts Leadership Society, and arts criticism training through the TeenTix Press Corps. Over 80 teen contributors make the TeenTix blog Seattle’s best source of youth-centric arts coverage. TeenTix is currently conducting a feasibility study to expand into Pierce County.

Case Study | Five X Five

The Five X Five Program is based on a program in Denver that connects Head Start and Early Head Start children and their families with year-round access and educational opportunities at sixteen of Denver’s cultural venues at no cost. The goals of program are to strengthen families and support school readiness by providing Denver’s young children with at least 5 cultural experiences by the age of 5 in order to spark their imagination and learning.

Asset mapping provides information about the strengths and resources of a community and can help uncover solutions. Once community strengths and resources are inventoried and depicted in a map, consideration can be given to how to build on these assets to address community needs and improve health.
In Tacoma 2025, residents voiced strong support of and pride in the Tacoma arts scene, urging the City to “not bring something in [but rather to] nurture and grow what is already here.” An emphasis was also placed on the unique diversity of the arts scene, including graffiti, museums, music, and ethnic festivals. Continued support for existing community events and celebrations—in the form of funding, training, and marketing, for example—recognizes the critical function of the homegrown cultural activities in adding to Tacoma’s identity, quality of life, social cohesion, and economic prosperity. The City should build on the success of existing events and celebrations to advance an evolution of arts and cultural activities which accurately reflect Tacoma’s community character.

Successful existing events may also provide a good model for new events. “Ground-up” cultural activities and events are uniquely poised to support and celebrate the self-identified needs of Tacoma’s neighborhoods.

In addition, a signature festival is an opportunity to tell Tacoma’s story, an opportunity to showcase the talent and perspective of the city’s diverse population, and highlight the arts industry as an important piece of Tacoma’s brand. A well-planned, highly-creative festival would also enhance and expand the visitor experience, supporting economic growth, drawing people to the city during the festival, and increasing interest in Tacoma as a destination year-round.

Signature festivals can take on many forms and celebrate art forms from glass sculpture to film. The City should explore opportunities to expand and market an existing event or develop a new event, and identify potential partners.

**Benefits**

- Expanded reputation of Tacoma as a major cultural/arts attraction
- Builds on the legacy of successful community festivals
- Encourages a sense of belonging among residents
- Provides the opportunity to enhance and celebrate Tacoma’s rich cultural and ethnic diversity
- Become a destination

**Actions**

- Develop an inventory of existing community events and celebrations—including identification, assessment, and mapping—to identify geographic, programmatic, and funding gaps in arts and cultural resources throughout Tacoma.
- Align with the special events staff and Special Events and Recognition Committee.
- Form an exploratory committee to look at expanding/marketing existing events or developing a new signature event.

**Examples of Signature Events**

- **Waterfront & Seafood Festival**
  Bellingham, WA
- **Washington Apple Blossom Festival**
  Wenatchee, WA
- **Party in the Market**
  Roanoke, VA
- **Northwest Folklife**
  Seattle, WA
- **South by Southwest**
  Austin, TX
- **Art Basel**
  Miami, FL
- **Sundance Film Festival**
  Park City, UT
- **Spoleto Festival USA**
  Charleston, SC
Identifying and growing a network of “connectors” across a wide variety of communities in Tacoma will strategically advance communications with the goal of increasing access to opportunities and deepening participation and representation in arts and culture by a more diverse range of ages, ethnic groups, gender identities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and geographies.

Developing and nurturing a network of cultural ambassadors who reflect the diversity of Tacoma’s citizens will strengthen a 2-way line of communication that increases awareness of and access to City services and opportunities. It also creates a rich network of citizens who can provide input on policy and programs, participate on selection panels for funding and public art, and provide a pipeline to more leadership.

Benefits

- Increased targeted audience outreach, specifically to underserved and underrepresented communities
- Increased diversity and inclusion of arts and culture related panelists, focus groups, and outreach participants
- Greater equity in distribution of cultural activities and events
- Increased civic engagement
- Increased diversity of funded artists and arts organizations
Actions

- Meet with a core focus group to vet ideas and gather input.
- Develop a description of roles and expectations.
- Identify target audiences and goals for increased access and participation.
- Identify best methods for recruitment including messaging and graphic image.
- Recruit “arts and cultural ambassador” participants.
Trends across diverse industries such as education, housing, health care, public safety, urban planning, environment, transportation, and arts are embracing the need to work across sectors to address change in our communities. National funders such as the Ford and Kresge Foundations recognize the power of the arts to transform communities and are exploring how the arts can connect through Creative Placemaking.

Creative placemaking leverages the creative potential already present in a place, all while nurturing an enduring sense of place. When done well, it creates opportunities for people of all income levels and backgrounds to thrive in place. As its value increases, a place that is intentionally inclusive and connected is more likely to spur economic opportunity and allow people to succeed where they are.

