VIRGINIA BEACH arts PLAN 2030

William D. Sessoms, Jr.
Mayor

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

Are you inspired by fine art, folk art or modern art? Do you enjoy a performance featuring dance, music or theatre?

Whatever your "arts" desire, the Virginia Beach City Council, the Cultural Affairs Office and the Virginia Beach Arts and Humanities Commission are dedicated to integrating the arts and culture as a vibrant part of everyday life in our community in a way that will stimulate, strengthen and revive the mind, body and spirit.

This **Virginia Beach Arts Plan 2030** presents a compelling vision for the future that individuals, families and visitors will support and embrace. Developed with an impressive amount of citizen input, this strategic plan outlines how Virginia Beach will further transform the stage of the arts in our city.
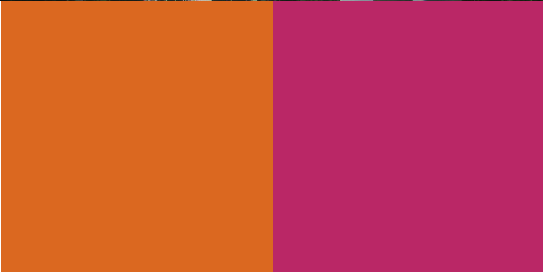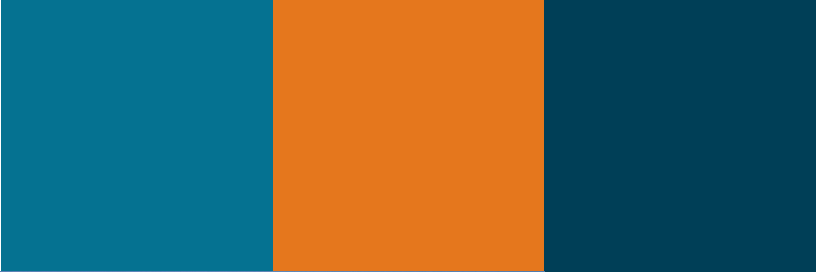
Already in Virginia Beach, the nonprofit arts and culture are a $56.8 million industry — one that supports the equivalent of 1,411 full-time jobs and generates $5.9 million in local and state government revenue. However I encourage you to look beyond the numbers to arrive at the bottom line. Hendrik Willem Van Loon, a journalist and author who became the first recipient of the Newbery Medal, once said, "The arts are an even better barometer of what is happening in our world than the stock market or the debates in Congress."

The expression of human creativity enriches the "art and soul" of Virginia Beach. I'm delighted about the future of the arts in the greatest city in the world. Let's all share in the excitement of this Vision for the Arts.

Sincerely,

William D. Sessoms, Jr.

Mayor

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pennant, Lin Emery

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The Honorable Louis R. Jones, Vice-Mayor

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Special thanks to all the citizens of Virginia Beach and beyond that participated in interviews, focus groups and town hall meetings and gave of their time, expertise and thoughts online and offline to help inform the plan and its results.

www.vbgov.com/artsplan2030

We thank and acknowledge the following community partners for their assistance:

Light Garden, Dale Eldred

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Named one of the best places to live in America by *USA Today Weekend*, Virginia Beach offers its residents, and the millions of tourists who visit annually, a lifestyle unmatched by any other major American city. Virginia Beach has a growing arts scene with distinctive cultural assets, emerging and exciting creative sector businesses, public art, outdoor music and arts festivals, and a new arts district. All of which bind our community together by creating shared experiences and a special place to live and visit.

The arts are an important industry in our city. A flourishing creative industry in Virginia Beach impacts much more than the employment of artists. It increases the city's tax base by generating admission, meal and hotel taxes. It improves the quality of life of its residents by offering unique experiences to residents and visitors and attracts a talented workforce to Virginia Beach.

Arts Plan 2030 is the culmination of a year-long process of listening to our community, assessing our cultural strengths and weaknesses, and analyzing forces, trends and models to provide a blueprint for Virginia Beach's cultural development over the next 15 years. Over just six months, hundreds of individuals contributed to the Plan through meetings, interviews, events and surveys through the City's website.

The Plan is more than a guide for city government — it's a Call to Action for the private sector, residents, civic leaders, local arts groups to adopt these recommendations to create a more vibrant Virginia Beach through arts and culture.

The Plan is presented as a framework to begin conversations about the long-term vision for the arts in Virginia Beach. Though its adoption by the Virginia Beach City Council does not initially come with funds for implementation, the path forward calls for the community to refine the priorities, explore the fundability of the strategies, and to ultimately leverage public funding with private sector investment.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS
Public Process

Input for this planning process was gathered through one-on-one interviews with a cross-section of the community, group meetings with City staff and local artists, a targeted group of individual meetings at which cultural development strategies were tested and refined, a Virtual Town Hall on the City website and a web-based community survey developed and issued in collaboration with the Office of Cultural Affairs.

ARTS PLAN 2030 TIMELINE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

AUGUST 2014
Preliminary Planning:

• Establish Arts Plan 2030 Working Group

• Identify Stakeholders

SEPTEMBER 2014 – MARCH 2015
Cultural Assessment: Identify cultural resources, critical needs, and opportunities to further the arts in Virginia Beach

• Interviews with 114 community leaders (City officials, elected officials, civic and arts leadership)

• 3 community forums: Over 125 participants

• 8 Stakeholders Meetings

• Community web-based survey: 284 responses

• Web-based engagement through Virtual Town Hall: Website received 465 visitors who engaged in 254 on-line responses

• Market Analysis

APRIL 2015 – DECEMBER 2015
Cultural Planning: Develop community-wide priorities

• Evaluation and feedback from stakeholders through targeted meetings to discuss and refine key opportunities and priorities

JANUARY 2016 & BEYOND
Implementation: Prioritize strategies

• Create implementation plan

• Evaluation and feedback

Amococo,
MOCA's Boardwalk Art Show

KEY THEMES from Community Engagement

An open-ended question regarding the most important action that City government can take to support the arts, culture and creativity received a variety of responses. Common themes included:

➲ Supporting the creation of one or more arts districts

➲ Improved parking and transportation

➲ Encouraging more collaboration between regional communities

➲ Inspiring more collaboration and increased communication between the City and arts community

➲ Improved and expanded marketing

➲ Increased levels of arts programming, particularly arts education for youth

➲ Increased funding to support all these items as well as the arts, culture and creative community in general

Generally, community survey respondents believe that City government should continue to support arts, culture and creativity. With anywhere from 58% to 70% of community respondents supporting ideas around a percent for art policy, art in private development program, additional space for the arts in public facilities, integrating arts in community planning, including the arts in community development priorities, increased advocacy, and, above all, increased funding.

84% of community survey respondents travel outside of Virginia Beach for arts and culture. More than half of this group does so 2 to 4 times per year. More than 20% does so once a month or more. Nearly two thirds of these people go to see programming that isn't offered in Virginia Beach. Most of them are traveling regionally for arts experiences, to Norfolk, Williamsburg, Hampton, Newport News. Some go as far as Richmond and Washington, DC. A few travel more extensively for arts experiences, to New York, Florida and internationally.

57% of community survey respondents do not participate in arts, culture and creative endeavors as much as they would like. 42% are satisfied and less than 1% participate more than they would like.

Web-based communications, newspaper and word of mouth are key communication methods for arts and cultural programming in Virginia Beach.

Interestingly, less than half of respondents are aware of the City's public art program while over 88% support City investment in public art to support beautification and create spaces and places for community gathering.

GOALS
and strategies

ARTS PLAN 2030

Goal 1. » Expand Public Art Programming
High Priority: Public Art and Place-making

Goal 2. » Strengthen & Establish Different and Distinctive Cultural Districts
High Priority: Advance ViBe as a Cultural and Creative District
Medium Priority: Establish Town Center Arts & Entertainment District

Goal 3. » Encourage Culturally Relevant Programming
High Priority: Multi Cultural Programming + Facilities

Goal 4. » Strengthen the Arts Community
High Priority: Modify City Policy and Practices to support cultural development
Medium Priority: Shared Resources

Goal 5. » Support Smaller- Scale Performance + Arts Education
Medium Priority: Develop Small-scale Cultural Space at Town Center
Low Priority: Develop Digital Media Facilities
Medium Priority: Develop Facilities for Emerging Artists

Goal 6. » Improve the Value, Impact and Sustainability of the Sandler Center
Medium Priority: Expand the Sandler Center

Goal 7. » Promote Virginia Beach as a Cultural and Creative Community
Medium Priority: Position the Oceanfront as a Cultural Destination
Medium Priority: Promote Identity as Cultural Community

Goal 8. » Expand Arts Infrastructure
Cultural Affairs, Arts & Humanities Commission

Goal 9. » Increase Funding for Arts Development
State, City, Private Sector

Where Land Meets Water,
Robert Drummond

INTRODUCTION

Webb Management Services, Inc. is a management consulting practice that provides planning services in support of cultural and community development. We work for government, schools, developers and arts organizations on cultural plans, feasibility studies, business planning and strategic planning. The practice was founded in 1997 and we just started our 350th assignment. We have completed a series of studies in the region, including feasibility studies for the Sandler Center and other projects in Hampton, Newport News and Williamsburg.

Our brief is to work with the City to facilitate the development of an arts plan for the City of Virginia Beach that looks forward to the next 15 years. The first step in the planning process was to consider broader issues and opportunities on the future of Virginia Beach and then the state of the arts in the community. The analysis then leads to a series of possibilities as to how the City may advance the arts and culture in Virginia Beach in ways that respond to core community goals.

OUR BEGINNINGS

Creative expression has been a part of the art and soul of Virginia Beach for generations.

From humble beginnings, the Virginia Beach arts and humanities scene has evolved into a thriving citywide cultural program that helps satisfy our senses and our hearts. Thanks to the determination and passion of countless volunteer arts organizations and enthusiasts, we have seen and felt the transformative power of the arts, and we're not finished yet.

The world-renowned Virginia Beach Boardwalk has been a focal point for the performing arts since it was originally constructed from wooden planks in 1888. During the late 1930s, and through the '40s and '50s, some of the biggest names in show business took the bandstand facing the Virginia Beach boardwalk, including Glenn Miller, Cab Calloway, Tommy Dorsey, Lawrence Welk, Bing Crosby and Judy Garland.

But it was 1948 when the seed for homegrown arts was planted, spawning the birth of our community's first successful producing theatre organization, the Little Theatre of Virginia Beach. Numerous milestones followed, including the formation of the Virginia Beach Chorale, giving shape and momentum to the Virginia Beach arts movement.

In 1952, the Virginia Beach Artists Association was founded and four years later launched the Boardwalk Art Show. Today, this annual event, produced by the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, is hailed as one of the best fine art shows in the country and draws over 275 artists and 200,000 tourists and locals.

In 1973, the Virginia Beach Neptune Festival was created to celebrate the heritage of our congenial coastal city. Today, with a series of more than 40 events, including the International Sandsculpting Championship, the Neptune Festival is lauded as one of the Top 100 Events in North America.

By 1979, the spirit of the arts had stirred a renaissance in our growing cosmopolitan community, and the Virginia Beach City Council established the Arts and Humanities Commission, which today supports hundreds of programs and activities that inspire, nurture and reflect our cultural diversity. In 1981, the Virginia Beach Community Orchestra, now known as Symphonicity, made its inaugural performance, and the Virginia Beach Pavilion Theater opened its doors to enthusiastic audiences.

Recognizing the need for art in public places, the Virginia Beach City Council passed a resolution for a Percent for the Arts program in 1986 to commission or purchase artwork. The program was defunded in the 1990's. In 2010, a grassroots group established the private, nonprofit Public Art Virginia Beach Foundation, which works with the City's Public Art Committee to plan projects and commissioned its first sculpture at the Laskin Gateway to the resort area in 2012.

The 1990s welcomed two new arts and humanities organizations, including Commonwealth Musical Stage (now Virginia Musical Theater) and the Virginia Beach Forum.

So far, the 21st century has brought exciting advancements in the arts, including a vibrant Chihuly chandelier at the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, the iconic *King Neptune* sculpture on the boardwalk, the intriguing *Wave* sculpture at Laskin Gateway, the new Zeiders American Dream Theater at Town Center, the ViBe Creative District at the Oceanfront, approval of land for the African American Cultural Center and the majestic Sandler Center for the Performing Arts.

As this Virginia Beach Arts Plan 2030 is presented to the community, the curtain rises on the next stage of the art and soul of Virginia Beach.

Bravo!

MILESTONES IN
Virginia Beach Arts & Cultural Development

1948:
- The Little Theatre of Virginia Beach is established

1952:
- The Virginia Beach Artists Association (VBAA), which eventually becomes the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, is founded

1956:
- VBAA establishes the Boardwalk Art Show

1958:
- The Virginia Beach Chorale is formed as the Virginia Beach Civic Chorus

1971:
- The VBAA merges with the Virginia Beach Museum of Art and creates a new organization, the Virginia Beach Arts Center

1973:
- The Neptune Festival is created to celebrate the heritage of the City

1979:
- The Virginia Beach Arts and Humanities Commission is established by the Virginia Beach City Council

1981:
- Symphonicity is founded as the Virginia Beach Community Orchestra
- The Virginia Beach Pavilion Theater opens

1986:
- Percent for the Arts Ordinance is passed
- The program is deactivated in 1990

1989:
- The Virginia Beach Arts Center moves to the current facility at 2200 Parks Avenue and changes its name to The Contemporary Art Center (CAC) of Virginia
- The sculpture *Pennant* by Lin Emery is installed at the Meyera E. Oberndorf Central Library. The sculpture was purchased through the Virginia Beach Percent for the Arts program

1991:
- The Virginia Musical Theatre, Virginia's professional producing theatre company is established as Commonwealth Musical Stage

1995:
- The Virginia Beach Forum is founded with their first season debuting in 1996

2003:
- The Contemporary Art Center (CAC) of Virginia builds the Rodriguez Pavilion to showcase *Mille Colori*, a glass chandelier by artist Dale Chihuly's chandelier, which was purchased through private donations for the museum

2005:
- The *King Neptune* sculpture, located at the corner of 31st and Atlantic, is dedicated on September 30, 2005
- Pavilion Convention Center closes

2007:
- The Sandler Center for the Performing Arts opens

2010:
- The CAC is accredited by the American Associations of Museums and changes its name to the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA)
- The Office of Cultural Affairs publishes the Virginia Beach Public Art Guide to highlight the City's growing public art collection
- The Public Art Virginia Beach Foundation is founded

2012:
- *Light Garden* by artist Dale Eldred is reinstalled at the Princess Anne Commons Gateway Park

2013:
- *The Wave* sculpture by artist Jeff Laramore is installed at the Laskin Gateway

2015:
- The ViBe Creative District is formally established by City Council
- City converys land for building of first African American Cultural Center
- The Zeiders American Dream Theater officially opens

Virginia Arts Festival
Masterclass

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

Public Process

Input for this planning process was gathered through one-on-one interviews with a cross-section of the community, group meetings with City staff and local artists, a targeted group of individual meetings at which cultural development strategies were tested and refined, a Virtual Town Hall on the City website and a web-based community survey developed and issued in collaboration with the Office of Cultural Affairs.

