participate : create : connect

city of san José’s cultural plan for 2011—2020
**Cultural Connection** was adopted by the San José City Council on February 1, 2011.

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Special thanks to the more than 3,000 people who contributed to **Cultural Connection** through interviews, focus groups, town hall meetings, and public surveys.

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Cover: Christian Moeller’s “Hands,” an artwork commissioned by the San José Public Art Program at the Mineta San José International Airport, includes images of hands from 54 Silicon Valley residents.
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A New Vision for a New Decade

*Cultural Connection* is San José’s plan for cultural development in the coming decade. Its purpose is to help create a more vibrant San José through arts and culture. The result of a yearlong process involving more than 3,000 people, *Cultural Connection* presents a vision and shared goals for the City of San José and community partners. This vision is founded on San José’s distinct cultural identity and its abundant cultural resources. This plan will strengthen San José’s culture and community, while making San José better known and understood in the region, the nation and the world.

The Importance of Arts and Culture in the Community

Arts and culture are an essential partner in community development. As reflected in Envision San José 2040, the City’s general plan currently in development, arts and culture contribute to important community goals: a celebration of heritage and diversity, quality education, healthy neighborhoods, and an innovative economy. In this manner, San José’s cultural growth is increasingly integral to the City’s future. Going forward, cultural development is not the province of the arts community or the City Office of Cultural Affairs alone, but involves the coordinated effort of many other players, including other City departments, the educational sector, the business community, real estate developers, neighborhood leaders, and philanthropic interests.

Why Cultural Planning and Why Now?

Dramatically changed circumstances for the City, the economy and the culture at large require a realignment of the City’s cultural resources with clear priorities. Articulating a cultural vision allows the City and community partners to leverage their collective resources and perform more effectively. *Cultural Connection* can help galvanize leaders around shared cultural goals. It will enable the community to achieve its cultural vision for the next ten years and enhance the value of arts and culture to all segments of the community.

What has changed? Money and the culture. San José, like other California cities, faces ongoing structural budget challenges in addition to the current economic recession. While tax revenues are down, other factors drive cost increases faster than revenues. This makes it more difficult for cities to fulfill residents’ expectations of local government, including providing cultural amenities. San José’s Office of Cultural Affairs, the City’s arts agency, has experienced substantial budget cuts in recent years, reflecting this downward pressure on City spending. In addition, the unique character and diversity of Silicon Valley’s culture, and shifts in the overall culture, require new responses. The proliferation of informal or amateur cultural activity outside the nonprofit arts world, the growth in popular culture, the deepening use of technology, and the sheer diversity of cultural expression—all necessitate reevaluation of how to fulfill the community’s cultural needs.
Cultural Connection was developed in the context of many related responses to this change. It was informed by Envision San José 2040 and is intended to become a key element of the general plan. In addition, the City and community cultural organizations have produced several recent plans and studies that will benefit from alignment in a cohesive ten-year plan.

San José’s Cultural Identity and Vision
A collective portrait of San José’s distinct and, in some ways, unique cultural identity emerged from the planning process. Diversity is the most frequently mentioned element of San José’s culture, both as a demographic fact and as a long-held civic commitment. Reflecting in part the attraction of Silicon Valley, the population is, on the average, relatively well-educated, affluent, international and transitional. In addition, San José has a highly diverse multicultural population not connected directly to high-tech, spanning both multigenerational families and recent immigrants.

San José’s culture is highly participatory, and residents’ cultural activities are often personal, active, informal and “off the radar” of cultural institutions. San José has also made a long-term investment in its own cultural development, and has created a vital community of nonprofit arts and cultural organizations, artists and arts-related businesses. San José’s diversity has shaped its arts and cultural community. There has been an emphasis on culturally based as well as mainstream arts, and the community produces and participates in a broad array of cultural expressions, such as low-riders, ethnic dance, textiles, and hip hop culture. Not surprisingly, a consistent theme of planning was getting beyond comparisons with San Francisco and the Bay Area, and celebrating and promoting San José’s own culture.

A cultural vision for San José was developed through the planning process, one that describes the vibrant arts and cultural life desired by the community:

*Arts and culture in San José connects people, provides rich opportunities for participation, and fosters creativity.*

Guiding Principles
Cultural Connection is based on five guiding principles, which were identified as authentic traits inherent in San José’s cultural sector through Envision San José 2040, new research, and trends in the arts. Five national issue experts were selected to prepare white papers to frame each principle in a national context and draw implications for San José.

*Cultural Participation:* Supporting residents’ personal, active participation in arts and culture.
Innovation: Fostering new responses to growing challenges in cultural development.

Cultural Pluralism: Using culture as a connector and fostering a “cultural commons” through arts and culture.

Arts and Economic Prosperity: Promoting economic development of the commercial creative sector—arts-related businesses.

Public Value of the Arts: Using personally meaningful arts experiences to help achieve community goals and create a better San José.