Creative placemaking leverages the creative potential already present in a place, all while nurturing an enduring sense of place. When done well, it creates opportunities for people of all income levels and backgrounds to thrive in place. As its value increases, a place that is intentionally inclusive and connected is more likely to spur economic opportunity and allow people to succeed where they are.

Artists have the ability to reach deeply into communities and bring light to issues, giving people voice that can then influence what is most needed and desired in neighborhoods, public spaces, and even delivery of services.

This initiative is committed to working cross-departmentally and across industries and sectors to consider how best to integrate the arts, artists, and creatives within our existing process to advance our engagement with community, involve more citizens, and gather information in new ways that can inform how we plan services and design our civic spaces.

Benefits

- Improved connection to community
- Successful improvement of public spaces that reflect community need
- Increased opportunities for data gathering to influence project development
Actions

- Pilot a mini-grant program in the Lincoln District to connect artists and community and encourage and mentor them to address social and civic issues through collaborative art projects.
- Public Art: In Depth II: Develop a program to train local artists to address actual civic and social issues in our community while building capacity for artists to work in community, connecting various sectors with artists, and resulting in a series of temporary and permanent interventions and artworks.
- Involve artists in planning efforts such as sub-area plans and neighborhood initiative plans.
- Strengthen community engagement components in public art projects.

Example | Lincoln District Revitalization

Artist Horatio Hung-Yan Law was selected as the lead artist for the Lincoln District Revitalization efforts. Through a series of community based workshops, he gathered data to influence the art that will be developed as well as strengthened participation by the neighbors.
Re-dedication of Sun King by Thomas Morandi at S 15th & Dock Street Pocket Park
Strategy 3

Use public art to create active, accessible, and welcoming public places.

Great public places are where friends run into each other, cultures mix, celebrations are held, and social and economic exchanges occur. Public art is one component of creating active, accessible, and welcoming public places. Investment in public art—both permanent and temporary—makes places more interesting and attractive and creates a sense of pride for residents. Public art animates civic spaces and reflects and contributes to community identity and heritage. Public art can contribute to urban design and the revitalization of civic infrastructure, enhance and personalize public space, comment on environmental and social conditions, and activate civic dialogue. Strategy 3 describes how art and design can contribute to great public places.
The City of Tacoma accepts a responsibility for expanding public experience through art and design. Since re-instating a 1% for art funding mechanism in 2001, the City has worked to employ public art as a strategy to improve the built environment, create welcoming places, add beauty and interest to projects, activate public spaces, engage community, tell stories, and build capacity for local artists to compete as public artists.

Identifying opportunities where art and design are considered as early as possible is imperative to leveraging public art to its highest role as a catalyst for creative placemaking. In order to advance equitable distribution of quality artwork throughout our city, leverage opportunities, and engage community in a meaningful way, arts staff and subsequently, artists should be included in planning efforts at the earliest stages of design. Relying solely on the 1% for art requirement to trigger inclusion of art limits the breadth of possibilities and best intentions of our city to create welcoming places, design authentic and beautiful projects that reflect our community, and provide equitable distribution of art throughout our city.

Benefits

- Improved ability to leverage project resources that support public art and design
- More opportunity for meaningful community engagement
- Thoughtfully designed public projects and spaces

Actions

- Complete Continuous Improvement Process to determine how to improve and strengthen funding mechanisms and administrative systems that support the development of public art.
- Identify upcoming capital projects that would benefit from public art.
- Partner with Pierce Transit and Broadway Center for the Performing Arts to implement a Culture and Transportation plan for the Theater District.
The Hands that Built Tacoma by Nickalas Goettling

Nickalas Goettling’s “The Hands that Built Tacoma” was commissioned by the City of Tacoma as part of the Murray Morgan Bridge rehabilitation. Built in 1913, the Murray Morgan Bridge was closed in 2007 due to safety concerns, and restored and reopened 100 years later, in 2013. This $12,000 mural commission is part of an interpretive information plan to tell the story of the bridge and celebrate its connection to the Foss Waterway.
This initiative supports equitable distribution of and access to arts for all throughout Tacoma with a focus on including art within the built environment and public spaces.

All citizens deserve well-made and well-designed environments, including access to quality works of public art by professional artists which enhance the buildings and public spaces within their community. An equitable distribution of public art includes geographic distribution as well as quality and diversity of style, scale, media, and artists. Opportunities to train emerging artists, engage citizens in art making practices, and encourage temporary public art projects are welcome strategies to increase public art throughout our city.

To date, Tacoma’s public art funding policy typically limits funding to where public projects are occurring, tying the funding to the location of the site. Increased investment in underserved neighborhoods has increased the ability for the reach of public art and creative placemaking to follow. The City’s public art partnership with Metro Parks Tacoma increases access to locations, a shared value, more resources, and opportunities to engage the community and create authentic, beautiful places where people want to be.