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JANUARY 2016 & BEYOND
Implementation: Prioritize strategies

- Create implementation plan
- Evaluation and feedback

Virginia Beach Chorale

WHO We Heard From

Input for this planning process was gathered through five key sources:

1. One-on-one interviews conducted at the beginning of the planning process.

2. Group meetings with City staff and local artists.

3. A targeted group of individual meetings at which cultural development opportunities were tested and refined.

4. A Virtual Town Hall, which was open from February 25 to March 7, had 465 visitors and garnered 254 responses. It included a combination of 8 multiple choice and open-ended questions.

5. A web-based Community Survey, developed and issued in collaboration with the Office of Cultural Affairs, was more extensive but included a few of the same questions as the Virtual Town Hall. It garnered 284 responses. Not all respondents answered every question.

Combined, the Virtual Town Hall and Community Survey collected input from nearly 500 community members. Our review of responses and demographic data available for each effort suggests that this group is likely representative of the community that does or is likely to support the arts, culture and creativity in Virginia Beach but is not completely representative of the community as a whole.

For example, the group of respondents did not include youth and very few young adults but high levels of empty nesters and retirees between the ages of 55 and 74. The community survey pool has significantly higher levels of educational attainment and household income and is less diverse than the City as a whole.

Input from interviews, group meetings and individual follow-up meetings has informed the plan. This chapter focuses on specific results from the Virtual Town Hall and community survey, which will inform implementation plans presented in subsequent sections. Comprehensive results from each effort can be found within the appendix.

Age Distribution of Survey Respondents

n=469

	Under 18	18-24	25-34	35-44	44-54	55-64	65-74	75+

Legend: ■ Survey + Virtual Town Hall ■ City
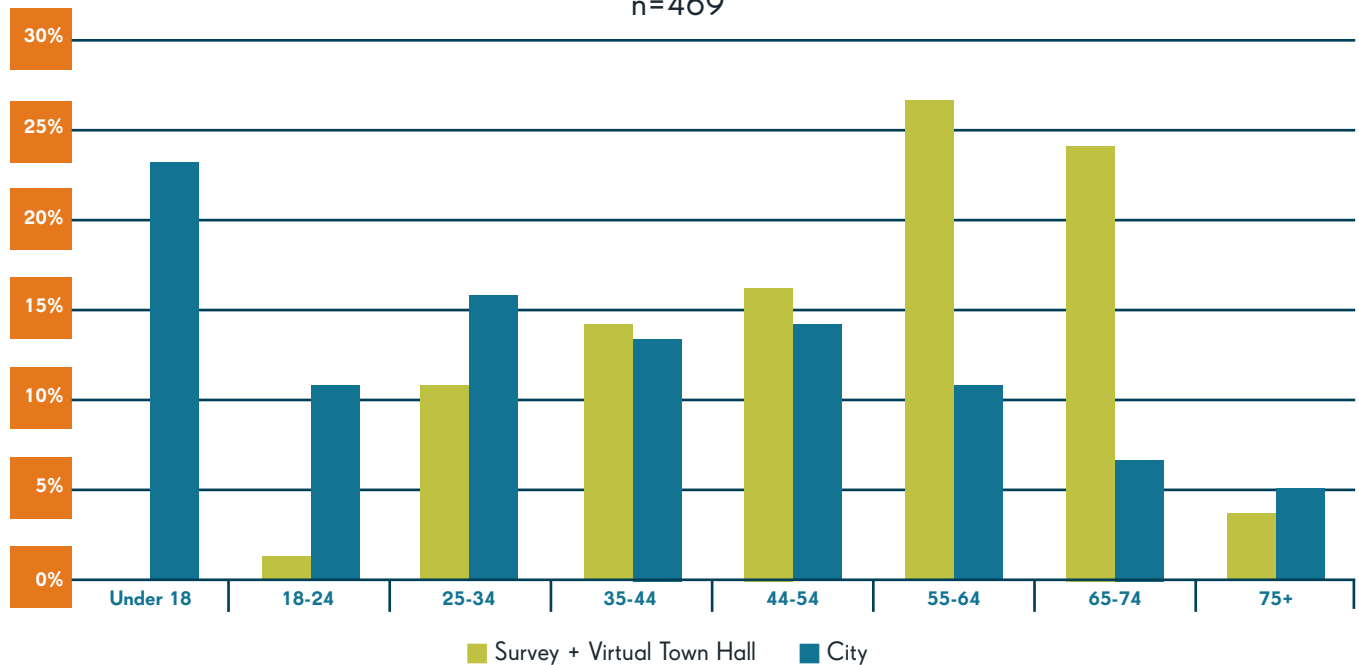
Virginia Beach Neptune Festival
International Sandsculpting Competition

WHAT
They Had to Say

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about what arts, culture, and creativity do for the City of Virginia Beach?

■ Strongly Disagree   ■ Somewhat Disagree   ■ Neither Agree nor Disagree   ■ Somewhat Agree   ■ Strongly Agree

Provide a Point of Distinction

Attract Tourism

Support and Create Active and Unique Neighborhoods

Represent Diverse Communities

Increase Quality of Life and Livability

Educate Youth

Bring Communities Together

Contribute to Economy

Provide Lifelong Learning Opportunities for Adults

Educate Disadvantaged Populations

Celebrate Unique History + Heritage

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

King Neptune, Paul DiPasquale

Three key questions were included on both the Virtual Town Hall and community survey. Input combined from these efforts and questions suggest the following.

Overall, the community understands the quality of life and economic benefits that the arts provide to Virginia Beach. The vast majority of ~500 respondents somewhat or strongly agree that arts, culture and creativity…

➲ Attract tourism

➲ Increase quality of life and livability

➲ Educate youth

➲ Bring communities together

➲ Provide lifelong learning opportunities for adults

A lower proportion of respondents agree that arts, culture and creativity…

➲ Provide a point of distinction for Virginia Beach

➲ Support and create active and unique neighborhoods

➲ Represent diverse communities

➲ Educate disadvantaged populations

➲ Celebrate Virginia Beach's unique history and heritage

Symphonicity

PARTICIPATION CHART

What types of cultural events do you attend and how often?

■ Two or more times per month ■ Once a month ■ Two to four times per year ■ Once a year ■ Never
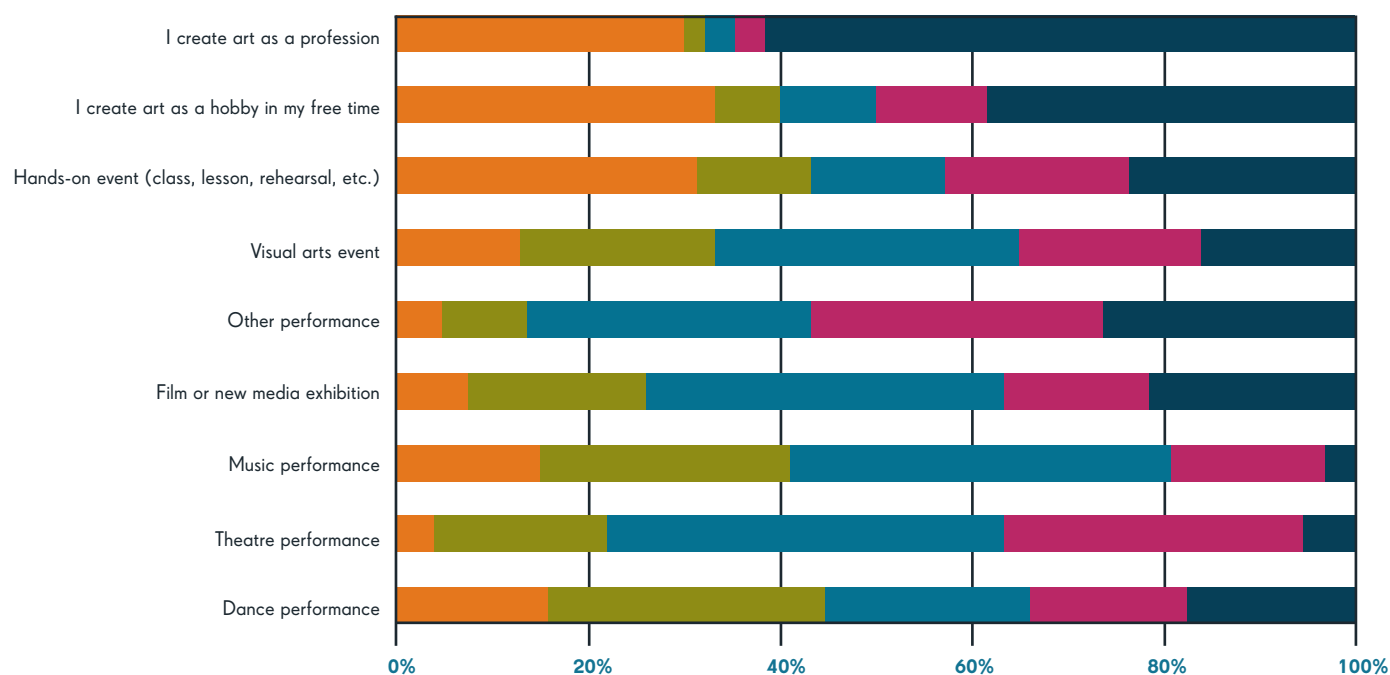
BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION CHART

Key barriers to arts participation are marketing and cost. Other barriers include content and lack of time.

To what extent do the following factors pose a barrier to your participation in arts and cultural programming in Virginia Beach?

Legend: ■ Not a Barrier ■ Somewhat of a Barrier ■ Significant Barrier ■ Not Sure

Categories (top to bottom): Child Care, Accessibility, Transportation or Parking, Safety, Marketing, Content, Advance Ticketing, Time of Events, Lack of Time, Cost, Distance

X-axis: 0%, 20%, 40%, 60%, 80%, 100%

KEY THEMES from Community Engagement

An open-ended question regarding the most important action that City government can take to support the arts, culture and creativity received a variety of responses. Common themes included:

- ➲ Supporting the creation of one or more arts districts
- ➲ Improved parking and transportation
- ➲ Encouraging more collaboration between regional communities
- ➲ Inspiring more collaboration and increased communication between the City and arts community
- ➲ Improved and expanded marketing
- ➲ Increased levels of arts programming, particularly arts education for youth
- ➲ Increased funding to support all these items as well as the arts, culture and creative community in general

Generally, community survey respondents believe that City government should continue to support arts, culture and creativity. With anywhere from 58% to 70% of community respondents supporting ideas around a percent for art policy, art in private development program, additional space for the arts in public facilities, integrating arts in community planning, including the arts in community development priorities, increased advocacy, and, above all, increased funding.

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Web-based communications, newspaper and word of mouth are key communication methods for arts and cultural programming in Virginia Beach.

Interestingly, less than half of respondents are aware of the City's public art program while over 88% support City investment in public art to support beautification and create spaces and places for community gathering.

TRENDS

Local audiences are also willing to spend more on arts and creative endeavors than those in other regional communities, particularly on literary and reading materials. Additional themes on the nature of the arts community include:

Stakeholder interviews suggest that Virginia Beach is home to large communities of visual artists and musicians working at a professional level. Local Arts Index data presented above reinforces this assertion. However, these folks are somewhat quiet and hidden, as they earn their livings in other industries given a lack of professional opportunities for artists and creative professionals. That lack of opportunity, along with a lack of cohesion within these artist communities, may be causing these artists to slowly migrate away from Virginia Beach.

➡ While there is some ethnic diversity reflected in the make-up and programming of the local arts community, most do not believe there is enough.

➡ There is also some need for diversity in style and type of art presented in the community. Few artists and groups are producing and presenting new work. Some community members cite the music programming at the Virginia Beach FunkFest festival as a step in the right direction.

Despite these challenges, many feel there is a sense of momentum and support for cultural development, as evidenced by:

➡ A number of creative entrepreneurs are emerging in the community, developing their own facilities, initiatives and programs.

➡ There is great support for the development of one or more cultural districts, much like the ViBe Creative District at the Oceanfront and the cultural arts district proposed for the Pembroke Strategic Growth Area.

➡ Interviews suggest a general desire for more creative industries such as recording studios, digital media providers and otherwise.

Community GOALS

Arts Plan 2030 identifies 9 goals to fulfill the community's vision for cultural development. These nine-goals address Virginia Beach's needs and opportunities, and they are guided by 2 principles interwoven throughout the plan.

COMMUNITY   CULTURAL

ISSUES

Regionalism + positioning
Tourism development
Quality of life
Economic, workforce + neighborhood development
Improved transportation

Spaces for artistic development
Stronger arts community
Audience development
Funding opportunities
Expanded advocacy

OPPORTUNITIES

Development of Strategic Growth Areas
Town Center development
Regional cooperation
Year-round tourism
Celebrating diversity

Cultural districts
Expanded arts education
Expanded public art and placemaking
Culturally-relevant programming
Engaging individual artists + creatives

This planning process has identified a set of cultural needs and responsive opportunities. In response, cultural needs and opportunities are aligned with various community development issues and opportunities. The result is a set of recommendations for cultural development that directly respond to community challenges and opportunities.

Guiding principles

- **Principle #1:** All investments in cultural development in Virginia Beach should respond both to needs observed in the cultural community and to larger community development issues, such that those investments have a broad and deep impact on the entire community, not just those involved in the arts.

- **Principle #2:** The City's role in arts and culture must evolve to facilitate collaboration within and outside of the cultural sector, including City departments, education and private sector partners to encourage creative innovation.

ARTS PLAN 2030 GOALS

Goal 1. » Expand Public Art Programming

Goal 2. » Strengthen & Establish Different and Distinctive Cultural Districts

Goal 3. » Encourage Culturally Relevant Programming

Goal 4. » Strengthen the Arts Community

Goal 5. » Support Smaller- Scale Performance + Arts Education

Goal 6. » Improve the Value, Impact and Sustainability of the Sandler Center

Goal 7. » Promote Virginia Beach as a Cultural and Creative Community

Goal 8. » Expand Arts Infrastructure

Goal 9. » Increase Funding for Arts Development

Tangle, Virginia Arts Festival

GOAL 1

STRATEGY:

➡ Expand Public Art Programming

To date, public art in Virginia Beach has been relatively focused on sculpture and static installations. The City and various partners should work together to imagine a new public art program that moves beyond these traditional objects and creates events, spaces and public places that animate the proposed cultural districts and strategic growth areas and bring the community together for unique public experiences centered around the arts, culture and creativity.