New Directions Based on Past Achievements

Key ideas in Cultural Connection are based on San José’s existing cultural strengths and assets. They are opportunities arising from the starting point of past accomplishments in the community’s cultural development. For example:

Emphasizing Personal Participation: San José has made a sustained investment in its arts and cultural infrastructure, with an emphasis on institutions and facilities for audiences to experience professional artists. Cultural Connection seeks to strengthen this infrastructure while providing more opportunities and places throughout the community where people can learn, practice, share, and celebrate their own personal cultural interests.

Using Culture to Promote San José as a Destination: San José’s cultural community has reached the point where it can become a more effective draw for people in Silicon Valley, the Bay Area and beyond. The plan proposes ways to boost cultural tourism while reinforcing San José’s own distinct culture.

Using Culture as a Connector: San José’s has a long-term commitment to celebrating diversity and fostering multiculturalism. This collection of artists, cultural organizations, and relationships now provides the opportunity for an even greater “cultural commons”—many ways to bridge across ethnicity, generations and backgrounds.

Using Culture to Enliven Many Places: San José has developed (and redeveloped) a collection of anchor cultural facilities, primarily in the downtown area. Cultural development downtown and in the neighborhoods can now focus on access to diverse, smaller-scale spaces, inside and outside, that support a broader range of cultural activities, more embedded in everyday life.

Developing San José’s Commercial Creative Economy: San José has focused its cultural policy to date on developing the nonprofit arts and cultural sector. The next stage is to also value and nurture individual creatives and arts-rooted businesses.
The Plan: Ten Goals over Ten Years

*Cultural Connection* has ten goals to achieve the community’s cultural vision over the next ten years. The goals are by their nature inter-related so that implementation of one often reinforces another. All goals are of equal priority over the long term but portions of each are more easily accomplished, or must precede tackling other portions.

1. Support Residents’ Active, Personal Participation in Arts and Culture.
2. Support the Availability of Diverse Cultural Spaces and Places Throughout the Community.
3. Strengthen Downtown San José as the Creative and Cultural Center of the Silicon Valley.
4. Integrate High Impact Public Art and Urban Design throughout the Community.
5. Expand Residents’ Access to Arts and Cultural Learning Opportunities.
6. Foster Destination Quality Events in San José.
7. Strengthen Communitywide Marketing and Audience Engagement.
8. Enhance Support for Creative Entrepreneurs and the Commercial Creative Sector.
9. Increase Funding for Cultural Development.
10. Strengthen the Cultural Infrastructure.
Implementation

*Cultural Connection* is a ten-year plan for the City and its community partners. Because cultural development is a collective enterprise, many agencies within and outside of City government, as well as organizations, businesses and people throughout the community participated in development of this plan and will play a role in its implementation.

In recognition of the current economic challenges facing the City and the community, the plan balances the practical with the visionary by identifying short-term recommendations that can be accomplished or initiated in the coming two years, often using currently available resources. These short-term recommendations align with the City's current priorities and internal work plans. There are also more ambitious, long-term recommendations that will require substantial preparation, new resources, and other changes before implementation begins.

Past Cultural Planning Successes Cultural planning, much like other community planning, builds on the past and points to the future. In this spirit, *Cultural Connection*, builds upon successes from San José’s two previous cultural plans.

20/21: A Cultural Plan for the New Millennium, adopted in 1997 as a 10 year vision for cultural development, was a major regional planning initiative in partnership with Arts Council Silicon Valley. Significant accomplishments that resulted from the 20/21 Cultural Plan include:

- Update of the public art ordinance leading to the development of Public Art Next!, the City of San José’s Public Art Master Plan
- Artsopolis, a model regional arts marketing initiative which has become a national network
- Cultural Initiatives Silicon Valley which developed and raised millions of dollars for a comprehensive K-12 arts education initiative that is now housed in the Santa Clara County Office of Education
- ZERO1’s 01SJ: the Biennial Art and Technology Festival, emerging as one of the world’s most significant events of its kind
- Renovation of the historic California Theatre into a special downtown, mid-size venue
- A cross-sector regional leadership initiative now realized at 1stAct Silicon Valley

The 20/21 Cultural Plan was preceded by the City’s first cultural plan, the 1988 San José Arts 2020, which served as the mandate for the City’s initial cultural policy including the establishment of the Office of Cultural Affairs; the development of the arts grants, public art and arts education programs; and program assistance that fostered the development of many small and mid-size arts organizations.
SAN JOSÉ’S CULTURAL IDENTITY

San José has a distinct and, in some ways, unique culture. Understanding this culture has been a persistent topic of great interest to those in the cultural sector. San José’s culture has been researched and described over a decade in studies such as the Creative Community Index and more recently by 1stACT Silicon Valley. The planning process for Cultural Connection repeatedly asked planning participants the question, “What makes San José’s culture distinctive?” Related questions asked about San José’s cultural strengths, and what should be preserved or built upon. A collective portrait of San José’s cultural identity emerged from this inquiry.