The City should continue to form strategic alliances with agencies and organizations that are engaged in city-building, public art, and philanthropic activity in order to facilitate the realization of the public art program’s purpose throughout Tacoma. In addition, as public art often reflects the character and identity of its immediate neighborhood, increased equitable distribution of public art throughout the city offers the unique opportunity to celebrate and externally reflect the city’s multicultural and multi-ethnic character.

This initiative focuses on how to increase opportunities for public art to be created throughout the city with a focus on neighborhoods that have little or no public art or only one form of public art. In addition, this initiative focuses on identifying opportunities to establish equity in how public art is developed throughout the city.
**Benefits**

- Greater access to art by all
- Enhanced identity and character in neighborhoods
- Increased community engagement
- More places that tell all of Tacoma’s stories
- Democratic presentation of art accessible outside an institution

**Actions**

- Inventory existing public art throughout the city and identify the gaps
- Complete Continuous Improvement Process to determine how to improve and strengthen funding mechanisms and administrative systems that support the development of public art.
- Work with City departments and partner agency Metro Parks Tacoma to determine opportunities and resources to implement public art projects in art deserts.
- Include artists in planning efforts for the Tacoma Mall Sub-Area plan to begin community engagement strategies and temporary projects to begin to address the challenges in this art desert.

The Traffic Box Wrap Project, an extension of the Tacoma Murals Project, was launched in 2015. The project is designed to enhance the public realm by adding works of art by local artists to public infrastructure that is often targeted by vandalism. The wrapped boxes are intended to enhance neighborhood and community identity, turn ordinary spaces into landmarks, and promote community dialogue. In this program, Tacoma artists are selected through a competitive process to create an artwork design that is reproduced as a vinyl wrap and applied to traffic signal boxes throughout the city. The first round of wrapped boxes was installed in spring 2016.
Public art in private development creates value for the developer and an amenity for the public. Including artwork can enhance the overall quality of a project and give it a unique character, not achievable in other ways. Public art and cultural facilities in private development can heighten the image and the value of a project and its income-producing potential.

Some developers feel strongly that works of art increase the value of the property itself and others have found that spending money on public art and cultural amenities can generate as much press as a public relations campaign, garnering more good will in the process. Supporting the arts through private development is a way to give back to the community in return for the ability to build. Public art also provides a chance for developers to work with artists and be part of the creative process.

There is growing interest in Tacoma for including public art in private development, as reflected in projects such as Point Ruston.

The City has a precedent for requiring public art in private and public/private projects controlled by the City such as Pacific Plaza and Town Center.

The City of Tacoma should develop and implement a policy for public art in private development to ensure that the city’s urbanization is offset by the creation of cultural assets dedicated to public use. The policy could include a Percent for Art requirement in City-controlled projects and RFPs and/or a Percent for Art requirement in private development with a portion of the requirement in “in lieu fees” to support artwork for the public benefit. There may be opportunities where “in lieu fees” can support projects in underserved areas to increase equity and access to arts.
Benefits

• Improved aesthetics of private developments
• Increased opportunities for artists
• Opportunity to support equitable distribution of artwork
• Holistic consideration for the design of public spaces and installation of public art

Actions

• Gather perspectives through interviews, focus groups with property owners, developers, artists, and other stakeholders to understand implications and build an achievable program.
• Research existing programs and policies that support public art in private development.
• Consider how public art can be included in City-controlled/ influenced projects.
• Implement public art in elements of the Town Center project.
Public art is part of a city’s legacy that needs to be nurtured and cared for. Unlike art housed in the controlled environment of museums, public art contends with the world at large. For outdoor pieces, this includes pollution, people, graffiti, changing weather conditions, birds, and sun. For indoor pieces, accumulation of dust and dirt, changing lighting, humidity and temperature, and active engagement by people all present challenges to the long-term condition of the art collection. All of these factors have considerable implications for art in public spaces.

Proper stewardship and maintenance of Tacoma’s Municipal Art Collection reflects the City’s commitment to sustaining a quality experience for residents and visitors of Tacoma, and respects the public’s investment in the aesthetic quality of its built environment.

Benefits

- Improved maintenance for Tacoma’s Municipal Art Collection
- Rise in Tacoma’s reputation as a city that provides and values quality public art

Actions

- Ensure ongoing funding for stewardship and maintenance of public art collection.
- Develop an effective public art collection management system.
- Continue ongoing care of artwork and be responsive to unforeseen maintenance and conservation issues.
Our public spaces are critical to a civic life that honors and celebrates our humanity and history and responds to cultural and political change. Residents and visitors—diverse in culture, age, and interests—seek the freedom to move about and use public space spontaneously and for a wide range of purposes. While the ways in which the weather and the public might interact with works of art are never entirely known or predictable, conservation is an essential component of ensuring that public art continues to enrich our environment, prompts us to ask questions, and feeds our imaginations.