As previous work has suggested, there are plentiful ideas, opportunities and partners to develop public art in Virginia Beach. These projects have potential to support community goals and plans expressed in the Sustainability Plan and Envision 2040 plan, building community, sense of place, quality of life, neighborhoods, community pride and otherwise. However, as previous plans and studies suggest, there is a lack of infrastructure and resources to support these projects. As a result, there is a need for increased investment in programming and administration to support public art in Virginia Beach.

» There is also a need for a funding stream that allows the City to inspire key projects.

» In an effort to better support community goals and priorities, there is a need for public art programming to move beyond traditional boundaries, including temporary projects, signature projects, encouraging artists to integrate with the community and incorporating projects and events that support community gathering and connection.

22

GOAL 1

PRIORITY: High

WHAT: Expand the city's public art programming, moving beyond traditional objects to create events, spaces and public places that animate the City and bring the community together for unique public experiences.

WHY: 1. The Virginia Beach Arts Commission has already established public art as a priority.

2. To date, public art in Virginia Beach has been relatively focused on sculpture and static installations.

3. Public art has potential to build community pride and sense of place.

4. Public art has potential to bring regional distinction and build visitation around particular installations or events.

5. Public art can be effectively integrated into new development plans and priorities.

HOW: The Office of Cultural Affairs, Public Art Committee and Public Art Virginia Beach Foundation should work to reimagine and better define the public art program, expressing the goals, priorities and activities that will achieve those objectives. Programming should include both temporary (event-based) and permanent installations that address community beautification and are integrated into redevelopment and new construction projects. The City should require that a percentage of expenditures on public development projects be devoted to public art. Endeavor to partner with the Virginia Beach City Public Schools to work towards accomplishing this goal. The City should also negotiate with private developers to require inclusion of public art or a donation to a public art fund.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: The City Council should allocate additional funds for public art and the Office of Cultural Affairs should work to diversify programming to include a wider variety of installations and events (both long and short term.) While City funds could be used to produce public art, they could also be used by the Office of Cultural Affairs to develop a program that incentivizes (grants funds to) artists and arts organizations to develop their own public art projects, thereby reducing the City's role as producer.

A revived percent for art program will collect a percentage of new public development expenditures to support activities. The City may also incentivize private developers to contribute to a public art fund under certain conditions. As the program grows it will be necessary for Cultural Affairs to hire a Public Art staff person that will oversee the program and administer projects.

GOAL 1

MODELS: WaterFire | Providence, RI

In the 1990s, the City of Providence began holding annual First Night celebrations in effort to draw families to its newly redeveloped waterfront. When the annual event did not draw people downtown, the City expanded its purview to include music and performances. They also commissioned artist Barnaby Evans to create a public work: First Fire, a series of bonfires lit upon Providence's three rivers. The event was so successful that, through a grass-roots initiative, WaterFire became an independent 501(c)3, making the public art piece an annual event that attracts thousands. In 2013, over 30 sponsorships made it possible for the organization to host 24 lightings between April and December. WaterFire's annual budget is approximately $1.7 million.

Scottsdale Public Art | Scottsdale, AZ

Scottsdale Public Art is a public art initiative funded by the City of Scottsdale and managed by the Scottsdale Cultural Council. The entity's mission is to "serve as a leader in defining art in the public realm through creative place-making, signature cultural events, exhibitions, and installations—contributing to the community's creative, cultural, and economic vitality." Throughout the city, Scottsdale Public Art is responsible for the creation of permanent and temporary exhibitions, the conservation of Scottsdale's Public Art Collection's nearly 100 public artworks and 800 portable works, and planning public events. Permanent works range from the decorative and experiential (Donald Lipski's *The Doors* and Jim Green's *Sound Passage*) to the functional (Kevin Berry's transit shelters). Temporary exhibitions have included Mary Lucking's *Picnic with a Fish*, in which she transformed a plaza along Scottsdale's Waterfront into a large picnic area with three large fish tanks. Music was provided by a DJ spinning custom-mixed bubbly lounge music, while picnic staff handed out oranges.

GOAL 2

Strengthen & Establish Different and Distinctive Cultural Districts

Recommended facilities, programs and other cultural assets, should be positioned to create a number of arts districts in Virginia Beach, building on plans for the approved ViBe Creative District. The establishment of additional cultural districts will contribute to economic development, particularly in the resort strategic growth area, support a transition toward year-round visitation, celebrate diversity and build quality of life in the three previously expressed areas of neighborhood development, community connection and life-long learning.

Cultural districts could also be connected to one another by reactivating Virginia Beach's waterway system and creating a 'cultural necklace' that positions Virginia Beach as an arts-friendly community and a true arts destination. Obviously this would be a huge undertaking, but it has potential to make Virginia Beach regionally unique and contribute to goals around improved transportation.
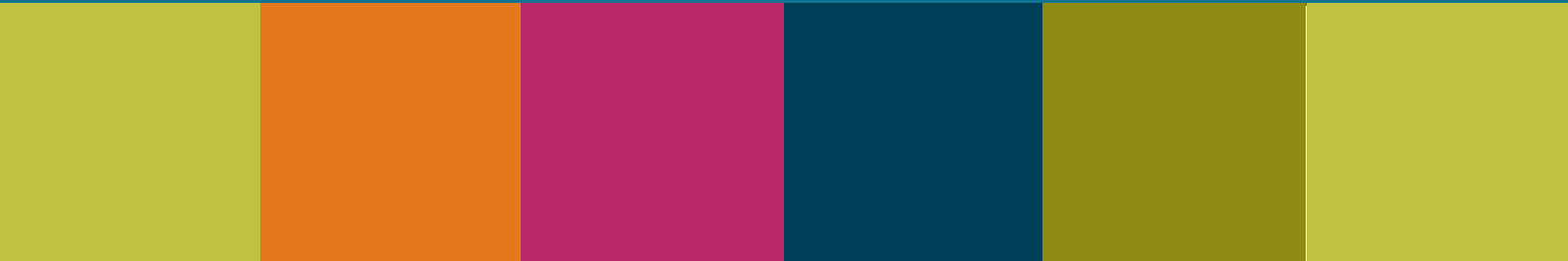
Left to Right:
Town Center Art Show
ViBe District volunteers
Igor's Custom

18th & ViBe Parklet

STRATEGY:
➡ Advance ViBE as a Cultural and Creative District

PRIORITY: High

WHAT: Support and promote the development of the ViBE Arts District as a destination for unique, casual, quirky, fun arts products and experiences.

WHY:
1. With the development of the Arena project, an arts district in this location can provide an interesting and different destination within walking distance.
2. Supports the positioning of Virginia Beach as a creative, unique, arts destination.
3. A district-wide focus on providing creative experiences and product can provide earned income opportunities for local artists and build the creative community.
4. The district already has great momentum and partners in place.

HOW: The City and Office of Cultural Affairs should work with ViBE to create structure that provides support from both private and public sources through non-profit status, the development of a BID or other entity.

ViBE must create a vision, brand and plan for the district that is distinct from the recommended Town Center Arts District. ViBE should include a balanced mix of entities from the small non-profit arts groups to entrepreneurial creative businesses — diversity and uniqueness is the key.

Partnering with ViBE, the City, through the Office of Cultural Affairs, should look to locate arts programming and public art in the district area. This location should also be considered when developing facilities for emerging artists and organizations. The City should integrate the ViBE Creative District into its arts marketing plan as a destination for both residents and visitors.

The success of this district and its components will be reliant on modifications to policy and practices, to make it easier and less costly for small creative businesses to establish themselves and grow. The City should develop an ongoing event agreement with ViBe to simplify the planning of outdoor community-building events.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: Costs will initially be low, but over time the district will require resources for infrastructure improvements (sidewalks, lighting, seating, etc.) and possibly for city arts facilities potentially located in the district. Additional city resources of $100,000 might be used in partnership for events, signage, maintenance, administration, programming and public art projects.

NEXT STEPS: The Office of Cultural Affairs should continue to help ViBE leadership position the project for support.

GOAL 2

MODELS: Village of the Arts (VOTA) | Bradenton, FL

This arts district was created in 1999 by the City through its Downtown Development Agency. VOTA, which consists of 42 acres and 240 residential structures, is directed by the Artist Guild of Manatee, a 501(c)3 corporation. VOTA currently includes about 30 galleries/studios, of which 15 are artist occupied residencies. Also in VOTA are 2 independent bookstores, 3 cafes/ restaurants and several art related retail establishments. All businesses in VOTA are located in refurbished residential properties, many constructed in the 1920s and 30s. While many businesses operate as part-time ventures, the percentage of full-time ventures has doubled over the past several years and is expected to rise significantly over the next few years as VOTA continues to invest marketing, signage, and cooperative projects with other cultural entities. An annual calendar of events is presented including activities such as evening art walks, studio tours, meet the artist programs, and special themed exhibitions. VOTA is strongly supported by the City which has invested in infrastructure (sidewalks, street repairs, antique style streetlamps, etc.). Additional support comes from the Manatee Chamber of Commerce, the Bradenton Cultural and Business Alliance and the Knight Foundation.

The Galleries at Morning Walk | Kennebunk, ME

The vision of a local developer, The Galleries at Morning Walk consist of a converted 18th century farmhouse and a number of cottages that serves as an attraction for local residents and tourists. Opened in 2013, this creative retail arts district offers a broad range of hand crafted items and art. The small business owner/artists serve as a support groups for each other and offer various classes, workshops and events for the public. "It is much more than a retail development," says one of the local artists, "It is a community of artisans. We support one another, talk shop, critique each other's work, and host events and workshops. We work to engage and educate people in the arts."

TechShop | Menlo Park, CA

TechShop is a "maker space" that combines the concepts of co-working spaces with industrial design. The first TechShop opened in Menlo Park, CA, and has since expanded to San Francisco, CA; San Jose, CA; Detroit-Allen Park, MI; Austin-Round Rock, TX; Pittsburgh, PA; Chandler, AZ; and Arlington, VA.

These membership-based, do-it yourself workshop and prototyping studios provide access to over $1 million worth of professional light industrial equipment, software, space, and instruction. Tools available include laser cutters, plastics and electronics labs, machine shops, wood shops, metal working shops, welding stations, and water jet cutters. They have become community hubs for 'idea people'—builders, hobbyists, artists, and crafters—to gather, share ideas, and connect around innovation and design. The open access model encourages creativity and exploration, the type of tinkering that can lead to prototypes and product design. Membership is open to all who pay a monthly or annual fee and take a safety and basic use course. Fees vary by location, ranging from monthly fees of $125-$175 and annual fees of $1,200-$1,395.

GOAL 2

STRATEGY:
➡ Establish a Town Center Arts + Entertainment District

PRIORITY: Medium

WHAT: Expand and formalize a Cultural District in Town Center.

WHY:
1. The Town Center already includes cultural assets like the Sandler Center and public art.
2. Pembroke Strategic Growth Area already has well-known, established cultural events like "Last Night on the Town," arts shows and cultural festivals.
3. More development is planned for the Town Center, as the City works to create a true community hub.
4. A cultural district can help build identity for the Town Center and for Virginia Beach as a community. It can also build visitation and foot traffic.
5. A cultural district and related activity has potential to drive additional commercial development in the Town Center.

HOW: The City should develop policy and negotiate the inclusion of incentives for developers of new projects that include cultural space, cultural activity and/or access for cultural organizations. The City should encourage and incentivize cultural organizations to provide arts programming in public spaces within the district. The City should also begin to market the Town Center as a cultural district and provide centralized marketing for facilities and programs taking place in the district.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: The most successful arts districts are supported by a dedicated funding stream, which pays for marketing and signage, advocacy, public programming and related administration and maintenance. The operation of the district might require an annual budget of $100K to $250K.

NEXT STEPS: The city should work with stakeholders to develop possible incentives and boundaries for the district.

FilFest

The Perot Museum of Nature and Science is located at 2201 N. Field St, three blocks west of Klyde Warren Park. Parking is under Woodall Rogers Freeway.

GOAL 2

MODELS: Dallas Arts District | Dallas, TX

The 68-acre Dallas Arts District was first conceived as a development plan for downtown Dallas in 1977. The plan was designed around a series of cultural anchors, including the Dallas Museum of Art, the Meyerson Concert Hall and a new Performing Arts Center. Those anchors were planned to drive the development of large-scale office and residential projects, plus a series of smaller cultural components. Completed in 2009, the District is now the largest contiguous arts district in the nation, home to 13 facilities and organizations, including The Annette Strauss Artists Square, Bello Mansion/Dallas Bar Association, Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, Cathedral Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe, Dallas Black Dance Theatre, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Dallas Theater Center, Meyerson Symphony Center, Nasher Sculpture Center, Trammel Crow Center and the Crow Collection of Asian of Art, as well as a number of churches and parks. A number of other organizations perform in the district on an ongoing basis. The Arts District is served by the Dallas Independent School District. It is accessible by light rail, streetcar and several highways.

Canalway Cultural District | Lowell, MA

Like most industrial cities in the post-industrial age, Lowell, Massachusetts, a former mill town, had seen better days. With over 5 million square feet of mostly vacant mill space, the City's downtown had become a ghost town as inhabitants left the city core. Although there was some turn around in the 1970s, it was not until after then-Mayor Eileen Donoghue proposed a plan for a Lowell arts district in 1998 that the City began to see significant change. Through the development of public-private partnerships, the City was able to attract artists and establishments into Lowell's urban core. In one example, a finance agency offered special mortgage packages to artists purchasing homes in the city. In another, a private developer donated 3,000 square feet of space in a newly restored building to the Revolving Museum, which had at one point been based in Boston.

Today, Lowell is home to seven festivals, multiple performance spaces, a number of arts organizations and galleries, the Lowell National Historic Park, and the Whistler House Museum of Art. The District is one of 17 in the state, and is overseen by the Cultural Organization of Lowell and the Office of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.

GOAL 3

➡ Encourage Culturally Relevant Programming

Research and input indicate that Virginia Beach's arts programming is not effectively serving or reflecting its diverse communities. Arts organizations should be encouraged to engage the City's diverse communities in all facets of their operations, production and programming, including leadership, volunteerism, casting, marketing, outreach, artistic content and otherwise.

GOAL 3

STRATEGY:

Establish Multicultural Programming + Facilities

PRIORITY: High

WHAT: Develop, support and promote greater diversity of arts offerings and facilities particularly in the area of culturally/ethnically specific arts including both traditional and contemporary styles. The focus for this effort should be on empowering and building the capacity of the City's various culturally specific groups and artists to provide this multi-disciplinary programming, which should include exhibitions, performances, public art and education programs such as workshops and classes in performing, visual and media arts.

WHY:
1. There is a general belief that existing arts programming does not reflect the needs and interests of the entire resident population.
2. The local resident population is rapidly diversifying. Demographic projections suggest that 39% of the population will be non-white by 2019.
3. Providing activities and programs that interest minority and immigrant cultures within a community can build a sense of place, belonging and inclusion.
4. The arts serve as a tool to foster appreciation and understanding of people "different than ourselves" and over time can help strengthen and sustain communities.

