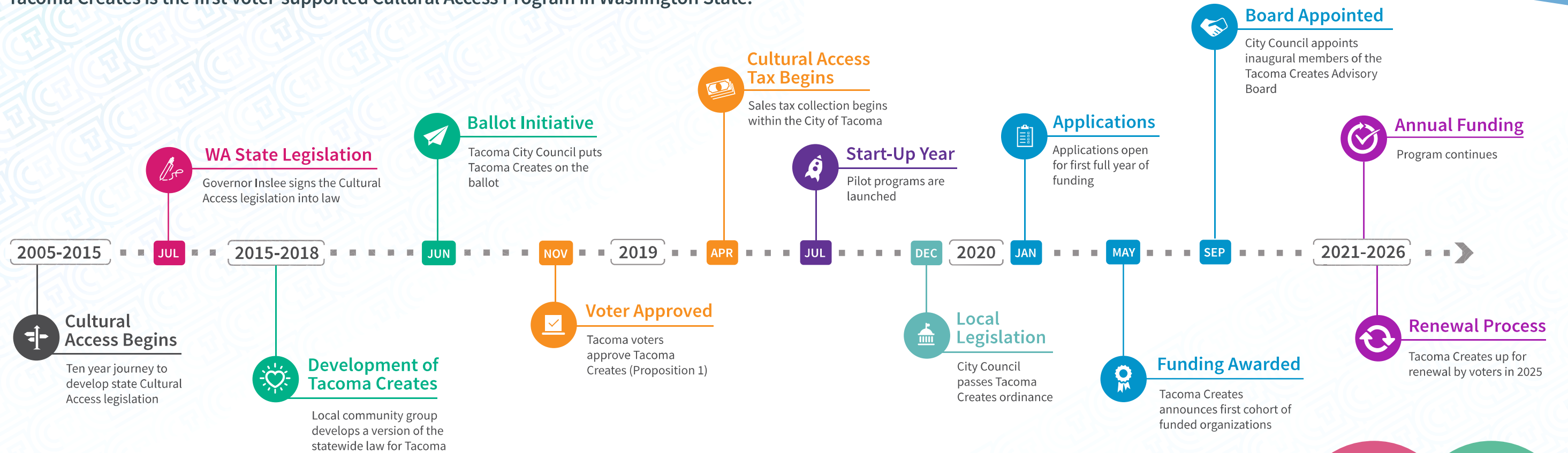


History & Timeline

Tacoma Creates is the first voter-supported Cultural Access Program in Washington State.



Cultural Access Beginnings

In 2005, a coalition of business leaders in the Puget Sound Partnership identified Cultural Stabilization and Capitalization as essential to a prosperous region. A task force of regional cultural and business leaders, including representatives from Tacoma, came together to study and develop possibilities for building and sustaining the cultural sector. This group's name became Cultural Access Washington.

Development of Tacoma Creates

In 2015, the Arts & Culture Coalition of Pierce County created a working group and began crafting a version of the statewide law that would be specific to Tacoma's needs. The group calls the initiative Tacoma Creates, and works with community members and local elected officials to develop the proposal. In June 2018, Tacoma City Council unanimously passed Resolution 40046, which put Tacoma Creates on that fall's ballot as Proposition 1.

Washington State Legislation

In 2015, the Washington State Legislature granted local governments the authority to create a Cultural Access Program in their county or city (RCW 36.160). Under such authority, revenue raised from a voter-approved sales or property tax increase can be used to strengthen access to cultural organizations and their public programming.

Tacoma Voter Approval

In November 2018, Tacoma voters approved Tacoma Creates by 67.2%, passing in every reporting precinct. Tacoma Creates is the first Cultural Access Program under RCW 36.160 to be enacted in Washington State, and becomes a program of the City of Tacoma's Office of Arts & Cultural Vitality. The sales tax increase, authorized under Tacoma Creates, went into effect April 2019. The tax will be in place for seven years, at which point it must be renewed by Tacoma voters.

Start-Up Year

In 2019, Tacoma Creates staff is hired and pilot programs are launched, including funding for Planning and Capacity Building contracts and Expanded Learning Opportunity programs in partnership with Tacoma Public Schools and Metro Parks Tacoma.

City of Tacoma Legislation

On December 3, 2019, the Tacoma City Council passed the Tacoma Creates ordinance which confirmed Tacoma Creates operations as a City of Tacoma program, administered by the Office of Arts & Cultural Vitality. This ordinance added Chapter 1.55 to the Tacoma Municipal Code, which defines the program purpose, funding eligibility, and the Tacoma Creates Advisory Board, along with other definitions and processes.

First Full Program Year

In early 2020, application deadlines for organizational funding came weeks before the declaration of a global pandemic. In spite of incredible challenges, cultural organizations persevered and pivoted programming, adjusting to new realities and community needs.