Diversity and Geography
The most frequently mentioned element of San José’s culture is diversity. San José is the 2nd most diverse city in the US, after Miami, and there is a long-standing and active multicultural community. There is no majority ethnic population and arguably no majority culture in San José. Diversity continues to grow and is increasingly international, with more than one-third of residents born outside of the US. Trends identified by Envision San José 2040 point to a future population with a larger proportion of young people, including second- and third-generation immigrant families, and older people (55+, retired). Reflecting its status as the Capital of Silicon Valley, San José is a highly educated community. More than 35% of the workforce has a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to the national average of 27%. In addition, San José has a highly diverse multicultural population not connected to Silicon Valley, spanning a range of multigenerational families and recent immigrants.

Diversity is more than a demographic fact. San José has a commitment to civic engagement with cultural diversity and the City has adopted a range of official policies supporting and valuing diversity. While many argue that cultural equity remains an elusive goal, it appears to be a shared value in the community, and San José’s culture reflects an awareness of and level of comfort with diversity. Perhaps reflecting this value, San José is one of the safest cities in the US.

San José is big in both population (over 1 million) and geographic size (175 square miles). It is the 10th largest city in the US. A result of its geographic size is that it is predominantly suburban, with the exception of its downtown, and decentralized. One of the overarching goals of Envision San José 2040 is to create a more cohesive contemporary urban community, or as one Task Force member described it, “retrofitting suburbia.”

San José has long compared itself to, and been measured against, nearby San Francisco and the larger Bay Area. San Francisco has a well-established arts and cultural community, with accompanying traditions of arts attendance and support. As 1stACT now asserts, the time for comparison is past. The cities are highly dissimilar and cultural development should be
based on the distinct character and assets of a place, rather than striving to emulate an ideal of a cultural capital. Many planning participants echoed this sentiment, and would prefer to see San José “become itself” in cultural terms more authentically, rather than try to recreate a cultural center that emulates another community.

A Culture of Innovation and High-Tech
San José has a culture of innovation, often represented by the high-tech sector and the predominance of the special culture surrounding it. For example, the city leads the nation in patent generation (more than Los Angeles and San Diego combined). San José also leads the nation in venture capital investment; fully one-third of all venture capital invested in the United States is invested in companies in the San José area. And San José is the most diversified of any innovation-based community; specializations span seven technology fields and foster innovation across disciplines.

What does this mean for San José’s culture? The high-tech innovation culture is merit-based and non-hierarchical, emphasizing entrepreneurship. It is multicultural and “nerdy,” and leans toward participatory rather than passive watching experiences. It is also a highly transitional culture, with people who often come from somewhere else and retain their roots in other communities. This has engendered a sometimes uneasy fit with more conventional arts and cultural activities, and support for local arts and cultural organizations. Nonetheless, individual artists and “creatives” often reflect the Silicon Valley, high-tech culture, especially among younger artists. There is an attitude of the self-starting “do-it-yourself, garage-built” culture and a contemporary approach of “mash-up and re-mix” to some art-making.

Personal Participation and the Informal Arts Phenomenon
As described later in this plan (Support Residents’ Active, Personal Participation in Arts and Culture, page 13), San José’s culture is highly participatory. People pursue a great range of personal arts and cultural activities on an amateur basis, many of which reflect their diverse cultural backgrounds. As described in There’s Nothing Informal About It (Cultural Initiatives Silicon Valley, Alvarez, 2005), there is also a wealth of informal arts activities that take place outside of nonprofit arts organizations and “off the radar” of mainstream cultural institutions.
*San José’s Arts and Cultural Community*

San José’s diversity has shaped its arts and cultural community. There has been an emphasis on culturally-based as well as mainstream arts, and the community produces and participates in a broad array of cultural expressions, such as low-riders, ethnic dance, textiles, and hip hop culture. The wealth of festivals in San José also reflects an orientation towards making culture broadly accessible to the community, often for free.

Reflecting its involvement with diversity, the City has made long-term investments in its multicultural arts community. In addition, the City, through the Redevelopment Agency, has made a major, sustained investment in cultural facilities downtown. It has supported the development of a collection of mid-sized cultural institutions, as well as smaller organizations. The City has one of the most established public art programs in the country, and one of the nation’s largest and most diverse public art collections (over 200 artworks in 85 locations). For many years, San José’s Public Art Program has been regarded within its field as a national leader.

A flyer for King 157, an “off the radar” graffiti art happening
CULTURE AS CONNECTOR

As described previously, cultural diversity is not only a defining characteristic of San José, it is also a deeply held belief. The City has had a long commitment to celebrating diversity and fostering cross-cultural understanding, including a sustained investment in development of a multicultural arts community. While no one denies the persistence of discrimination and tension arising from cultural differences, there is also a widespread opinion among planning participants that San José exhibits high levels of tolerance and acceptance, and a shared pride in the daily experience of diversity.

What does this mean for cultural planning? Arts and culture is a powerful instrument for promoting cultural equity in a community. Issue expert Maria Rosario Jackson states that arts and culture activity is in fact a necessary part of promoting more diverse and equitable communities. San José’s residents share this belief. It was a consistent theme in community discussions during the planning process, and community survey respondents expressed strong agreement with the belief that a vibrant arts and cultural environment is a way to build bridges among diverse people and to learn about other cultures.