HOW: The Office of Cultural Affairs should support the development of the planned African-American Cultural Center. The Cultural Center should contract the services of a professional folklorist that can guide all aspects of the undertaking. A small oversight committee could be established by Center leadership to work with the folklorist and provide background, insight and connections to the various cultural communities in the City. Fostering the development of diverse arts programming within a community is a longterm undertaking that demands professional knowledge, flexibility and sensitivity to the cultural mores and practices of specific cultural groups. As African Americans make up 20% of the Virginia Beach population, additional focus on this community will be warranted beyond the coming Cultural Center.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: Funds for the services of a Folklorist to direct initial program development for two to three years will cost $25,000 to $30,000 annually. Various grants from the Virginia Commission for the Arts, the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, foundations, and the National Endowment for the Arts may be available to support program planning and development as well as programming.

NEXT STEPS: The Cultural Center's Board of Directors, in conjunction with the Office of Cultural Affairs, should host a meeting with appropriate arts and community leadership to discuss the project to assess interest and potential participation in its development.

Initial steps will be to identify the current cultural assets (artists, arts groups, current activities, facilities, community organizations (including libraries), businesses, etc.) that can play a role in supporting and presenting arts programs. Inventories developed for this planning effort can serve as a starting point. Identifying potential leadership within the various cultural communities and supporting the vision and interests of the different groups and artists is critical. A series of discussions and visioning meetings can follow to begin to shape a vision and process for moving forward.

GOAL 3

→ African American Cultural Center

African American Cultural Center
Conceptual Site Plan

VIRGINIA BEACH
STRATEGIC GROWTH AREAS
JUNE 29, 2015

Labels on site plan:
- EXISTING WOODED AREA
- EXISTING BUS STOP
- WALKING TRAIL
- OUTDOOR EVENT AREA
- EMPLOYEE PARKING AND SERVICE/LOADING AREA
- BUFFER PER B2 SCREENING REQUIREMENTS
- 15' SETBACK FROM RESIDENTIAL PER B2 ZONING
- PAVILION, TYP.
- EXISTING TREES, TYP.
- REHABILITATED BASKET BALL COURTS
- ADDITIONAL CROSSWALK
- Diamond Springs Rd.
- Newtown Rd
- ADDITIONAL CROSSWALK
- DROP OFF AREA
- 25,000 SF, TWO STORY AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER
- SHADE TREE, TYP.
- FLOWERING TREE, TYP.
- 76-CAR PARKING AREA
- IMPROVED SIDEWALK
- 35' FRONT SETBACK PER B2 ZONING
- 9 ON-STREET PARKING SPACES
- ADDITIONAL CROSSWALK
- Hampshire Lane
- Hampshire Way
- 0 15 30 60 Feet

Mission of African American Cultural Center of Virginia Beach:

» To collect, preserve, interpret and celebrate Virginia Beach and Princess Anne County's African American history, culture and community from mid 1600s to the present, and to inform and educate the public about their achievements in business, politics, religion, civic organizations and the arts

» To include regional African American History

Goals

» To create an opportunity for those who would love to learn more about African American culture, and to explore and revel in its history

» To reiterate the important role of African Americans and share how essential African American Culture and History is to our City

» A Center to showcase the struggles of African Americans for civil rights and how they have impacted freedom struggles regionally and around the world

» Build partnerships with African American historic sites and cultural centers in the region

Benefits to the City

» Establish Virginia Beach as another hub for African American historic sites and cultural activities in the region

» A major amenity for the Burton Station and Newtown Strategic Growth Areas

» Direct and indirect job creation opportunities

» Become an additional tourism asset for the City and region

GOAL 3

MODELS: While the following models are developed and mature organizations, they began as a result of the processes outlined above and naturally developed over time into large organizations offering extensive and diverse programming in their communities.

Philadelphia Folk Life Project | Philadelphia, PA

The Philadelphia Folk Life Project is an independent, non-profit organization that documents, supports and presents the City's folk arts and culture – including the arts of people that have been in the community for generations as well as those who have just arrived. The organization offers exhibitions, concerts, workshops and assistance to artists and communities. They conduct field research into community based local arts, history and culture and preserve records in their archive. They also provide arts education opportunities to young people enabling them to study with diverse and amazing artists. "With our work, we try to deepen public understanding of local traditional arts and the peoples and communities that create them."

City Lore | New York, NY

Founded in 1986, City Lore's mission is to foster New York City's living cultural heritage through education and public programs. They document, present and advocate for the City's grassroots cultures to ensure their living legacy in stories and histories, places and traditions. A collaborative organization, they partner with other groups and a wide range of community organizations on the development of program ideas and presentations such as a festival of Puerto Rican Decima music, often serving as fiscal sponsor for new and small community initiatives.

Hereabouts | Arlington, VA

Hereabouts was a program developed to build the organizational capacity of culturally specific art groups in Arlington. Each year through a simple application process and follow –up interviews, two or three emerging minority arts organizations were selected to participate in a yearlong training program provided by the County's Economic Development Department for small businesses in Arlington. Arts staff assisted the organizations with their participation and developed training sessions specific to arts groups to complement the training the group received from the regular program.
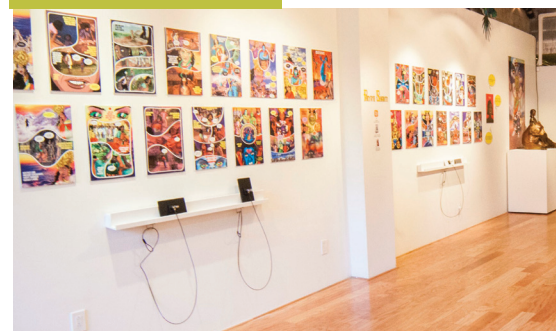
GOAL 3

YMI Cultural Center | Asheville, NC

The Young Men's Institute is one of the nation's oldest African American Institutions in America. An 18,000 square foot facility was constructed by George Vanderbilt to serve the local African American community, many of which worked for him. During this time, it served as the epicenter of African American life, containing all levels of schooling, a library, gymnasium, doctors' offices and a swimming pool. After a period of decline in the 1970s, the building was purchased by a local coalition and was restored to become a community center.

Today, the center's facilities include a 2,232 square foot auditorium/event space, which hosts numerous performances, weddings and other special events throughout the year. There's also a large gallery space, which hosts various exhibitions, as well as workshops, seminars, lectures, and small receptions. Additionally, there is office and meeting space in multiple shapes and sizes that are continually rented by the community.

Additionally, YMI is home to the Dixon-Stephens Leadership Institute, a 10-week program designed for non-majority leaders between the ages of 22-35. Through training and mentorship, the goal is for these individuals to interact with and become leaders in the community and represent African American values in their professional and personal lives. YMI also presents Goombay, an annual celebration of cultural expression that echoes back to the Bermuda slave trade.

Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center | Kansas City, MO

Situated in Kansas City's Cultural Mall, the Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center provides the perfect complement to the famed Spirit of Freedom Fountain. The center is named in memory of Bruce R. Watkins, a local political and social activist who continues to be one of the most important African American figures in the history of Kansas City. The 16,600 square foot facility was funded by a partnership between the Bruce R. Watkins Foundation, the Kansas City Parks and Recreation Department and the State of Missouri. The facility has a primary permanent exhibition on Bruce R. Watkins' life and other important African American figures. It also features an auditorium, large and small gallery space, a resource library, children's workspace, and various office and meeting spaces. The programming of the center serves to showcase performing and visual artists from Kansas City and around the world. They also provide many educational opportunities, through various exhibits, films, classes, workshops and special ceremonies. With its adaptable and spacious facilities, organizations from the community rent out the center to host meetings and other special events.

GOAL 4

➡ Strengthen the Arts Community

First of all, there is a need to strengthen and grow the arts community, providing resources and services that better support their marketing, fundraising, facilities and administrative functions. The Arts Commission is working to develop co-operative marketing mechanisms, but this could easily extend to other services around fundraising, sponsorship, perhaps most importantly, elements of shared administration.

If organizations spend less capacity on administration, marketing and fundraising, they can devote more time and attention to developing quality programming, activating spaces and places that contribute to economic development, engaging community and contributing to lifelong learning—all of which enhance quality of life. In addition, these programs can help to inspire the creation of new organizations and programs— or attract existing organizations and programs to Virginia Beach. These programs and partnerships would ideally be regional, helping to build much-needed regional cooperation.

The City maintains a process for establishing business that some say is difficult to navigate. These policies may be limiting the establishment of creative businesses (small arts businesses, retail, galleries, etc.) that could impact the creation of one or more cultural districts.

> » Parks and Recreation could offer more community arts programming, to promote participation on the neighborhood and amateur level.

> » There are opportunities to bring together City departments in order to coordinate and collaborate in support of cultural development.

GOAL 4

STRATEGY:
Modify City Policy + Practices to Support Cultural Programming + Development

PRIORITY: High

WHAT: The City should make various changes to its operating policies and practices in support of artists and arts organizations active in Virginia Beach. Specific ideas include:

» Simplify the permitting and licensing processes for special events

» Encourage more collaboration and cooperation between various City departments in support of the arts and creativity

» Empower the Office of Cultural Affairs and Arts + Humanities Commission to incentivize and reward collaborative efforts on the part of artists and arts organizations, both amongst themselves and through cross-sector partnerships

WHY:
1. Artists and arts organizations sometimes spend significant time and resources navigating City infrastructure in order to accomplish goals and projects such as public events and facility projects.

2. The City recognizes the value and potential impact of the arts, having integrated the arts into broader community planning efforts.

3. Individual artists and organizations often lack the skills and resources to successfully navigate City government in order to establish organizations and initiatives, gain access to space, undertake facility projects, produce public initiatives and events, market themselves and their projects, secure funding, and establish partnerships and relationships within City government.

4. A more collaborative approach on the part of City government could help create stronger connections between the cultural life of the community and the pursuit of the City's economic and community development mission.

Virginia Symphony
Photo: David A. Beloff

HOW: The Office of Cultural Affairs should establish a Task Force of staff from different City departments, plus some individual artists and arts organizations, perhaps beginning with the Working Group organized for this planning process. Leadership should give the group a mandate to develop a specific set of recommendations over a four to six month period.

NEXT STEPS: Develop and take proposal to City Manager.

GOAL 4

MODEL: Arts Incubator | Arlington, VA

The focus of the Incubator was to encourage and manage the sharing of the resources artists need to create and present their work. Artists occupied low cost shared office spaces provided in various locations around the county, used shared pottery and printmaking studios, utilized a shared scene shop and shared costume shop with an extensive inventory of costumes available for re-use. They began to operate a cooperative craft retail store in local mall space that was negotiated for them by the County. And artists eventually established shared calendaring and marketing efforts for performances, festivals and events so that all the available facilities were utilized to their fullest potential and companies were able to get the best dates possible for their seasons. Arlington County's arts staff facilitated the interaction of the arts groups with all the other County departments in the areas of marketing to the schools, negotiating signage and various zoning and building use issues. Arts staff managed a centralized arts website that promoted the arts regionally and linked to all the County's arts organizations and developed an individual artist directory that was open to all artist living or working in the county.

Ballet Virginia International

GOAL 4

STRATEGY:

Develop additional Shared Administrative Resources for the Arts, Cultural and Creative Community

PRIORITY: Medium

WHAT: The arts community and creative businesses stand to benefit from affordable access to resources that support administration, management and the creative process. While the Arts + Humanities Commission is already addressing shared marketing, that effort could be expanded to provide more comprehensive set of marketing, ticketing, fundraising and administrative services. Available resources and services might include materials and supplies for administration, materials and equipment for production (costumes, props, music stands, etc.), and shared services such as printing and duplication services, bulk media buying, insurance, grantwriting, healthcare and benefits, networking and professional development.

WHY:
1. By pooling and sharing resources, artists and organizations will have access to higher quality resources than what might be accomplished individually.

2. These resources will also be more affordable.

3. Resource sharing can provide organizations with greater capacity to develop and deliver quality programming, activate spaces and places that contribute to economic development, engage community and contribute to lifelong learning— all of which enhance quality of life.

4. These programs can help to inspire the creation of new organizations and programs—or attract existing organizations and programs to Virginia Beach.

5. These programs and partnerships would ideally be regional, helping to build much-needed regional cooperation.

HOW: The Arts Commission should work with the Office of Cultural Affairs to build on existing shared marketing efforts and continue to collaborate with existing groups and businesses to formalize and develop this program, utilizing skills and resources that already exist in the community wherever possible. The Cultural Alliance has tried to take on shared services, including health insurance, and as a result may be a good partner for these efforts. The Arts Commission and Cultural Affairs may choose to create a separate entity to provide these shared services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: Funds will be needed to support a start-up and incubation period ($25,000) for the program. Ideally this program will grow to be self-sustaining.

NEXT STEPS: The Commission and Cultural Affairs should establish a committee to develop framework and plan for this effort, also identifying potential partners such as the Cultural Alliance and the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts Foundation.

Little Theatre of Virginia Beach
Photo: David A. Beloff

GOAL 4

MODELS: Dallas Performing Arts Collaboration, Dallas, TX

In late 2012, five major Dallas performing arts institutions announced the development of a collaborative to find operating efficiencies within their business models. Options being assessed include combining back-office operations such as healthcare and benefits, ticketing and box office, scheduling and capacity, artistic collaboration and facility management. The group plans to begin small and add more work streams as success is achieved. Its first initiative is a "sampler" ticket package. Partners include AT&T Performing Arts Center, The Dallas Opera, Dallas Summer Musicals, Dallas Symphony Orchestra and Dallas Theater Center and the City of Dallas. The project is funded by AT&T.

MACC Commonwealth | Minneapolis, MN

In 2007, five human services organizations developed a joint agreement to create a framework for like-mission organizations to collaborate and share key administration functions. The founders believed they could access the highest quality administrative services without adding to their individual overhead. As a result, they merged their administrative staff, including finance, human resources, and information technology staff, to form MACC Commonwealth, a nonprofit shared management services organization.

Leaders estimate that MACC saved the partnering organizations roughly $200,000 in the first year while affording them greatly improved financial and administrative services. In addition, the joint purchasing power helped negotiate a common set of ancillary benefits that represented a 30 percent savings over what would have been achieved separately. MACC's team of 40 employees, along with its network of service providers, support a membership of 30 diverse organizations in areas of nonprofit finance, human resources, and information technology. New products and services are developed in response to membership needs, now also including facilities management, government contract management, data systems and more. MACC provides scalability and support during organizational growth and changes, including mergers, leadership development programs and staff transitions.

GOAL 5

Support Smaller-Scale Performance + Arts Education

There are also needs for other additional cultural facilities, including smaller performance facilities, arts education facilities focusing on digital arts, additional facilities at the Sandler Center and facilities for individual artists. Much like improvements to the Sandler Center, these additional facilities will accommodate programming that supports lifelong learning. Unique arts education opportunities for people of all ages has potential to make Virginia Beach regionally distinct. These facilities should also be developed with regional educational, or community partners.