Conservation of Contemporary Public Art by Rika Mcally Smith and Lillian Hsu
The competitive advantage of our cultural and creative sectors depends on maintaining a virtuous cycle of creative talent, artistic expression, entrepreneurship and investment, as well as proper reward and remuneration for creators.

Xavier Prats Monné, Director General for Education, Culture, Youth and Citizenship of the European Commission
Strengthen Tacoma’s creative ecosystem.

A strong creative ecosystem is a vibrant constellation of individuals, audiences, programs, civic interests, and social needs woven together through deep and lasting relationships. It recognizes the power of many perspectives and skills to inspire and shape the future. Strategy 4 and supporting initiatives describe opportunities for strong partnerships to help promote a healthy and vibrant creative ecosystem and a flourishing community.
Provide expert arts administration consulting services to partners seeking to advance the arts in their organizations and our community.

The City of Tacoma’s Arts Commission staff bring years of experience implementing best practices in arts administration, funding distribution, and public art management. The City is the only local government agency in Pierce County with professional staff dedicated to the implementation of arts, and has been recognized nationally as a leader in the field of arts administration and creative placemaking.

As non-arts sector agencies and organizations desire to include artists in community engagement, public art, and creative placemaking, they are seeking the expert services of the City of Tacoma arts staff to provide arts administration leadership and access to talent in order to advance these shared goals. Regional agencies, such as Sound Transit, with established art programs seek local expertise to manage and implement their projects and engage with the community.

Building on the innovative trend between government agencies to build programmatic partnerships advances the goals of each partner by consolidating expertise within the agency best suited for the work. This approach will grow and strengthen opportunities for artists, improve our built environment, and expand the ability for the arts program to grow and meet demand.

Benefits

- Leverages resources to focus on best practices and service delivery
- Increases equitable distribution of art throughout Tacoma
- Ensures high quality and consistent service delivery
- Potential for a "one stop shop" for public art development in the South Puget Sound region

Tacoma 2025 Framework Goals

Livability
Economy & Workforce
Education
Civic Engagement
Equity & Accessibility

Partners

Metro Parks Tacoma
Sound Transit
Tacoma Public Schools
Tacoma Housing Authority (THA)
Actions

- Implement the Metro Parks Tacoma public art plan and continue to develop the partnership.
- Work with Tacoma Public Schools to develop a partnership to implement public art projects within their system.
- Clarify needs of existing partners to determine work load and community impact.
- Identify additional organizations who may want to increase arts within their organization.

Union Station Sculptures by Fernanda D’Agostino and Nate Slater

*Union Station includes nine large sculptures honoring the tools and technology used by people of Tacoma over the centuries.*
There is a growing understanding of the role and value of Tacoma’s diverse and vibrant arts and culture activity as a factor in community identity, livability, and economic success. Public and private resources and support should increase, commensurate with this level of importance and value.

The City of Tacoma currently offers three funding opportunities intended for varying types of organizations and individuals: Arts Anchor Fund, Arts Projects, and Tacoma Artists Initiative Program (TAIP). The Arts Commission has developed an accessible yet competitive process for reviewing and distributing funds, managing contracts, and ensuring compliance and success.

As demand grows, more artists come to Tacoma, and the number of arts organizations increase, it will be important to increase access to capital to support current funding programs. In addition, alternative funding programs could be developed to build capacity, support training, and be responsive to the needs of our community.

Beyond public funding, increased private cultural philanthropy and corporate sponsorship could also provide funding opportunities for arts and culture in Tacoma. The City should position the arts as an important benefactor of more philanthropic contributions, and advocate for increased corporate and foundation giving to the arts. Besides helping to diversify funding sources, increasing corporate contributions promotes a climate of support that can encourage other types of giving.

**Benefits**

- Increased public funding opportunities for arts organizations and artists
- Higher levels of individual giving and the development of a “culture of philanthropy”
- Corporate leaders more aware and galvanized as cultural advocates; increased corporate support for arts
Actions

- Explore public funding models and strategies to strengthen and stabilize funding for the arts.
- Recruit more business and civic leaders to be strong voices for arts giving.
- Explore strategies to grow private cultural philanthropy and corporate sponsorship.
- Partner with City departments to advance shared initiatives that could be funded through grant programs or adding support to existing programs.
- Identify need and interest in additional funding programs.

City of Tacoma Funding Allocations for the Arts

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<td>$ 258,905</td>
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<td>$ 95,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$ 405,000</strong></td>
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Learning in and through the arts develops the essential knowledge, skills, and creative capacities all students need to succeed in school, work, and life. Mounting research evidence confirms that students in schools with arts-rich learning environments academically outperform their peers in arts-poor schools. Arts and cultural learning are critical components of a complete education for all our youth.