San José’s past, and current, cultural landscape reflects an emphasis on culturally specific and multicultural expressions. There are a number of prominent culturally specific arts organizations based in San José. Arts organizations, festivals and events often feature culturally specific or culturally-themed work and, to some extent, this brings together diverse audiences for cross-cultural experiences.

Community members engaged in discussions for this plan identified “inter-cultural” communication as the next step in San José’s multicultural development. Connecting people across cultures can play an even more effective role in defining San José’s distinct culture while promoting greater equity and diversity. Maria Rosario-Jackson identifies three interrelated steps in promoting diversity through arts and culture. San José has for many years engaged in the first two steps: 1) affirmation and preservation of a group’s own and unique cultural identity, and 2) critical assessment of a group’s identity—whether it is a self-proclaimed and/or imposed identity—to help people understand who they are as a group within the context of the broader society. The third step is to begin bridge building among distinct groups with complicated relationships.

How does San José seize this opportunity to strengthen its community? Cultural Connection’s goals provide a mechanism for fostering San José’s cultural commons. A key element is personal involvement with arts and culture: it is the foundation of a community’s culture. This means that celebrating and promoting residents’ active and personal participation in their own cultural interests—regardless of whether that is amateur or professional,
fine arts or popular arts, commercial or nonprofit—is important. But it is also important to encourage the interaction of varied cultural interests to create entirely new art forms and experiences.

**CULTURAL VISION FOR SAN JOSÉ**

The cultural vision for San José, developed through the planning process, describes the vibrant arts and cultural life desired by the community:

> Arts and culture in San José connects people, provides rich opportunities for participation, and fosters creativity.
THE PLAN

_Cultural Connection_ identifies ten goals to fulfill the community’s vision for cultural development. These ten-year goals address San José’s needs and opportunities, and they are guided by the five principles interwoven throughout the plan.

Each goal includes short- and long-term recommendations and a rationale that sets the context. The following is an overview of the goals.

_San José Cultural Connection’s Ten Goals_

Goal 1. Support Residents’ Active, Personal Participation in Arts and Culture.

Goal 2. Support the Availability of Diverse Cultural Spaces and Places Throughout the Community.

Goal 3. Strengthen Downtown San José as the Creative and Cultural Center of the Silicon Valley.

Goal 4. Integrate High Impact Public Art and Urban Design throughout the Community.

Goal 5. Expand Residents’ Access to Arts and Cultural Learning Opportunities.

Goal 6. Foster Destination Quality Events in San José.

Goal 7. Strengthen Communitywide Marketing and Audience Engagement.


Goal 9. Increase Funding for Cultural Development.

Goal 10: Strengthen the Cultural Infrastructure.
**GOAL 1. SUPPORT RESIDENTS’ ACTIVE, PERSONAL PARTICIPATION IN ARTS AND CULTURE.**

Recognize, value and promote greater opportunities for residents’ amateur, grassroots participation in arts and cultural activities.

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“The root of the word “amateur” is from the Latin “to love.” We need to build on that natural love of the arts both as a pathway to new vehicles for arts delivery and to help renew interest in our professional arts offerings as well.”

Robert Lynch, President & CEO
Americans for the Arts

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A key point of this plan is support for residents’ personal arts and cultural expression. In recent decades, San José’s cultural policy has focused primarily and successfully on building a vibrant nonprofit arts community. The greatest gains now lie in building on this resource to better serve the community’s cultural needs. This in large part means focusing on resident’s personal cultural participation, on “doing instead of watching.” Why is this important?

**San José’s Culture is Participatory**

First, it is an intrinsic part of San José’s culture. At least two studies have documented the extent of this defining characteristic. The *Creative Community Index* (2005) found that 55% of adults in Silicon Valley are amateur artists, when broadly defined to include a range that includes informal cultural activities, many of which take place outside of the mainstream arts community. *There’s Nothing Informal About It* (2005) “…conjure[s] a picture of an existing informal arts field in Silicon Valley that is expansive, entrepreneurial, resilient, and adaptive, while at the same time highly idiosyncratic, dispersed, and ephemeral.”

**Cultural Participation Builds Social and Civic Capital**

Second, personal participation in arts and culture leads to positive social and civic outcomes. The *Creative Community Index* concluded that participation in “…the arts and culture [in Silicon Valley] are correlated to enhanced civic engagement.” According to cultural researcher Alan Brown, “Cultural engagement is civic engagement and a pathway to a more cohesive community.” A national *Chorus Impact Study* (2003, updated 2009) documented that amateurs singing in choirs are much more likely to volunteer in the community, give to charity and vote. They are also better informed and report that their choral participation improves their lives and their contributions to society in myriad ways.