Research has also indicated some demand and opportunity for the following.

» Regional organizations may be willing to relocate to Virginia Beach given the right facilities.

» Vacant storefronts may be activated with exhibitions or hands-on programs for the short or long-term.

» Potential to partner with regional colleges and universities to establish facilities. For example, there may be opportunity to partner with Old Dominion University on digital arts and teaching in Town Center as well as with Hampton University on the creation of a multi-cultural center with gallery space.

» Interviewees talked about the challenges of finding audition space, as well as the need for affordable office, classroom, and rehearsal space.
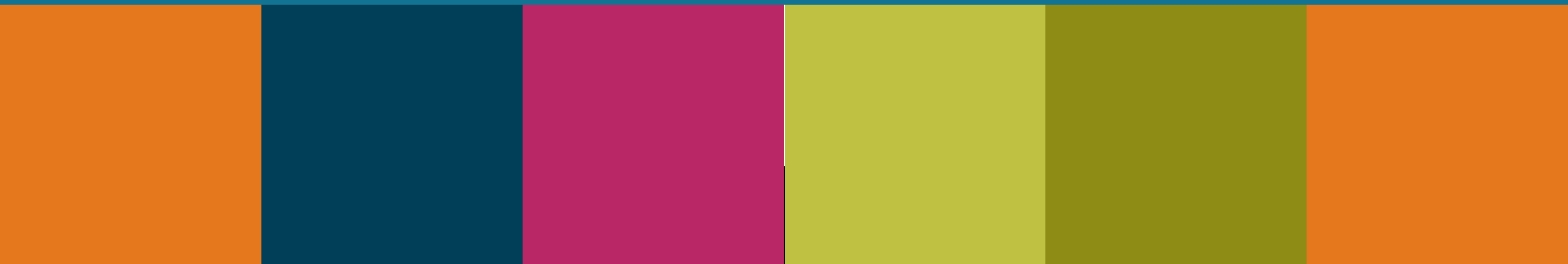
Hairspray, Salem High School
Performing Arts Academy

Zeiders American Dream Theater

STRATEGY:
➡ Develop Small-Scale Cultural Space at Town Center

PRIORITY: Medium

WHAT: Develop and expand facilities at Town Center to include smaller performance, rehearsal, exhibition, teaching and support facilities.

WHY:
1. There are gaps in the regional inventory for smaller scale performance, creative and teaching facilities.
2. These spaces have the most potential to support and grow the creative community, providing appropriate and affordable space to support the creative process.
3. These spaces also facilitate the delivery of arts education programming—a potential regional point of distinction and expressed priority for nearly half of all survey participants.
4. Small and flexible performance, exhibition and program spaces have potential to diversify programming already offered in Town Center and respond to community demand for hands-on programming.

HOW: The Office of Cultural Affairs should advance partnerships with existing organizations looking to develop facilities such as the American Dream Theater, Hampton University (which already has teaching facilities at Town Center) and MOCA, which has potential to develop a satellite facility.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

These are potentially significant investments for the City as partners in the development of these additional Town Center facilities. The level and timing of investment is to be negotiated.

NEXT STEPS: Advance plans with partners.

MODELS:

Cultural Center + Civic Campus | Pompano Beach, FL

The Pompano Beach Community Redevelopment Agency, an independent taxing district established by the City of Pompano Beach to focus on redevelopment initiatives, had been working on a plan to enhance and revitalize historic Downtown Pompano. The plan suggested the development of a Civic Campus that would include a new Broward County Library. Around the same time, the City-supported Cultural Arts Committee was developing a partnership with three regional municipalities, and suggested that an auditorium be developed on the second floor of the new library. Following a feasibility study that assessed the opportunities of such a project, a plan for a Pompano Beach Cultural Center was developed. In this plan, the City is the primary founder of a cultural center that will function as the heart of the new library. The Center will include a 5,000 square foot performance and event space, an exhibition gallery, and a digital arts and media center. The performance space will have retractable raked seating, as well as state-of-the-art technical features. Surrounding the facility will be a CRA-funded Civic Campus that will include a large public plaza as well as connectivity to Downtown Pompano.

52nd Street Project | New York, NY

The 52nd Street Project (The Project) is a theater program for kids between the ages of 9 and 18 living in Hell's Kitchen. Unlike a traditional theater program, The Project is not focused on teaching kids how to act or how to write a play; but rather, focuses on "giving a kid an opportunity to prove that he or she has something of value to offer, something that comes from within that he or she alone possesses, something that cannot be taken away". In 2010, after nearly 30 years in operation, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs invited The Project to become one of three arts tenants in Archstone Clinton, an apartment complex that was being developed along Manhattan's 10th Avenue. Prior to this opportunity, The Project had been borrowing space. Its new facility is a 150-seat black-box theater with flexible seating, a lobby, gallery, and a terrace. Other spaces include two rehearsal rooms, an art booth, an electrics room, and two dressing rooms with full bathrooms. The Project was completed in 2010 for $20 million.

Armory Art Center, Art School + Galleries | West Palm Beach, FL

Housed in an historic Art Deco building, the Armory provides exhibitions in three galleries art classes for students of all ages, art salons, lectures and special events. It is housed in a three building campus in West Palm Beach, FL. In 2014, the Center leased a 5,000 sf facility in nearby Lake Worth to expand reach and programming. The Armory Art Center Annex will:

» Focus on and feature local artists through exhibitions and teaching opportunities

» Provide outreach programs for youth and adults

» Offer classes and workshops during the day, at night, and on weekends

» Serve an audience from Lake Worth and the surrounding west and southern areas

» Provide studio space to 2D artists

Chevron Maker Annex, Children's Museum of Houston | Houston, TX

Opened in 2014, the Chevron Maker Annex is a 450-square foot place for children to invent, construct and showcase their work. The space encourages makers to tap into their creative potential with access to resources such as 3D printing, casting, programming with Arduino and Scratch, building and soldering circuits, robotics, animation, game development, circuit bending, laser cutting and more.

Workshops begin by introducing various engineering concepts. The topics in the workshops focus on everything from electricity to structural integrity. After an interactive lesson, visitors are challenged to create products based on a prompt, which encourages learning through self-exploration.

GOAL 5

STRATEGY:

→ Develop Digital Media Facilities for Lifelong Learning

PRIORITY: Low

WHAT: Develop a digital media center—a different kind of arts facility that focuses on the intersection of creativity and technology.

WHY:

1. There is a programming gap and community demand for additional hands-on cultural opportunities in Virginia Beach

2. Digital media centers can be developed incrementally and are relatively inexpensive to start, particularly with the right partners.

3. The project has great potential augment youth arts education and engage Virginia Beach's large youth population—as well as people of all ages.

4. Enhanced and expanded quality arts education has potential to provide Virginia Beach with a regional point of distinction.

HOW: The City should partner with an educational institution to develop and operate this space. This partnership should be facilitated by the Office of Cultural Affairs. The facility would be well-positioned as part of a new Town Center Arts and Entertainment District.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: Digital media centers are not particularly complicated in terms of building requirements and are often developed within existing structures, as the spaces tend to be fairly flexible and straightforward. Capital costs will be highly dependent on whatever partnership might be established to facilitate the project, though a typical project might range from $1M to $5M. It is also important to note that there is ongoing cost and complexity pertaining to equipment and need to continually replace and upgrade hardware and software.

NEXT STEPS: The Office of Cultural Affairs should identify and explore potential partnerships with educational institutions, including ODU and/or School Districts in order to advance this project.

MODELS:

### Community Media Center | Grand Rapids, MI

The Community Media Center started as a public access television station, the Grand Rapids Cable Access Center, in 1981 and became a role model for the transformation from a traditional public access television station to a multi-disciplinary Community Media Center. The non-profit center provides training in radio, television, media and information technology as well as access to all the necessary equipment. The center also has a special program to assist non-profits with information technology needs and traditional and new media marketing tools. With the successful completion of its $1.2 million capital campaign in 1997, the Community Media Center integrated its services under one roof for the first time in a renovated historic 1920s neighborhood library. In 2005, the Media Center acquired the Wealthy Theatre, a struggling historic theater, with a plan to transform the space into a technically advanced theater for community use. A subsequent $2.4 million campaign helped pay off the debts associated with the acquisition and raise additional funding to upgrade the Media Center's other programs.

Media and Games Network, NYU and Polytechnic Institute of NYU | Brooklyn, NY

Opened in Fall 2013, the Media and Games Network (MAGNET) is a multischool cluster that brings together students and faculty from various schools to co-locate teaching and research to examine the intersections of technology and culture. Undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate students from the various schools come together for programs in game design, digital media design, computer science, and engineering.

The facility, located in downtown Brooklyn, was co-designed by the participating schools--NYU Tisch School of the Arts; the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development; the Polytechnic Institute of NYU; and the Computer Science Department of the Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences. The 40,000 square foot space includes labs, multi-media classrooms, student exhibition space, a black box theatre, an audio studio and mixing booth, an equipment checkout room, physical computing workspace, a large lecture room, human computer interaction labs, and collaborative work spaces.

The goal for MAGNET is to break down the walls between technology and the arts and become the epicenter of gaming development on the east coast. The facility was developed on a floor in Brooklyn's MetroTech Center, a 1990s office park.
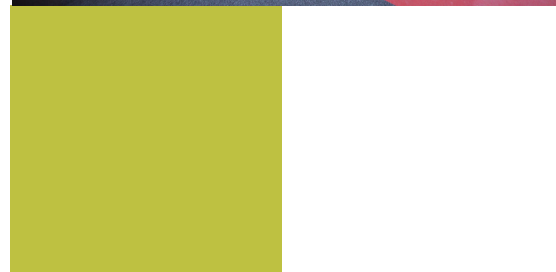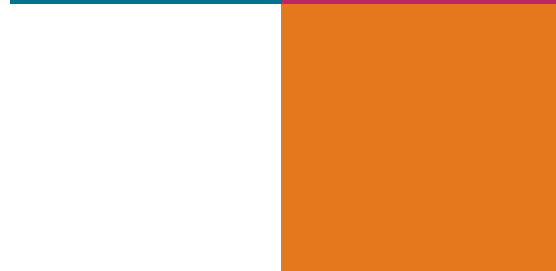
STRATEGY:

➡ Develop Facilities for Emerging Artists and Organizations

PRIORITY: Medium

WHAT: Develop low-cost space where artists can create, exhibit and sell their work.

WHY:
1. There is a need to develop resources and opportunities to showcase local artists and attract new professional artists to Virginia Beach.
2. A new shared space facility will bring together local artists and help them further develop a sense of community.
3. The facility will help to promote Virginia Beach as an arts-friendly community.
4. The facility will contribute to the development of an arts district.

HOW: New spaces for artists to creative, exhibit and sell their work should be developed to include various sized studio space. Some studios should include water access, some should be appropriate for large format work. The facility should ideally include a kiln. The facility should include adequate space for visiting and regional artists to conduct workshops and classes. The space should be operated such that leases are of a fixed duration (perhaps a year or two) in order to guarantee churn and ensure that the space is operated as a true incubator. Artists studios should be required to have open hours, when the public can visit, watch and learn about the artist's work. Artists should be awarded space through an application process that clearly defines rules, regulations and criteria for artists to be selected.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: Capital costs for other similar projects have ranged from $350,000 to millions. Operating budgets start at $200K.

NEXT STEPS: The Office of Cultural Affairs should look to create partnerships such as with The Artists Gallery, that support the development of physical and business plans for the incubator as well as an application process for artists.

MODELS:

Business of Art Center | Manitou Springs, CO

The Business of Art Center opened in 1988. The brainchild of Manitou Springs city planner Paul Intemann, the facility was designed to: "Facilitate the development of the artistic and business skills of artists by providing subsidized studio space, art classes, workshops, and business instruction; increase public knowledge of art processes, art forms, and issues; and, provide a stimulating creative environment which will contribute to the understanding and pleasure of art." The facility does this through a Business Incubator that offers low-cost, equipped, shared studio space, a Business Institute that offers a program taught by professionals from a plethora of fields, an Art Institute offering classes, workshops, and seminars by regional and national artists, and exhibition galleries, a gift shop, an educational facility, and a community center. The BAC Studio Arts Program is a key component of the Business of Art Center, providing artists with space to create, educational programs, office equipment, and a resource library. The BAC offers 10 studios, all of which are available on a 24-hour basis. Artists are required to commit to a 12-month lease, although the BAC will work with him or her to develop a customized plan to address any goals or needs. The facility also offers open studio use to artists looking for less commitment. However, these facilities are only available on regular business days during regular business hours. For 2012, the BAC's operating costs were $213,818.

Ponyride | Detroit, MI

Based in Detroit, Ponyride is a self-proclaimed "study to see how the foreclosure crisis can have a positive impact on our communities." The project began when Phil Cooley, a local restaurant owner, purchased a 30,000 square foot factory building for $100,000. Working with a team of community members, the group slowly transformed the facility into a working space for artists and entrepreneurs. With over 25 resident organizations, space is offered for $0.20-$0.25 per square foot, including the cost of utilities. In addition to private studios, Ponyride recently opened a co-working space. For $100, members have 24-hour access access to a conference room, shared kitchen, wifi, a printer, storage, use of a mailbox, and desk space for 4 to 6 people. Programming at Ponyride includes a residency program for visiting artists, education programs led by tenants, and a series of pop-up and dinner events. The facility is also available for event rental by outside users.
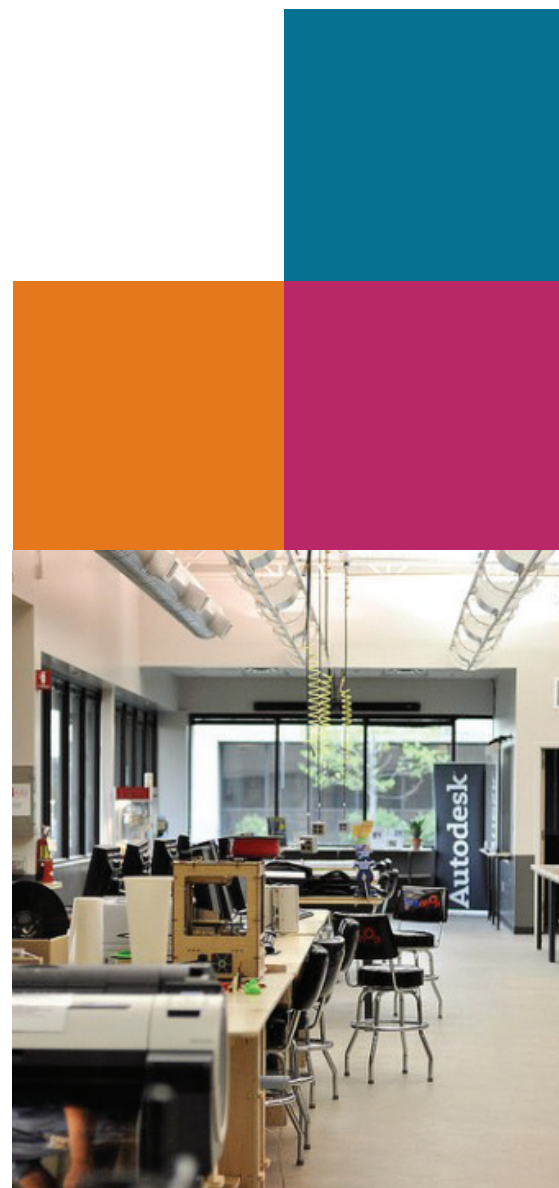
Arts Education

The Virginia Beach City Public Schools are proud to support high quality arts education programs. The Governor's School of the Arts also provides quality pre-professional arts training programs for youth. And local and regional arts organizations and private sector providers offer arts education for youth and adults. Even still, there is potential to develop more extensive arts education programming for residents of all ages:

» While high school programs are particularly strong, there is a still a need to support the schools' burgeoning steel drum programs and provide quality instruments (and related storage) to students. In addition, arts and creativity could be better integrated into school- wide curriculum for children of all ages, particularly elementary students.