According to the National Endowment for the Arts, students who have access to the arts tend to have better academic results overall, better workforce opportunities, and more civic engagement. These benefits are most pronounced for students of low socioeconomic status.

Through strategic partnership with the City of Tacoma and arts providers, the Tacoma School District can help ensure that all students in all Tacoma Public Schools have opportunities to learn through the arts, helping them achieve success in school and in life. Reaching beyond the school walls to form partnerships with the City and arts organizations would help infuse Tacoma's schools with rich, comprehensive programs integrated into the core curriculum—not simply add-on experiences that can come and go with the availability of resources.

Benefits

- Strong partnership between the City and the School District
- Support to school district in providing a coordinated approach to cultural learning
- Efficient use of resources to expand arts program offerings
- Improved academic success and problem solving skills
- Increased participation in arts and cultural activities among Tacoma's youth, families, and adults
- Potential for more students entering creative industries
- Clear continuum of access to culture, creativity, and learning
**Actions**

- Research successful community--supported arts education programs such as: Creative Advantage, Big Thought, and The Right Brain Initiative.
- Convene a summit with arts education service providers, Tacoma School District, Metro Parks Tacoma, and field leaders (Arts WA, Arts Impact, Seattle Office of Arts & Culture).
- Prioritize and build strategic partnerships to enhance art programming for all.

**Case Study | Creative Advantage | Seattle, WA**

The Creative Advantage is a public-private partnership with the Seattle School District, the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, the Seattle Foundation and community arts organizations. The Creative Advantage supports hiring more arts specialists, bringing professional artists into classrooms, training teachers on arts integration, connecting students with career opportunities, and ensuring arts programs are culturally relevant. While the work benefits all schools, Seattle Public Schools focus on regional clusters of schools they call “arts pathways.” A report on the program’s first year (2013–14) found overall that arts education had become a priority, not only for the district, but for the city and community at large.
The Cultural Access Washington program gives local decision makers and voters a tool to increase access to cultural and educational experiences for children and adults across Washington State. The cultural access bill—HB 2263—passed the House 87–10 and Senate 33–12 and was signed into law by Governor Inslee in July 2015. This legislation enables local jurisdictions to put an option to voters to support a small tax that will increase access to cultural experiences focused on arts, heritage, and science. The goal is to increase access to cultural experiences for children and adults across Washington. Funds would be used to provide cultural education programs for students and residents, and to pay for school transportation to these venues. The Cultural Access Washington program is also a tool to use to help adequately fund arts education in Washington.

There are currently several states that have adopted legislation authorizing the use of special tax districts. St. Louis, Missouri established the first such district in 1969, using its funds to support the art museum, zoo and museum of science. For 23 years, the seven-county Denver, Colorado metropolitan area has distributed approximately $40 million annually to scientific and cultural organizations through the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District.

**Benefits**

- Sustainable funding source for arts, science, and heritage organizations
- Increased access to arts, science and heritage by students
- New and expanded programming for families and students particularly around education

**Actions**

- Research local options for funding.
- Develop strategies for a campaign.
- Educate the public about the opportunities.
- Develop a local program management model for the implementation of the program.
Case Study | Scientific & Cultural Facilities District, Denver

The Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD) is metro Denver’s unique commitment to its arts, cultural, and scientific organizations. Since its initial voter approval in 1989, the citizens’ SCFD dollars have funded world-class cultural programming for all ages.

SCFD is a voter-approved penny sales tax on every $10 purchase within the seven-county metro area (Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson counties), annually distributing more than $40 million in operations funding. These dollars support public access and programming at the Denver Art Museum, as well as about 300 unique institutions, serving millions of people each year.

SCFD-funded organizations serve the public in many ways, including access to programs, collections, and school outreach. In fact, every school district within SCFD’s boundaries is served by programming and outreach from funded organizations. Many of the programs SCFD supports provide free and discounted access to citizens, including the Denver Art Museum’s Free First Saturdays.
When our administrations realize the potency of artistic and policy based collaborations, truly transformative works will happen.

Theaster Gates
Strategy 5

Optimize performance and capacity of arts programming, services, and operations.

The City of Tacoma is a critical contributor to the creative ecosystem, providing leadership, services, policy, and support to guide the future of arts and culture in Tacoma. The City has steadily evolved and strengthened its involvement and support for arts and culture over the past few decades. In order to achieve the strategies identified in *ArtFull Tacoma*, this plan suggests a continued evolution and growth in the City’s role, including expanded collaboration with partner public agencies and the private sector. The following discussion of strategies and actions identifies the measures needed to ensure capacity within the City to achieve the vision established in *ArtFull Tacoma*.