**Cultural Participation and the Professional Arts Reinforce One Another**

Alan Brown’s research shows that “doing leads to watching.” And San José’s arts community plays a vital and continuing role in fostering cultural participation. Arts and cultural organizations are keepers and exemplars of art forms and traditions. To reap the greatest dividends, *There’s Nothing Informal About It* recommends forging better connections through the existing networks of Silicon Valley’s nonprofit arts and cultural organizations that already have relationships with informal art practices and practitioners.

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*Lowrider enthusiasts snap pictures of customized cars lifted off the ground during the San José-based StreetLow Magazine’s one-day show at the McEnery Convention Center.*
Cultural Participation Fosters Diverse Cultural Expression and Inter-Cultural Understanding

San José’s diverse culture is often expressed through personal and informal activity. While there is a vital community of nonprofit multicultural arts organizations, many cultural traditions are expressed “off the radar.” Cultural participation supports diversity, and since cultural expression is often meant to be shared, it promotes inter-cultural understanding as well. As Maria Rosario Jackson’s research shows, assisting people to affirm and critically assess their identity, through cultural expressions, enables them “…to step into a diverse cultural commons with a point of view and something to contribute.”

San José has many opportunities for residents to engage in their own cultural interests. However, people are not fully aware of what’s available and how to connect, and there is often a disconnect between the informal and the professional. The best approach to encouraging greater cultural participation in all its forms is to increase access to information about, and connections among, these opportunities.

Short-Term Recommendations:

1. Nurture the success of small-scale, live performing arts venues Downtown and in neighborhood business districts.

   Small-scale performing arts venues are a key resource in enlivening the city with ongoing cultural activities, and to providing residents’ with accessible performing opportunities. Venues could include clubs, restaurants, galleries, theatres, and public gathering places. For example, planning participants often cited having a vibrant live music scene downtown and in other areas of the city as a desirable goal. The development of the Left Coast Live festival represents an effort by the music community to enhance the city’s music offerings and make San José a recognized center and destination for music. This requires support for development and sustaining of appropriate venues, in areas throughout the City, and removal barriers of barriers to their use.

2. Develop a communitywide cultural participation directory/portal of classes, informal events, spaces, venues, etc., building on existing resources such as Artsopolis, MeetUp.com, Facebook, and others.

   Since a primary barrier to increased participation is information, an enhanced system to provide listings and connections is needed. There are resources available on which to build. For example, the City’s Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) provides class listings and is developing a more robust online directory of spaces available in City facilities and the Library Department has a new online calendar. Artsopolis.com has listings of workshops, events and spaces. Facebook.com and MeetUp.com offer social networking for people who share a cultural interest. Connecting these and other resources with the goal of ensuring easier access to information, and greater use of
current means of connection, such as social networking and mobile access, will increase their community impact.

1stACT Silicon Valley, in partnership with Artsopolis/Arts Council of Silicon Valley, is currently planning a regional cultural engagement campaign which would include such a system. This approach should be supported, and the City should participate in its development financially and by making its information available.

3. **Demonstrate how personal participation in arts and culture builds community.**

While San José’s participatory culture is widely practiced, it is not often publicly acknowledged or celebrated. Collecting and sharing examples of personal participation by residents and visitors will help demonstrate the role and value of this form of cultural activity in the community. It will also increase communitywide awareness of, and encourage involvement in, personal participation. An effective method would be to develop a system for gathering and publicizing personally meaningful experiences, ones that illustrate the transformative nature of arts participation as well as the resulting community benefits. These personal experiences can be collected by arts and cultural organizations. Responses can inform programming, marketing and articulation of public value.

**Long-Term Recommendations:**

4. **Develop a comprehensive neighborhood-based initiative to identify, connect and enhance local cultural resources on the grassroots level.**

Informal cultural activity often takes place on the neighborhood level. For practical reasons, people have the closest access to activities in their neighborhoods, and for many, including ethnic and immigrant communities, cultural activities are often by nature home- and community-based. Identifying and connecting neighborhood cultural resources are a sensible way to foster greater cultural participation, and to strengthen communities in the process. One model for this is Big Thought in Dallas, whose Thriving Minds program (http://www.bigthought.org/SubNavPages/ThrivingMinds) organizes neighborhoods to coordinate and boost creative activities for families outside of school, during evenings, weekends and summers. Thriving Minds arose from efforts to enhance arts education in schools; it soon became self-evident that fostering cultural activities in neighborhoods was a valuable complement, and connected children’s activities to those of their families and adults in their communities. It also promotes ethnic and heritage-based cultural expressions, especially those that take place “off the radar” of arts organizations. An initiative such as Thriving Minds is an ambitious undertaking and will require sustained support.
GOAL 2. SUPPORT THE AVAILABILITY OF DIVERSE CULTURAL SPACES AND PLACES THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY

Encourage development and use of facilities and spaces that bring cultural activities into more places in the community, and better integrate culture into the fabric of everyday life.