» Outside of the schools, arts education programming is heavily dance focused. Approximately 65% of arts education facilities host dance classes and camps compared to the 18% hosting music and theatre (respectively), 26% offering visual arts, and 3-4% offering digital media or history. Programs are overwhelmingly focused on youth education, although there are some adult offerings.

» New community arts education programming should respond to City goals around lifelong learning. This includes hands-on programs for children, teens, young adults, adults, empty nesters and elders in all disciplines, including visual, performing and media/digital arts.

» Local arts organizations should be encouraged to develop and provide education programming. For example, there is potential for the Sandler Center to expand education offerings, the Governor's School would like to establish a national summer theatre camp in collaboration with Virginia Musical Theatre, MOCA sees potential to expand education offerings and add a welding school and Tidewater Winds wants to do more education programs but has no space.

» New programming should include opportunities for students and amateurs to interact with and learn from professionals.

GOAL 6

⮞ Improve the Value, Impact and Sustainability of the Sandler Center

As noted, the Sandler Center is the focal point of the performing arts in Virginia Beach, as well as a key economic driver of the Town Center area. It supports many creative organizations, brings great touring programs to the community and supports extensive arts education programs. Its success is thus vitally important for the City.

At the same time, the Center is under substantial economic pressure to drive earned income and manage expenses in such a way that the cost to sustain the facility remains reasonable. These challenges occur in similar facilities all over the country. The economic challenges on arts facilities are substantial and growing. Thus, the City should consider investments—including facility expansion—that make the Center more active, more relevant to more people in the community, and more financially sustainable.
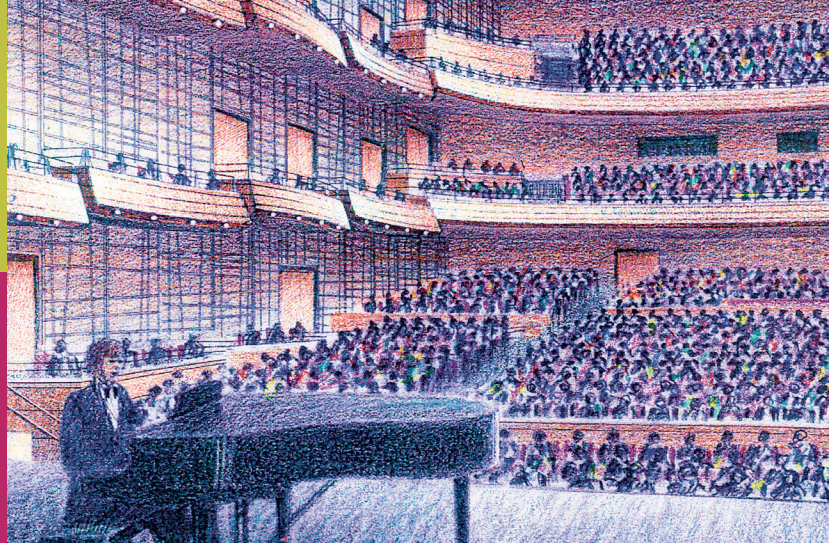
STRATEGY:
➡ Expand Sandler Center for the Performing Arts

PRIORITY: Medium

WHAT: The Sandler Center should be expanded (in fact completed relative to the initial concept) to include:

» Facilities for Arts Education: Additional small performance areas and classrooms that support various educational programs produced by the Sandler Center or partners.

» Meeting + Event Spaces: Additional spaces and technology that drive additional meeting and event business (and related earned revenue) to the Sandler Center.

» Food + Beverage Operations: Additional spaces and functionality that enhance food and beverage operations for the Sandler Center, with the expanded meeting and event business very much in mind. But we would also point to the opportunity to animate the Sandler Center with more food-based programming that also connects to the agricultural heritage of the community as well as health and wellness issues.

WHY:
1. There is significant local demand for these additional facilities and capabilities.

2. Arts education programs are likely to drive the development of audiences and support long-term arts participation and sustainability.

3. National trends suggest growing demand for hands-on arts opportunities for people of all ages.

4. Many performing arts facilities are adding facilities like these to improve activity, community connections and financial sustainability.

5. This activity will make the Sandler Center even more active around the clock, allowing it to be a more vital cultural destination and component of Town Center.

6. These additional spaces will leverage the Center as a community asset that helps with corporate recruitment and builds quality of life.

HOW: The Office of Cultural Affairs should work in partnership with the Sandler Center Foundation to plan for and develop the expansion project.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: The financial implications of the expansion are significant. A 10,000 square foot addition with a cost of $500 per square foot equates to a $5,000,000 project. A 20,000 square foot addition represents a $10,000,000 project. Of course, there will also be ongoing financial implications associated with animating and operating the new spaces.

NEXT STEPS: Cultural Affairs should support the Sandler Center Foundation as it undertakes exploratory physical planning to understand cost implications before pursuing a fundraising feasibility study. Then, the Sandler Center Foundation should initiate a competitive bid process to bring physical planners on board to work with the Office of Cultural Affairs and Sandler Center Foundation and staff on the expansion.

MODELS:

Broward Center for the Performing Arts | Fort Lauderdale, FL

In 2009, the Broward Center for the Performing Arts initiated a $56 million plan to reimagine the Center, branded as ENCORE! Building Community through the Arts. The plan included theater renovations, new dining spaces and a refresh of public areas. It also included the development of two new facilities—the Huizenga Pavilion and the Rose Minaci Arts Education Center both of which opened in 2014.

The Huizenga Pavilion, a two-story structure with a glass facade overlooking the river, includes 3,500 square feet of event space in the Porter Riverview Ballroom on the second floor and waterside dining at a new restaurant on the first level. Spaces connect to terraces that offer lovely views of the river and a plaza area connects to theater entrances. The Rose Miniaci Arts Education Center includes the JM Family Studio Theater, 3,000 square feet of classroom, coaching and office space, and 2,100 square feet for rehearsals and performances. The building is uniquely outfitted with advanced technologies that allow for distance-learning programs that connect students on the Broward Center campus with artists around the world. The Center offers classes for children of all ages, beginning from three-months old. Students have the ability to advance through a class roster that begins with arts as a tool for early child development to conservatory style classes in subjects like musical theatre, improvisation, performance and many more. The facility also offers yoga, Pilates, Zumba, ballroom and many other special classes for adults. They offer a class for students with physical or mental disabilities to engage with the arts, master classes with the casts of national tours and classical musicians, as well as a popular Summer Conservatory. The new education center has enhanced existing programs as well, including student performances and a high school theater awards program.

Patel Conservatory at the Straz Center for the Performing Arts | Tampa, FL

Opened in December 2004, Patel Conservatory offers 100 classes for all ages weekly, after school and on weekends in a three-story, 45,000-square-foot facility attached to the Straz Center for the Performing Arts. The facility includes studios and classrooms for dance, media arts, theater, on-camera acting and private lessons in all disciplines, plus a piano lab, a recording studio, a scene shop, a costume shop, a library and a black box theater. The Patel Conservatory recently received accreditation from the Southern Association of College and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement and is also a member of the National Guild for Community Arts Education and followed the associated code of best practices.

The Conservatory supports departments in various performing arts disciplines, including dance in partnership with the Orlando Ballet School, theater with on-stage, on-camera and non-performance, and music for all ages. The Media Arts Department offers classes such as Recording Studio and Hip-hop Music Creation and Production. Students learn from professionals who have worked extensively in film and television production, audio production and the music business. Overall, the program serves more than 60,000 students each year, through offerings on site, outreach and a teacher-training program. It is a program of the Straz Center.

GOAL 7

Promote Virginia Beach as a Cultural and Creative Community

STRATEGY:
➡ Position the Oceanfront as a Cultural Destination

PRIORITY: Medium

WHAT: Establish the Oceanfront as a destination for cultural tourists, driven by a set of programs and promotional efforts.

WHY:
1. Builds on the success of a set of public art and other projects and events already occurring at the Oceanfront.

2. Supports the positioning of Virginia Beach as a creative, unique, arts destination.

3. Provides potential to augment tourism goals and establish Virginia Beach as a year-round destination.

4. Diversifies the base of tourists, adding more cultural tourists which are more likely to stay longer and spend more.

5. Contributes to Oceanfront redevelopment goals and connects with other goals and priorities identified in this plan, including those around public art.

HOW: The Office of Cultural Affairs should work with the CVB to partner with and incentivize a number of cultural entities to establish a series of high quality and innovative cultural events on the Oceanfront. The City should be prepared to enhance infrastructure and make changes at the policy level in order to facilitate this activity. One key partner could be the Virginia Arts Festival. Other priorities and recommendations in this plan have potential to animate the Oceanfront, including public art events and installations.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: Activity and improvements to accommodate that activity can be developed incrementally over time. To begin with there should be minimal cost, though the City may end up investing significant funds in infrastructure and programming in the future.

NEXT STEPS: Cultural Affairs should identify and meet with partners to aid in this effort, potentially establishing a committee to support this endeavor over time. That committee must include the CVB, City representatives, cultural community representatives and Oceanfront business owners. Partners should identify and visit other communities that have successfully established waterfronts as cultural destinations.

MODELS:

Miami Beach, FL

Miami Beach has a rich history as a trend setting arts center, from the world famous nightclubs of the 50's, to the rich cultural life of today's modern South Beach. Miami Beach is truly a major international entertainment and cultural destination. The identity is supported by the City's Tourism, Culture and Economic Development Department. This department has successfully animated the oceanfront as a cultural destination by maintaining a series of annual events, supporting of local cultural institutions and infrastructure and maintaining an active cultural tourism program.

The Department was established to centralize the City's tourism and cultural initiatives and programs through the unification of the Special Events Office, Film and Print Office, Entertainment Industry Office, Art in Public Places, Cultural Arts Council, Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach Convention Center (MBCC), Fillmore Miami Beach at the Jackie Gleason Theater, Byron Carlyle and Colony Theaters, and the Office of Tourism and Conventions.

The Department also partners with the Miami Beach Visitor and Convention Authority (VCA) and the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau (GMCVB) to market and promote the City of Miami Beach as a destination. The oceanfront and nearby streets are principally animated through an extensive series of world-class annual events that include a wide array of arts and cultural disciplines and backgrounds. For example, events include the Miami Beach Global Music Festival, Food Truck & Music Fest and Art Basel Miami Beach, the winter showcase for the immensely popular international contemporary art showcase. The city becomes a large gallery as works of art are displayed everywhere from outside along the waterfront to storefronts. In 2014, Art Basel brought 73,000 visitors to Miami Beach.

Granville Island |Vancouver, BC Canada

In the 1970s, the Canadian government and the City of Vancouver, British Colombia decided to take an abandoned brownfield industrial site on the waterfront and develop it into a cultural destination. From 1975-79, the federal government spent $20 million to update industrial buildings and marine-related elements of the island while also adding roads, pathways and public space. Performance spaces, museums, a hotel, a college of art and design, a brewery, 200 artist studios and a variety of other retail were developed on the Island and waterfront. More importantly, public space hosts performances, artisans, and community related activities and services that are free for all. Overall, the island is one of the most popular attractions in Vancouver, drawing 10.5 million visitors annually, employing over 2,500 people and generating more than $215 million in economic activity annually. The Canadian Management and Housing Corporation oversaw the initial development and continue to manage the island.

GOAL 7

MOCA's Boardwalk Art Show

STRATEGY:

➡ Promote Virginia Beach as a Cultural Community

PRIORITY: Medium

WHAT: All of the cultural development recommended in this plan is planned in effort to establish Virginia Beach as vibrant place for arts, culture and creativity. As such, there is potential to leverage all of these efforts and actively position Virginia Beach as an arts-friendly and culturally vibrant place.

WHY:
1. Communities known as being culturally vibrant are known for high quality of life and as destinations for tourists, corporations and quality workforces.
2. Building a 'cultural brand' will drive support to cultural amenities and assets.
3. It will also support community and economic development goals.

HOW: Cultural Affairs and community partners should work to communicate its arts plan. This might involve engaging a marketing agency to develop a branding strategy and support implementation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: Here again, these costs will be incremental but minimal, including an initial branding exercise and roll-out and then annual costs for ongoing marketing.

NEXT STEPS: Cultural Affairs and community partners should first work to build cultural development and initiate this effort once a larger concentration of activity and development has been achieved.

MODELS:

Atlanta, GA

Having hosted the Olympics in 1996, the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau (ACVB) faced the challenge of finding the next "Big Thing" to draw visitors. In the fall of 1997, the ACVB launched a pilot Cultural Initiative to test the viability of an alliance to market the city as a cultural destination. The initiative's objectives were to unify the Atlanta arts and cultural communities around common marketing goals and to add to the city's quality of life and economic vitality. Through repeated meetings and demonstrations of its commitment, ACVB overcame some initial hesitation and brought more than 70 members to the initiative. The tourism initiative was directed by a Cultural Tourism Board, composed of partner representatives and administered by two ACVB staff.

With major corporate sponsorships—BellSouth and Coca Cola Company, among them—ACVB produced a series of projects and blockbuster events to forward the organization's goal of establishing Atlanta as the cultural gateway to the South. In early 1999, ACVB organized a cultural tourism program that focused on a traveling exhibit of Impressionist works at Atlanta's High Museum of Art. The package, targeted at the entire southeast region, tied together the exhibit at the High, 11 hotels offering package deals, and cross promotions with seven other cultural organizations, including the Atlanta Botanical Garden and Atlanta Ballet. Subsequent efforts included a collaborative outer-market summer tourism campaign and "Celebrate the Spirit of America," tied into three blockbuster American history exhibits at the High and the Atlanta History Center by offering hotel packages and discounts on admissions.