Strategies 1 through 4 identify ambitious and far-reaching actions that the City and its partners can take to establish Tacoma as a center for the arts. Strategy 5 seeks to ensure that the City has the capacity to implement these actions through a range of measures related to improved communication, staffing, organizational structure, and funding.
ArtFull Tacoma was specifically developed to support and further the vision for the Tacoma 2025 framework goals and Tacoma 2025’s Focus Area 5, Arts and Cultural Vitality, and the supporting community priorities. In order to ensure a robust implementation of actions to support this vision, ArtFull Tacoma should be adopted as the implementing plan to advance arts and cultural vitality and support the Tacoma 2025 framework goals.

Benefits

- Support for an integrated approach to implementation of Tacoma 2025
- Allows consideration of future arts and cultural services and programming within the context of Tacoma 2025
- Provides accountability measures that support future benchmarking of success of ArtFull Tacoma measures
- Reflects focused input from the community

Actions

- Arts Commission review and approval to advance to City Council.
- Present ArtFull Tacoma to the City Council for adoption as the implementing plan for Focus Area 5 of Tacoma 2025 and the implementation tool for the comprehensive plan.
Dome District mural by lead artist Chris Sharp
Spaceworks | 1120 Creative House
Arts EnviroChallenger | Sherman Elementary School
The Second Touch by Larry Anderson
Floating Life Forms by Ed Kroupa
Temporary installation for PA:ID by Lance Kagey, Chris Sharp, & James Sinding
Sparky the Salmon by Susan Carles
Dome District mural by lead artist Chris Sharp
In the late 1990’s the City of Tacoma employed arts and culture as its key strategy for revitalization. Public investment in the museum district and theaters set the stage for this transformation, along with the development of the Greater Tacoma Convention and Trade Center, Link Light Rail, University of Washington Tacoma, and Chihuly Bridge of Glass. In 1999, with consideration to this new focus, the City created the Culture & Tourism Division.

The Division, formerly called the Cultural Resources Division, was placed in the newly-formed Economic Development Department and included a division manager, two arts staff, a Historic Preservation Officer, and a Sister Cities Coordinator. It was charged with promoting Tacoma’s arts and cultural assets; attracting visitors, artists, and creative businesses; and creating the foundation for a flourishing creative community. In 2005, this Division was disbanded and staff was reduced, reorganized, and functions dispersed.

Since that time, the City’s arts program has regained credibility and built a strong reputation for creating and implementing nationally-recognized, innovative, and effective projects, programs, and partnerships.

Intentional strategies, initiatives, and programs developed and implemented by the Tacoma Arts Commission and arts program staff over the past decade have resulted in an increase of artists, development of local talent, creation of creative businesses, public art, and other activities that have noticeably contributed to the transformation of our community into a vibrant place to live, work, and play. Due to this success, demand has increased and current staffing levels—2 FTE, 1.5 contractor—make the current level of programming and services unsustainable in the long term.

Over the years, Tacoma Arts Month activities alone have increased eight times, reflecting the energy and participation of the community. Eighty-five creative businesses have emerged and grown through Spaceworks Tacoma in the past five years. Creative space development projects are
on the rise including long coveted artist live/work spaces, music venues, and maker spaces. As city construction increases, there are more public art projects that employ artists and provide the opportunity for meaningful community engagement that informs larger public works projects.

Partner agencies like Metro Parks Tacoma, Sound Transit, and Tacoma Housing Authority have identified the importance of art and seek the expertise of City arts staff to implement and grow their programs, advancing the arts for everyone in Tacoma.

The magnitude and effectiveness of the arts could be significantly amplified if the City were to create an Office of Arts & Cultural Vitality and expand staffing to be able to fully implement the initiatives and actions outlined in ArtFull Tacoma.
Create an Office of Arts & Cultural Vitality.

At a minimum, a change in status from a program to an office would raise the profile of the arts, make the services and program more visible to the public and fellow City staff, provide an umbrella under which more partnerships can develop, and reflect the role that City Hall plays in advancing arts and culture in Tacoma.

ArtFull Tacoma provides a framework and opportunity to strategically evaluate and consider how to best align and leverage the services, responsibilities, and resources that can advance the current needs and goals of the City and strengthen Tacoma’s position as a thriving destination and great place to live.