San José has made a multi-decade investment in cultural facilities. The facilities of almost all arts and cultural organizations in the downtown area have been supported financially by the San José Redevelopment Agency and the City of San José, and Team San José operates a collection of City-owned cultural and entertainment facilities. In line with past plans, the City has sought to create a pathway for development of performing arts organizations through its cultural facilities, from small-scale incubation to major venues. This investment also reflects a commitment to diversity, with support of projects such as the Mexican Heritage Plaza.

The role of facilities and spaces in culture has shifted for San José. A recent study, *Demand Analysis for New Small-Scale Cultural Facilities in San José* (2008), illustrates a change in the community’s cultural facilities needs. Rather than major new cultural facilities, the primary focus is on spaces that reflect the diverse population, diverse cultural interests, and an emphasis on cultural participation. In addition, it proposes facilities that are more sustainable and better suited to current and projected market realities. It recommends, “…projects or parcels that can accommodate flexible, multipurpose space appropriate for events, programs, rehearsals and performances that serve a variety of organizations.”

Planning participants affirmed these findings, articulating the need for facilities that support smaller-scale, less formal, and more diverse cultural activities. These facilities include venues and spaces in community centers, libraries, commercial businesses and clubs, and schools. Spaces can and should be shared and multi-use, which can better integrate cultural activity into the community, and complement cultural activities that take place in recognized “arts buildings.” Cultural spaces and places should be located throughout the city, in downtown as well as in the neighborhoods.

In addition, San José places a value on culture as a tool in public place-making. The mild climate has long encouraged a broader concept of the use of space for culture, and San José’s festivals often take place in public spaces, including parks, streets, and plazas. There are additional opportunities to use cultural activity as a place-maker and community asset in places such as restaurants, sidewalks and streets, parks, offices, and vacant lots.

San José now has a well-developed infrastructure of major cultural facilities. A next step is to sustain what has been built and to focus on meeting the community’s other needs for cultural spaces and places. This means...
emphasizing better use of current facilities, venues, and public spaces throughout the city.
In addition, it is important to facilitate and direct the development of new and re-purposed
cultural spaces, both public and private.

Short-Term Recommendations:

5. **Update the inventory of facilities, venues and spaces, including City-owned, nonprofit, church, commercial and school-based that can be used for cultural activities.**

There are currently a variety of facility/space lists, including those maintained by Artsopolis, OCA, and PRNS. In addition, 1stACT Silicon Valley is currently planning to expand these listings as part of its “Discover the Unexpected” campaign and technology platform, and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation is in the process of developing an eleven-county Bay Area Cultural Asset Map (BACAM) to better understand the region’s cultural ecology. These lists should be coordinated, integrated and made more accessible to the public through inclusion in the cultural participation portal/directory (Recommendation 2). In addition, the inventory will permit an analysis of specific facility and space needs and opportunities.

6. **Enhance consideration of cultural uses in development and operation of parks, libraries, and community and recreation centers.**

The City’s current planning process for development of parks, libraries, and community and recreation centers already includes consideration of cultural uses, and many facilities have been created with character and amenities that are distinctive to their areas and that allow for cultural uses. Including arts and cultural staff, and arts and cultural leaders from the community, in the process would help identify additional possibilities. These possibilities could include partnerships with cultural organizations for development and operation of facilities and activation of parks and public spaces. This is also a recommendation of the Demand Analysis of Small-Scale Cultural Facilities study.

7. **Steward the sustainability of city-owned cultural facilities.**

The City owns a collection of cultural facilities that serve as the homes of San José arts and cultural organizations, rental spaces for community events, as educational spaces, and as presenting venues. These are vital resources for the community. As maintenance and operating costs rise, sustainability can be challenging. It is important to ensure that the city-owned cultural facilities remain ongoing viable community assets. For example, the Mexican Heritage Plaza seeks to become a community school for arts and culture, which can advance the goal of supporting arts education and active participation for children, families and adults. The Plaza is also an excellent common ground for cultural expression and exchange. It is important to assist it in ensuring its evolution and sustainability.
Long-Term Recommendations:

8. **Encourage multipurpose space in private and public development that is appropriate for events, programs, rehearsals and performances serving a variety of organizations.**

The Demand Analysis of Small-Scale Cultural Facilities study identifies the need for this type of space downtown and in the neighborhoods. Along with demand for rehearsal and performance space, there is also need for space to support classes, workshops, meetings, storage and more. The study recommends seeking opportunities to include such spaces in commercial and public developments. It would also be beneficial to remove barriers to such development. Planning participants identified barriers that include access to compliance information, unfriendly zoning and permitting requirements, and onerous insurance requirements.

9. **Explore development of spaces for cultural participation in neighborhoods.**

The creation of cultural spaces in neighborhoods will reinforce the goals of this plan by supporting cultural amenities, spaces and uses that reflect the unique character of each area. OCA and the Planning Department can explore identification of, and development of plans for, such districts. Martha Gardens/Sparta Keys and Japantown were specific areas arising in this planning process. Preserving and Creating Space for Arts & Culture in Seattle (2009) presents a model approach to the use of cultural overlay districts for this purpose.
GOAL 3. STRENGTHEN DOWNTOWN SAN JOSÉ AS THE CREATIVE AND CULTURAL CENTER OF THE SILICON VALLEY.