To further demonstrate its commitment to developing a partnership with the arts community, ACVB packaged a program of marketing workshops with funding from BellSouth. This three-year series of training sessions, headed by a professor of marketing at Georgia State University, helps cultural site managers improve their programming, pricing, board development, and marketing techniques.

Providence, RI

Over the past two decades, Providence, Rhode Island has established itself as a "Creative Capital." Providence has found success from legislative and grassroots efforts to create an Arts and Entertainment District that has become a haven for artists and the public.

The city was supported by state legislation in 1998, when the General Assembly passed innovative legislation that provides tax incentives for artists to live and work in specific districts in eight Rhode Island communities including Providence. Artists living and working in these districts do not have to pay income or sale tax for works created in the district. In addition, the galleries within the district are also exempt from state sales tax from the sale of these original works. Another benefit came with the state's historic building tax credit, equal to 30% of total expenditures, on rehabilitation of buildings that qualify for the Rhode Island Register of Historic Places. These programs have been a catalyst for the renaissance of the downtown district. In Providence, this movement is anchored by AS220, an alternative arts performance, studio and living space with cutting-edge performances, readings and gallery exhibits.

The district features a lot of creative reuse of historic buildings as art galleries and performance spaces, weaving the arts into the city's landscape and architecture. These are enhanced by the presence of the Rhode Island School of Design, as well as larger companies such as the Rhode Island Philharmonic, Opera Providence and the Festival Ballet Providence. The combination of small cutting edge organizations, artists support service and spaces, and large cultural institutions make Providence a unique arts destination. A night in Providence could include a dinner in the many downtown restaurants, a stroll viewing local art on Gallery Night, to catching a performance from Big Nazo (a street performance troupe) to gathering with the crowd for the now famous WaterFire spectacle.

GOAL 8
Expand Arts Infrastructure

➡ City of Virginia Beach

The City has several mechanisms in place to facilitate its commitment to and support of the arts.

- » The Office of Cultural Affairs, which provides oversight, programming, marketing and support for arts and culture across the City.

- » The Arts and Humanities Commission, supported by the Office of Cultural Affairs, grants the City's annual arts contribution and provides other support.

- » The Historic Commission, which is committed to preserving Virginia Beach history and older buildings.

- » The Parks and Recreation Department, which provides some cultural programming, principally in visual arts, though the level of Parks and Recreation arts programming is declining.

In addition to funding the Office of Cultural Affairs, Parks and Recreation and other community programming, the City has historically allocated $1 per resident to a grant pool that is then distributed by the Arts and Humanities Commission. That amount remained relatively stagnant for many years. Last year, the Commission argued that the amount should be increased, as no increases had been made for years, even to account for inflation. The City approved an increase to allow the Commission to increase grants.

➡ The Role of the City

As suggested, the City should modify its role and approach to advancing the arts in Virginia Beach. The City must encourage the development of successful partnerships within and outside of the cultural sector, including City departments, education and private sector partners to support creative innovation. The focus must be on arts and cultural development in support of City goals around economic, community, neighborhood and workforce development. As suggested, this will be accomplished through adjustment of City policies and priorities, supporting artists, arts organizations and creative entities in their endeavors, expanding and adding funding mechanisms, and encouraging City departments to participate in cultural development. Most of this will be accomplished and facilitated by the Office of Cultural Affairs, though Cultural Affairs leadership will call on City leadership in support of many efforts.

MOCA's Boardwalk Art Show

⮕ Role of Cultural Affairs

The Office of Cultural Affairs is functioning well. In order to accomplish the broad set of cultural development initiatives laid out in this plan, the Office of Cultural Affairs must expand its role, moving from funder and producer to development partner, collaborator and facilitator of a broader set of programs and services on behalf of the City. More specifically, Cultural Affairs must place focus on:

» Acting as a bridge between the public and private sectors to build general support for the arts in Virginia Beach and to support the initiatives identified in this plan

» Identifying and mobilizing additional resources from the City and private sector in support of cultural development initiatives and goals

» Convincing other City departments that investment in arts, culture and creativity will advance their own goals

» Continued advocacy that supports the cultural community and role that arts, culture and creativity can play in building quality of life

» Efforts that support artists and arts organizations in endeavors related to goals and priorities set out in this plan, similar to the role Cultural Affairs has played in the development of ViBe

⮕ Cultural Affairs

Cultural Affairs currently includes three full-time staff members: a Director, Development Specialist for the Sandler Center Foundation, and Cultural Affairs Assistant. A significant amount of resources are devoted to supporting the Arts Commission and Sandler Center Foundation, particularly the facilitation of grant programs. We would suggest that the initiatives suggested in this plan necessitate the addition of additional staff members and re-alignment of responsibilities over the next fifteen years.

While the department should continue to be led by the Director and supported by an assistant, we would suggest that three additional full-time Assistant Director positions are re-aligned/established to focus on facilities, funding and programming. All of these positions should report to the Director of Cultural Affairs and should be supported by half to full-time positions, as funding allows. A list of key responsibilities for each position follows.

» Assistant Director for Facilities: Acts as City liaison to the Sandler Center Foundation, ViBe Creative District, American Dream Theatre and other City supported facility and district projects; Collaborates with City staff to support the establishment of districts and increase cultural activity in desired areas.

» Assistant Director for Programming: Reimagines and administrates new public art and placemaking program, produces other Cultural Affairs public programming such as gallery exhibitions; develops and administrates activities that support local artists and arts organizations; Acts as City liaison to Public Art Foundation.

» Assistant Director for Funding: Oversees and administrates all granting programs; Serves as Arts Commission staff support and City liaison.

Arts Commission

City Council established the Arts and Humanities Commission in 1979 in order to:

1. Advise City Council on issues related to the arts and humanities
2. Encourage development of programs in arts and humanities
3. Bring together local and regional arts organizations to collaborate and innovate
4. Provide information and assistance to organizations for the benefit of Virginia Beach
5. Channel City funds earmarked for the arts and humanities
6. Coordinate efforts to secure federal and state funding

The Commission consists of eleven members, all appointed by City Council. Members must be residents of Virginia Beach and are appointed to a 4-year commitment, with 2 consecutive terms at most (though Council can allow extensions.) The Director of Office of Cultural Affairs serves as ex- officio member of the Commission. Commission activities are supported by the Cultural Arts Assistant for the Office of Cultural Affairs. The Commission is organized into two committees (executive and nominating) though additional committees are active.

The Commission has a positive reputation in the community but seems to struggle a bit with its mandate and identity. For example, Commission members see a need to provide unrestricted operating support, but the Commission is required to offer a granting program that encourages collaborative programming (for example.) In support of its role to provide assistance to arts organizations, Commission members sit in on organization board meetings. Most arts groups do not see benefit in that.

Some also criticize the Commission's granting policies, which award City funds (local tax dollars) to groups that are headquartered outside of city limits. In FY14 and FY15, 23 unique local and regional arts organizations applied to the Commission for funding, 13 from Virginia Beach and 10 from Norfolk. Awards were made to 8 groups based in Virginia Beach and 8 groups based in Norfolk. However, it is important to note that awards are only made to groups to support programming provided in Virginia Beach.

Role of the Arts Commission

The mission and mandate of the Arts Commission should be expanded to support many of the initiatives proposed in this plan, and to support the City in its efforts to facilitate cultural development in support of community goals.

The following chart summarizes the current and potential role of the Arts Commission, showing how it should evolve from a key steward of City funds to an entity that promotes and supports creative innovation and cultural development.

CURRENT ROLE

» Advise City Council on issues related to the arts and humanities

» Encourage development of programs in arts and humanities

» Bring together local and regional arts organizations

» Provide information and assistance to organizations for benefit of the City

» Channel City funds earmarked for arts and humanities

» Coordinate efforts to secure federal and state funding

POTENTIAL ROLE

» Re-granting funds allocated by the City for arts and humanities

» Coordinate efforts to secure federal and state funding for appropriate initiatives

» Motivate and incentivize collaboration and cooperation amongst local and regional arts organizations

» Motivate and incentize innovative crosssector collaboration

» Motivate and reward private sector support of the arts, including businesses and individuals

» Develop and maintain a formalized set of services to support the cultural sector

» Advocacy

The Commission should also change in size and make-up in order to achieve its new objectives. This means that it should be larger, connected to arts and culture, include term limits that support ongoing initiatives and activities and include a committee structure to address particular issues such as facilities, regional cooperation and otherwise.

CURRENT MAKE-UP

» 11 members; Must be City residents

» Appointed by City Council to 4-year terms

» Director of Office of Cultural Affairs serves as ex-officio

» Two committees (executive and nominating) though additional committees are active

» One member is designated Chairman (1 year term)

POTENTIAL MAKE-UP

» Should have a connection to, knowledge of or interest in arts and culture

» Must represent various community segments (education, corporate, religious, law, diverse populations)

» Potential members suggested by Council, staff, commission and public

» Staggered 3 year terms for members

» Membership appointments would still remain under City Council authority

» Committee structure developed in response to key cultural development issues (facility issues, regional partnerships, etc.)

» Possible membership changes from 11 to 15 members

Summary of Grant Requests + Awards
Virginia Beach Arts + Humanities Commission

■ Requested ■ Awarded
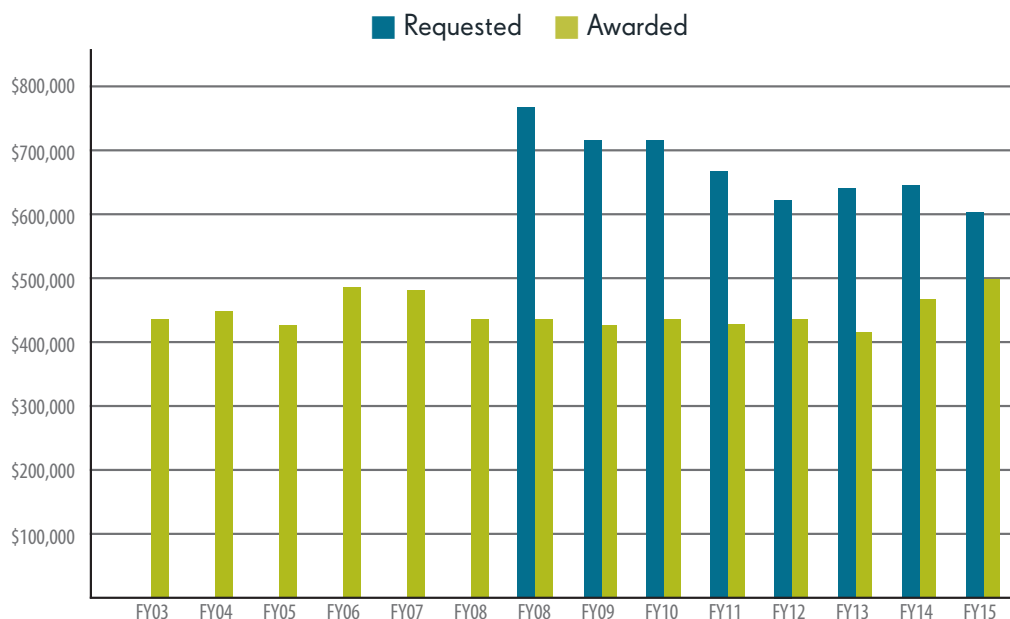
Annual grants are generally larger and can be used to support planning, arts education, the provision of artist Funding is a key issue for most arts groups—and Virginia Beach's groups are no exception. The chart on the following page provides funding detail for 23 arts and cultural groups that applied for funding from the Arts and Humanities Commission in FY14 and FY15. Data are pulled from each organization's most recent publicly available IRS Form 990. Groups are organized into Virginia Beach-based and Norfolk-based groups and then into those with revenue above and below $500,000.

This suggests:

» Virginia Beach groups earn a higher proportion of funding than Norfolk-based groups. Larger groups based in Virginia Beach earn a higher proportion of revenue than smaller grotups.

» Average proportions of government funding are similar for most groups, with the exception of a few that have a higher reliance on public funding. In Virginia Beach, the Old Coast Guard Station, Symphonicity and Virginia Musical Theatre receive the highest proportions of funds from government sources. In Norfolk, Virginia Arts Festival and Tidewater Arts Outreach receive more of their funds

from the government (though it is important to note that Tidewater Arts Outreach also raises a high proportion of funds from the private sector.) The Governor's School and Virginia Legends Walk are more reliant on the private sector.

The City is continually compared to Norfolk and criticized for allocating fewer tax dollars annually to the arts. (The City is said to grant about $300K less annually than Norfolk to arts and cultural groups and initiatives.) While local groups appreciate City donations, they more critically need unrestricted operating funds and have trouble raising those funds from the public and private sectors.

While there are only a handful of local and regional foundations that support the arts, local corporations understand the value that the arts provide to Virginia Beach. VB Vision supports an active arts and cultural development task force. This group is particularly interested in supporting arts districts. Local businesses support the arts through event-based sponsorships but there is significant competition for these dollars.

GOAL 9

Increase Funding for Arts Development

➡ Funding Cultural Development

Finally, and perhaps most critically, new funding sources need to be established to support the implementation of this plan and further cultural development in Virginia Beach. The City should pursue the development of these sources through a three-pronged approach.

STRATEGY 1: State Funding

In the 2014/15 grant cycle, the City and four organizations received funding from the Commonwealth of Virginia. Even while the Virginia Commission for the Arts' funding base has been reduced over the last few years, the history of arts funding levels in Virginia indicates that funding changes from year to year and it is important that the City and its' arts groups and artists to begin to build a stronger relationship with the state with a goal of bringing more state arts dollars to Virginia Beach. To that end, there may be opportunities for the City of Virginia Beach to expand the level of funding it receives from the state in support of new initiatives as well as the activities of some of the local arts organizations.

The City should take a proactive stance in encouraging and/or even requiring that local arts groups, particularly those that receive City funding, apply for funding from the state. Many local groups would be eligible to receive project support (for new initiatives) and technical support (for planning assistance or professional development). In some instances a 501(c)3 organization, acting as a fiscal agent, may be needed to accept and monitor the state grant and the City could play a role in helping an emerging arts group locate the needed agent.

The Virginia Commission for the Arts also provides funding assistance for touring artists and fellowships for individual artists. Funding from these programs could support various activities (performances, workshops, exhibitions) that might be presented in cultural district or arts facilities. A Fellowship grant could provide support for a local or visiting artist interested in working on an in- depth community project.

The State currently provides General Operating Support to four Virginia Beach organizations. There may be additional local groups that would qualify for this type of grant now or in the near future.

These grants are generally larger and more consistently awarded and they help build financial stability.