Benefits

- Raise visibility of the services we offer and make clear that the arts serve the whole city
- Align and strengthen services to advance the strategies of ArtFull Tacoma
- Raise the profile of the arts and mark their importance within City Hall
- Ensure current levels of service and continue to add programs and projects
- Provide clarity for partnerships with non-city agencies

Actions

- Change the name of the art program to something more visible and consistent with similar programs around the country.
- Determine the best ways to strategically strengthen logical alignments in the focus areas (at right) of the arts to advance Tacoma as a destination center for the arts, increase investment, and build on the strength of the creative economy.
- Develop a staffing and resource strategy to best support an Office of Arts & Cultural Vitality. Examine current staff assets that could support implementing the strategies in ArtFull Tacoma, and identify additional resources and skill sets required to bring the plan to fruition.
Focus Areas for Tacoma Arts

The Tacoma Arts Program is located within the Community & Economic Development Department. A diverse and robust program, the arts advance and support the following areas of focus that align with a wide range of City departments, programs, services, and goals.

Cultural Programming

- Funding to artists and arts organizations
- Tacoma Arts Month
- Education, professional development, and training
- Special Projects/Festivals [Aligns with Sister Cities, Historic Preservation Office, and Special Events & Recognition Committee and staff]

Public Art & Creative Placemaking

- City public art and placemaking projects (in process: Lincoln District, South Tacoma, People’s Community Center, Tacoma Murals Project, Prairie Line Trail, site reclamation, etc.) [Aligns with Public Works Department, Environmental Services Department, and Neighborhood & Community Services]
- Public art management for partner clients (Metro Parks Tacoma, Sound Transit, Tacoma Housing Authority, Tacoma Public Schools, and others)
- Public art maintenance [Aligns with Public Works Department]

Creative Economy

- Spaceworks Tacoma [Partner: Tacoma Pierce County Chamber of Commerce]
- Creative Space Development (artist live/work, cultural facilities)[Aligns with Tacoma Community Redevelopment Authority, Department of Planning & Development Services, and Historic Preservation Office]
- Creative Sector Development (craft manufacturing, design, creative tech, film) [Aligns with Community & Economic Development Department and Film Permitting]
- Data collection and analysis [Aligns with Office of Management & Budget and Geographic Information Systems]
Cultural Tourism

- Special events [Aligns with City Events & Recognition Committee and staff, Historic Preservation Office, Sister Cities]
- Marketing and promotion of museums, theaters, and attractions [Aligns with Media & Communications Office, Public Assembly Facilities, and Travel Tacoma]
- Attract audiences to events in Tacoma-owned facilities [Aligns with Public Assembly Facilities and Travel Tacoma]
- Film [Aligns with Film Permitting]

Cultural Equity & Community Engagement

- Use the arts to connect with community and inform projects [Aligns with Neighborhood & Community Services, Public Works Department, Environmental Services Department, Department of Planning & Development Services, and others]
- Ensure equitable participation in arts and cultural events [Aligns with Office of Equity & Human Rights]
Existing Staff Resources that Support the Arts Program

**Arts Administrator | 1 FTE**

Provides management, strategic direction, and overarching leadership to the arts program and the Tacoma Arts Commission, including oversight of all programs, policies, partnerships, and staff. Responsible for representation in management-level City meetings and planning. Provides project management on select public art projects, creative space development, and creative economy.

**Cultural Arts Specialist | 1 FTE**

**Program Development Specialist Classification**

Provides coordination for the Tacoma Arts Commission and administration of three funding programs (Arts Anchor Fund, Arts Projects, Tacoma Artists Initiative Program), Tacoma Murals Project, Tacoma Arts Month, Arts EnviroChallenger, Tacoma Poet Laureate, artTown, National Arts Program, and Tacoma Arts Listserv, as well as special projects such as Arts & Economic Prosperity surveys and education initiatives.

**Current Contractors | Funded Through December 31, 2016**

**Public Art Specialist | Full Time**

Provides coordination and project management of public art projects and associated community engagement strategies for City of Tacoma projects—such as the Water Flume Line Trail, Prairie Line Trail, South Tacoma, and Lincoln District—and partner projects (Metro Parks Tacoma)—such as the PDZA Aquarium, Point Defiance Waterfront, and others. Provides content expertise and best practices for artist selection, contracting, copyright, and conservation and collection maintenance.

**Arts Program Assistant | 20 Hours/Week**

Provides overarching administrative support to the arts program including processing applications for funding, National Arts Program, public art projects, and assisting in the facilitation of selection processes, scheduling, collection maintenance, and presentation preparation.

**Art Collection Maintenance & Conservation | Variety of Contracts Depending on the Need**
Artists and others in creative businesses access City Hall for many different purposes, the majority of which are related to the business side of being an artist—for example, business licenses, building permits, special use permits and other permits. Artists may also be interested in pursuing funding, taking advantage of professional development training, or knowing which department to contact for special projects and requests.

However, many artists or creative businesses do not have the knowledge or experience to know what information is required or what the process is for the services that the City offers. In some cases, the information requirements can be a significant obstacle in and of themselves.