Reinforce downtown’s current role as the Valley’s cultural center through enhancement of its cultural amenities.

San José’s Live Music Scene
San José has a vibrant live music scene of musicians, bands, festivals, DJs, clubs and informal happenings. Rooted in live performance, this musical ecology enlivens downtown as well as the neighborhoods, and generates community benefits ranging from an increase in visitors and economic impact, to informal cultural participation and education. Cities such as Austin, New Orleans and Seattle have benefitted from support for their music communities, including favorable policies, promotion of this musical community, and support for development of music businesses.

One goal of the City’s Economic Strategy 2010 is to continue to position downtown as Silicon Valley’s City Center. Downtown has become recognized as a cultural center for the Valley, and has grown in that role with the development over time of a concentration of cultural institutions and theatres, festivals, the SoFA District (South First Area), public art works, entertainment venues, a lively club scene, and many other cultural amenities. Still, survey respondents have a strong desire for a broader range of cultural amenities in downtown. They agree or strongly agree that they would like enhancements such as restaurants and cafes near cultural facilities, places for people to exhibit and perform their work, and a cultural and entertainment district.

Town Hall participants identified many cultural strengths of downtown that can be leveraged for greater vitality, including its walkability, and its many arts organizations, venues, activities and public art. They articulated issues that must be addressed to more effectively contribute to a vibrant arts scene that in turn supports economic development and other City goals. These issues include making downtown more inviting and lively, helping people feel safer, and streamlining requirements for cultural activities and venues.

Short-Term Recommendations:

10. Support and promote downtown San José as the creative urban center of Silicon Valley with sub-areas or districts having a specific focus, such as SoFA and the Historic District.

Downtown’s existing concentration of cultural institutions, festivals, public art and other activities has already established its role as Silicon Valley’s creative urban center. Moreover, these cultural assets are concentrated in several areas, such as the institutions near Cesar Chavez Plaza, the SoFA District, San Pedro Square, creative retail businesses, live music venues, and the Convention Center area. Enhancing promotion of specific downtown districts will help draw attention to, and participation in, cultural activities in those areas. Promotion can include coordinated branding, marketing, programming and removal of barriers to cultural activities. Over time, such promotion will reinforce the objective of enlivening downtown with enhanced cultural amenities, increased public presence and pedestrian traffic. Exploring funding mechanisms can provide new resources for this effort.
Special efforts can be made to continue revitalization and activation of the SoFA District as downtown’s chief creative arts district. The SoFA District is part of an urban design framework intended to create a more vibrant city center through a partnership of 1stACT Silicon Valley, the City/Redevelopment Agency, the San José Downtown Association, and businesses located in the district. SoFA has benefited from a range of physical improvements and can become even more effective as an urban “arts place” through continued efforts that support the goals of this plan.

Long-Term Recommendations:

11. Create a facility use fund to increase access by small- and mid-sized organizations to existing cultural facilities, such as the Montgomery Theatre.

The Montgomery Theatre, and other City-owned cultural and community facilities, present cost barriers to use by small- and mid-sized organizations. These facilities were intended in part to serve such organizations but face their own imperative to generate sufficient revenue to sustain their operations. The resulting balance between access and revenue now prevents use that theater managers consider to be desirable. One solution is to create a facility use fund that would subsidize rentals by arts and cultural organizations that lack the means to afford the use fees. This approach is widely used for municipal cultural facilities and even a modest amount of funding can be targeted to serve specific uses, groups, or schedules.

12. Explore creation of a dedicated, downtown festival site.

A dedicated festival site in the downtown area has been considered for some years. A dedicated festival site would reduce the cost and logistical challenges of producing events, and would provide enhanced technical capabilities and audience amenities. It would also, for some festivals, better facilitate ticketed events (some of which are now free in part because access cannot be readily controlled) and support the development of cultural tourism “products” that require the revenue from ticketing. This possibility should be evaluated and planned, including input from the recommended Cultural Tourism Task Force (Recommendation 22). At least two potential sites have been identified, Guadalupe River Park and Arena Green.
GOAL 4. INTEGRATE HIGH IMPACT PUBLIC ART AND URBAN DESIGN THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY.

The Next Step for San José’s Public Art

Over the last 25 years, the City of San José has developed a large and diverse public art collection. In 2006, recognizing the changing funding environment and the need to update its focus, the OCA commissioned a new public art master plan. The 2007 plan, entitled Public Art NEXT!, seeks to align public art with the next generation of design and development in San José by restructuring public art funding, its engagement process and its focus. The plan proposes new priorities that will enable the Public Art Program to assume a more active role in shaping San José’s visual environment, build more meaningful stakeholder involvement, and employ more efficient planning and funding strategies.