STRATEGY 2: New Public Sector Funding Mechanisms

The City itself is currently the primary local arts funder. The annual allocation is approved by the City's Arts Commission and is subject to reduction (or expansion) based on annual Commission vote and budgeting process. While that policy and effort could certainly continue, we would suggest that additional cultural development proposed in this plan could be funded through a secure public mechanism, such as a Public Art Fund, Sin Tax, Hotel Occupancy Tax or Surtax, Cable Company Franchise Fees, Utility Late Fees, Real Estate Tax or a Cultural Tax District. The possibilities should be explored based on existing legislation. Here are a few examples of funding mechanisms utilized in other communities across the country:

Sin Tax | Deadwood, SD + Cleveland, OH

In Deadwood, a portion of a 9% gaming tax on adjusted gross proceeds of gaming goes to the arts. In Cleveland, a 30 cent tax per pack of cigarettes sold provides about $15M annually to the arts.

Hotel Occupancy Tax or Surtax | Round Rock, TX + Tucson, AZ

In Round Rock, a 7% hotel occupancy tax is used to support tourism, cultural enhancements and city promotion; a portion is allocated to arts and culture. The City of Tucson imposes an additional surtax of $2 per day per rented room which then funds the arts. This surtax is in addition to a 6% hotel/motel tax.

*Note: This model will only be relevant to Virginia Beach if new hotel accommodations are developed.

Cable Company Franchise Fees | New Orleans, LA

The federal government allows municipalities to collect a fee of up to 5% from cable companies. Most cities collect the full 5%, some (like New Orleans) allocate a portion to the arts.

Cultural Tax District | St. Louis, MO

A property tax levy of 23.3 cents per $100 of assessed valuation supports the arts, with 6.3 cents to the Zoo and Art Museum, 3.3 cents to the Science Center and Botanical Gardens and 4 cents for the history museum. All funds offset facility operating expenses.

There may be some funds required for public relations and communications related to the development of funding streams. As a next step the Commission should test the viability of a dedicated arts funding stream as part of its advocacy efforts and work with the City to understand realistic options. Research conducted in support of this plan suggested particular potential for the revival of the percent for art program, which would collect a percentage of public development expenditures to support activities.

Increase Private Sector Engagement

Virginia Beach must work to develop a new community of private sector philanthropists and corporate support for the arts, reducing focus on the City and its Arts and Humanities Commission. The key will be to develop innovative strategies to engage the private sector through partnerships with regional institutions and developers to create programs that develop a new set of private sector donors and corporate partners, including local start-ups.

This effort could be established in partnership with the other regional jurisdictions, the Cultural Alliance of Greater Hampton Roads, Hampton Roads Community Foundation, a local or regional educational institution, the City and local corporations and arts organizations to identify and train a new set of funders. This is another good opportunity to develop new local and regional partnerships and cooperative efforts. A few groups don't raise any funds at all while a few others don't earn any. Most groups maintain a balance of income from a variety of sources.

Anticipation, Richard Stravitz

Arts leaders report that fundraising from individuals is most difficult. Many believe that the wealthy donor base is "hiding" and "siloed." Others cite local residents donating to the arts in Norfolk and other regional communities and see potential to redirect those dollars locally. Some site a need for more unity in the donor base and improved training, skills and resources for arts groups to better attract those funds. Other indicators from the Local Arts Index provide detail that further contextualizes these issues. Those in Virginia Beach applying for state arts grants had a 52% success rate, the lowest of any key regional municipality and lower than the regional average.

The Virginia Beach proportion of households donating to public broadcasting or arts is on par with Norfolk and higher than Hampton and the regional average. It is lower than Newport News. However, this regional percentage is quite low, with less than 20% of regional households donating.

Overall, many believe that Virginia Beach would benefit from a dedicated arts funding stream, with many citing the percent for the arts program, which was discontinued in the 1990s, services (such as an arts incubator), community arts, folk arts, discipline based arts activities and operating support for arts organizations. City groups should be encouraged to consider Community Arts and Folk Arts programs in accordance with the priorities and recommendations coming out of this planning process. While these grants will not provide sole funding for the support of any one activity, they can provide matching funding to enhance programs and cultural development efforts.

## STRATEGY 3: Create Incentives for Private Sector Investment

The private sector has not historically been engaged or asked to support the arts, since the City has served as the key provider. There are opportunities in this regard:

1. Create opportunities and incentives for commercial property owners to bring cultural activity into their spaces. This might include pop-up or temporary installations, or longer term leases that give favorable terms to non-profit cultural organizations.

2. Develop a program with the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce to teach local businesses how and why to sponsor cultural programs, showing how sponsorship deals are made and how to maximize the value of sponsorships to local businesses.

3. Develop a program with the Department of Economic Development, VB Vision and/ or the Central Business District Association that helps key local arts groups form relationships with regional businesses and industries.

4. Organize a mentoring program whereby established families with a tradition of supporting the arts in Virginia Beach recruit and encourage newer arrivals and younger families to become more active as funders and supporters of the arts.

5. Encourage the Arts Commission to start an annual awards event drawing attention to individuals who give to the arts.

DATA & RESEARCH
A. Cultural Indicators

Data from Americans' for the Arts insight about the size and nature of the Virginia Beach arts community and its audiences and participants, as compared to key regional municipalities.
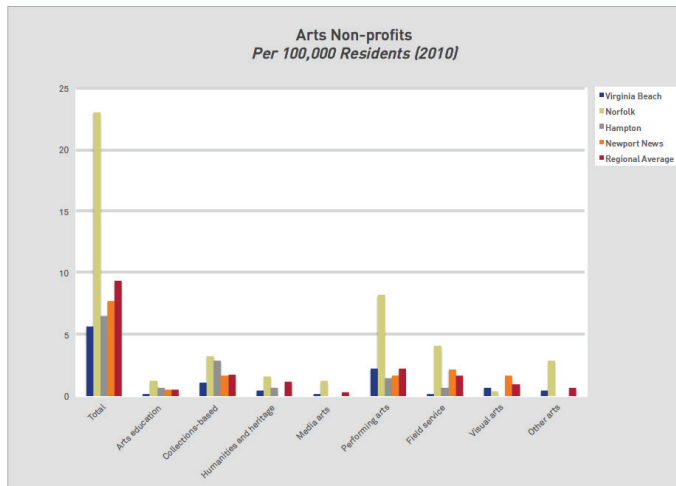

Launched in 2012, the Local Arts Index culls data from a variety of secondary sources including the U.S. Census Bureau, Claritas Research, Scarborough Research, and the National Center of Charitable Statistics. The Index includes a variety of indicators (statistical measures) around arts activity, resources, competitiveness and local cultural character. For this discussion, we compare Local Arts Index Indicators for Virginia Beach to other key regional communities including Norfolk, Hampton and Newport News. We also include a regional average, defining the region as Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, Portsmouth, Norfolk, Hampton, Newport News and Suffolk.

These data suggest that in 2010 Virginia Beach was home to fewer non-profit arts organizations per capita than Norfolk, Hampton, Newport News and the region on average. In addition, while Virginia Beach has the second highest number of performing arts organizations per capita, it is home to fewer arts education, collections-based, humanities and heritage, media arts, field service, visual arts and other arts organizations per capita. And Virginia Beach nonprofit arts organizations spend the least amount per capita.

Concerning individual artists and creative industries, Virginia Beach is home to a higher number of independent artists per capita than the other communities and the region. However, this number declined from 181.51 to 179.63 between 2009 and 2011, while it grew in every other jurisdiction except for Suffolk. In addition, Virginia Beach is home to the third highest number of creative industries per capita in the region.

Nearly all of the organizations providing input for this plan expressed difficulties in marketing and audience development. This is not necessarily evident in data on local cultural participation, which suggests a level of performing arts attendance that is on par with regional averages. Museum attendance is slightly lower (likely due to fewer museums.) A higher proportion of Virginia Beach residents attend popular entertainment and movies than other regional jurisdictions and more residents participate in online media.
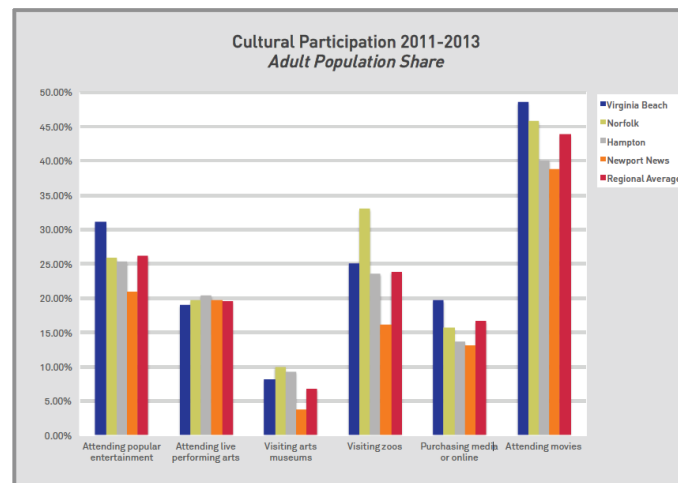
B. Cultural Facilities

Appendix B includes cultural facility inventories and analysis for the performing arts, visual arts and other culture as well as program space. The inventories provide detail on quality, programming type and physical features for each facility and availability for performing arts facilities. A review of that information suggests:

- The majority of arts and cultural facilities in Virginia Beach and the region tend to be low to average quality and are quite limited in terms of technical abilities. In Virginia Beach, there is a gap in mid-sized, high quality performance venues as seen in the matrix below, which compares facility quality to capacity.

- The Sandler Center, Museum of Contemporary Art, and a handful of school/university facilities are the primary arts programming providers. Audiences and users rely heavily on these spaces and both the Sandler Center and MOCA receive significant City support given challenges in long-term sustainability. MOCA has a particular challenge around location and access.

- Very few performance facilities have high or medium availability. In Virginia Beach, those that do have availability are facilities at the Sandler Center, Regent University, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, spaces that might be financially or geographically challenging for some arts groups.

- There is a low proportion of purpose-built performing arts venues in the area. Most venues are school/university spaces or are located in libraries, museums or churches.

- Music presenting is the dominant type of programming throughout the Hampton Roads area. However, there are very few music venues that are not bars or restaurants. The music venues that do exist have low quality ratings as they aren't able to effectively accommodate more than a mic and a light.

- Most outdoor performance spaces are makeshift stages or gazebos in parks and plazas with low to no availability. There is only one true amphitheater in the area; it has a capacity of 20,000 and is of good quality.

- There are very few true exhibition and gallery spaces in Virginia Beach, although there are a number of art shops.

- Virginia Beach has a handful of heritage and cultural attractions. With the exception of the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center, all of these facilities focus on history and/or culture, and feature exhibitions that include cultural artifacts. Most of these facilities offer some kind of programming, including family programs, tours, school/youth programs, or adult programs.

- Arts programming is overall focused on dance and geared towards children and families, although there is a mix of music, theater, and visual arts programming. There are very few film or digital media opportunities and very little food-based programming.

- There are a number of facilities in development including local venues like the Virginia Beach Arena and Zeiders American Dream Theater. Regional projects include a new performance and arts education space in development by the Hurrah Players in Norfolk and a new arts building in development by Virginia Wesleyan College. Research has also indicated some demand and opportunity for the following.

- Regional organizations may be willing to relocate to Virginia Beach given the right facilities.

- Vacant storefronts may be activated with exhibitions or hands-on programs for the short or long-term.

- Potential to partner with regional colleges and universities to establish facilities. For example, there may be opportunity to partner with Old Dominion University on digital arts and teaching in Town Center as well as with Hampton University on the creation of a gallery space.

- Interviewees talked about the challenges of finding audition space, as well as the need for affordable office, classroom, and rehearsal space.

C. Public Art

The City of Virginia Beach currently has 44 permanent works of public art concentrated at the Oceanfront, Boardwalk, Town Center, the Central Library and the Convention Center. A percent for art fund supported public art in previous years but was discontinued in the 1990s. Recent public art has been developed through private investment and donations as well as community partnerships. The City's involvement in public art is overseen by a Public Art Committee.

In 2012, the Office of Cultural Affairs and Arts and Humanities Commission hired a consultant to assess existing public art and suggest short-term steps for progress, particularly as the City has named public art as a priority in its comprehensive plan. The plan notes that while the City lacks a dedicated funding stream for public art, there is considerable philanthropic interest in commissioning additional public art. In 2014, the Office of Cultural Affairs revised its policy on donations of artworks and memorials and produced the Public Art Guide, which maps and explains each of the 44 art pieces, and also points visitors to a digital app that will provide more information about selected work. A copy of that guide is attached as Appendix C along with a related public art inventory. Following is a summary.

- Virginia Beach includes 44 permanent public artworks, with the oldest developed in 1962 and the newest in 2014.

- Most (over 90%) are traditional, large-scale sculpture. Others are digital, water or other mixed-media installation.

- Nearly half (45%) are concrete or bronze. Others consist of steel, glass, fiberglass, video or natural elements. Two include water features.

- More recent public art, such as the video installations at the Convention Center, the light garden at the Central Library and various sculptures at Sandler Center, are more innovative than other more traditional statues and monuments.

- 11 (25%) are sculpture of animals and 8 (18%) are memorials.

- 18 (41%) are located at the Boardwalk and 33 (75%) are located near the Oceanfront (including the Boardwalk, Aquarium and Marine Science Center, Convention Center, MOCA, Visitor Information Center, Laskin Gateway and EMS and Fire Training Center.)

The maps from the recently released Virginia Beach Public Art Guide show the locations of local public artwork, with most concentrated near the Oceanfront.

D. Other Cultural Resources + Partners

There are a number of other resources present in Virginia Beach that have potential to further contribute to the City's arts sector.

- The City's Libraries are quite strong, with programming that includes cultural components, including story time, STEAM classes for preschoolers, afternoon movie screenings, art exhibits, arts and crafts workshops.
- The Art Institute of Virginia Beach, with classes and degree programs in design, digital arts, fashion and culinary arts, has grown over the last few years.
- A number of regional colleges and universities, including Old Dominion University, Hampton University and Virginia Wesleyan are interested in building a presence in Virginia Beach.

All of these organizations represent strong potential partners for cultural development.

The 2012 public art assessment recommends several site opportunities for the development of public art. Opportunities at the Oceanfront include gateways into the Resort District, street passages that connect Atlantic Avenue and the beach area, arrival points along the boardwalk, Rudee Inlet and future development parcels at the south end of Atlantic Avenue. Other opportunities include City Gateways (at entryways into the city as well as where people leave transportation systems,) Town Center gateways, streetscape and green spaces and the coming light rail.

Building on the recommendations provided by the consultant in 2012, this planning process has confirmed that public art has been gaining support and momentum in recent years. Stakeholder interviews suggest that the existing program has good support and there is a desire to better market existing assets and develop more. This is evidenced by the following:

- A number of public art projects have been developed outside of the City purview. For example, a pop-up art program for lifeguard stations on the oceanfront was recently launched.
- There is currently support to integrate Public Art into new city gateways and the new light rail system.
- The City's Department of Public Works sees the value of public art and is supportive of future projects. The Virginia Beach Police Department has held a mural competition for local students for the last few years.
- The Libraries would like public art installations at each of their 10 branches.
- There is some discussion about adding public art to recreation centers.