The City could provide support to create a more user-friendly City Hall experience for artists and creative businesses in a wide variety of ways, including clarifying permit review processes, helping to make connections for specific needs, helping to complete forms, scheduling meetings, and other tasks that reduce barriers.

**Benefits**

- Improved reputation as a city that welcomes and encourages creative activity
- Successful development of creative spaces and projects that advance the vibrancy of the community
- Improved access to arts and opportunities in the City

**Actions**

- Identify the ways that artists and creatives interact with City Hall and the services they use.
- Determine opportunities to educate and share information internally to identify opportunities and barriers within our policies, code, and communication that could be improved to advance the creative activity, aesthetics, and vitality of our city.
Numerous actors, artists, independent filmmakers and freelancers in the creative field meet the income thresholds to qualify for government benefit programs, from affordable housing to health care. “Every benefit in New York has significant barriers for independent, freelance and episodic workers,” says Barbara Davis, deputy executive director of The Actors Fund, a nationwide arts service organization.

“That’s the biggest, broadest problem we see.” For understandable reasons, government programs require applicants to submit W2 or 1099 forms and other documents that detail the amount of income they earned in the past year and provide an indication of what they will earn in future years. However, submitting this documentation isn’t so simple for many creative workers who might have had a handful of paid gigs as dancers, actors, playwrights or film editors in addition to numerous part-time and freelance jobs—and whose workload and income often varies greatly from one year to the next. “Try talking to a 33 year old modern dancer and put together every way they got paid: temp job, babysitting, wait job, dance job,” adds Davis. “These people don’t have one W2 for the year. They have stacks and stacks of different 1099s and all sorts of ways to show different contracts. And it’s not a predictor of what’s going on for them the next year. The way people in the creative community earn money does not fit into existing models of support services and benefit programs.”
REFERENCES


Acknowledgments

**Tacoma City Council**
Marilyn Strickland · Mayor
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Robert Thoms
Keith Blocker · Arts Commission City Council Liaison Alternate
Marty Campbell · Arts Commission City Council Liaison
Joe Lonergan
Victoria Woodards
Conor McCarthy
Ryan Mello

**Tacoma Arts Commission**
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Rachel Cardwell · Vice Chair
Scott A. Campbell
Joel Chang
Heather Conklin
Kareem Kandi
Traci Kelly
Johnaye Kendrick
Halley Knigge
Don Lacky
Dane Meyer
Wanda Thompson
Paul Throne
Katrina Toft
Lynn Wilmot-Stenehjem

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Mark Lauzier · Assistant City Manager
Tanisha Jumper · Tacoma 2025, Program Manager
Ricardo Noguera · Community & Economic Development, Director
Martha Anderson · Community & Economic Development, Assistant Director

**City Arts Staff**
Amy McBride · Tacoma Arts Administrator
Naomi Strom-Avalia · Cultural Arts Specialist
Rebecca Solverson · Public Art Specialist
Stakeholders
Tanya Andrews · Children’s Museum of Tacoma, Executive Director
Deborah Boone · Textile Artist/B2 Fine Art Gallery
Bennish Brown · Travel Tacoma (CVB), President & CEO
Andy Buelow · Tacoma Symphony Orchestra, Executive Director
Courtenay Chamberlin · Arts & Culture Coalition of Pierce County
Michael Chansavang · Dream Music Project
Philip Cowan · The Grand Cinema, Executive Director
Katy Evans · Post Defiance/The Grand Cinema
Kit Evans · Hilltop Artists, Executive Director
David Fischer · Broadway Center for the Performing Arts, Executive Director
sweet pea Flaherty · King’s Books, Owner
Lisa Fruchantie · Rainbow Center and Special Event Producer
Marguerite Giguere · Move to Tacoma, Realtor
LaMont Green · City of Tacoma, Office of Equity & Human Rights
Erik Hanberg · Metro Parks Tacoma Board & Business Owner/Author
Linda Ishem · UW-Tacoma Urban Studies
Heather Joy · Spaceworks Tacoma, Manager
Lance Kagey · Letterpress Artist/First Night
Jaime Kay · Top of Tacoma, Owner
Jon Ketler · Tacoma Public Schools
Jennifer Kilmer · Washington State Historical Society, Executive Director
Debbie Lenk · Museum of Glass, Executive Director
Mary Lynn · Puget Sound Revels
Kathy McCormick · Tacoma Housing Authority, Development Director
Marianne Moses · Tacoma Local’s Guide
Chandler O’Leary · Artist & Creative Business Owner
Lua Pritchard · Asia Pacific Cultural Center, Executive Director
Cindy Renander · Second City Chamber Series
Mark Reutlinger · Tacoma Concert Band
Laura Rodriguez · Metro Parks Tacoma, Recreation Supervisor
Elyse Rowe · The Greater Tacoma Community Foundation
Stephanie Stebich · Tacoma Art Museum, Executive Director
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