Public Art NEXT! is in its third year of implementation and is acting on the following key recommendations:

Short-Term Recommendations:

13. Prioritize projects in key areas of City development: Downtown, North San José and the Airport.

The San Jose Public Art Program (SJPA) of the Office of Cultural Affairs (OCA) continues to develop projects that enhance Downtown San José as Silicon Valley’s creative urban center, Mineta San José International Airport as the gateway to Silicon Valley, and North San José as an increasingly mixed use environment. SJPA can build public-private partnerships to support public art in each of these key areas including the integration of public art into the Diridon Station multi-modal area, the proposed San José Major League Baseball stadium, the Earthquakes Stadium and continuing rotating exhibits at the airport.

14. Incorporate public art in high-traffic transportation corridors and pedestrian areas.

SJPA is developing public art that enhances pedestrian areas and transportation hubs, while also supporting the City’s Green Vision and excellence in urban design. SJPA can build partnerships with VTA to include public art in Bus Rapid Transit projects and with the High Speed Rail Authority to integrate art into the elevated infrastructure of the rail system as well as the station and station area. Partnerships with the Santa Clara Valley water district can be developed to integrate interpretive artwork elements into the trail system.

15. Support public art projects in community gathering places.

SJPA is employing public art to promote community and build cultural understanding, and to support neighborhood revitalization goals. Reach out to community partners, the City’s Strong Neighborhood Initiative program and private funders to enhance these projects and build community involvement.
16. **Integrate public art into the City’s long-term planning initiatives.**

SJPA continues to include public art in transportation and environmental projects arising from long-term planning efforts in those departments, and supporting the City’s Green Vision. The program can continue to develop interpretive and landscape-based public art projects that communicate the City’s green vision at San Jose’s Environmental Innovation Center, its solar demonstration center, and the Water Pollution Control Plant grounds, particularly in the areas that connect to the Bay Trail and provide recreational opportunities.

17. **Encourage private participation in public art, starting with downtown and North San José.**

Acknowledging that the private sector has a role to play in building the urban landscape and supporting a rich cultural environment, SJPA is actively exploring opportunities to incorporate cultural amenities as part of the private development process, including on- or off-site public art, facilities and activities that support arts and culture. This could be through a private development funding contribution. It is recommended that, through partnerships with the development community, new development be enhanced through the inclusion of site-integrated public art, cultural spaces and programming.
**Goal 5. Expand Residents’ Access to Arts and Cultural Learning Opportunities.**

Expand arts and cultural learning opportunities for residents of all ages in schools, community settings, and higher education.

*The City Has a Long-standing Commitment to K-12 Arts Education*

The City of San José has provided arts education programs for school children for more than 30 years. Drawing on the recommendations of a 2007 program assessment, the City began development of a Strategic Plan for Arts and Cultural Learning in 2008 to define the City’s role moving forward in a substantially changed environment. During the course of the planning process, it became clear that the term “arts education” did not reflect the entire scope of the City’s interests and opportunities. For most inside and outside the field, “arts education” connotes arts instruction taking place in schools and focusing on familiar arts disciplines. The focus and the name of the plan were changed to “arts and cultural learning” to demonstrate an inclusive definition of arts and culture, serving adults as well as children, an expansive concept of learning that included formal instruction as well as more varied forms of participation and educational experience. This moniker best reflects the intention of the plan to fulfill a broader role in the City’s efforts to serve the community and to take full advantage of the City’s resources.

The draft Strategic Plan for Arts and Cultural Learning was completed in 2009 and is currently in a pilot implementation phase. It will be finalized and adopted in the 2010/11 fiscal year. The following recommendations will guide the City’s efforts in fulfilling its vision and mission for arts and cultural learning. They emphasize coordinated interdepartmental efforts among the OCA, Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS), the Library, the Office of Economic Development, the City Manager’s Office, and other potential agencies.

*Arts Education is Part of Cultural Participation*

There is a clear connection between arts education and cultural participation. Informal or amateur arts participation by residents often includes ongoing learning, such as music lessons, dance classes, and mentorships in a traditional art form. Many of the recommendations for supporting residents’ cultural participation (Goal 1) reinforce those presented here for arts and cultural learning.
**Short-Term Recommendations:**

18. Provide arts and cultural learning opportunities in community settings.

To enhance public accessibility and participation, the City can facilitate arts and cultural learning opportunities for all ages and cultures in community settings. This would include providing or supporting instruction and participation in diverse community venues.

19. Explore sustainable ways to support K-12 arts education.

To enhance effective school-based learning, the City can support K-12 arts education and efforts to implement California’s Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Standards, consistent with its supporting role for education. The City will coordinate its efforts with the implementation of the countywide Arts Education Master Plan and its partner agencies (the Santa Clara County Office of Education, 1stACT Silicon Valley, and Arts Council Silicon Valley).

20. Utilize partnerships among City departments and programs.

To ensure better coordination, quality and efficiency of City arts and cultural learning programs, City departments and programs will seek ways to partner in fulfilling the City’s mission for this area. They will engage in ongoing communication and identify ways to enhance existing, or develop new, programs in areas such as gang prevention, PRNS classes, library programs, and workforce development. In addition, they will engage in periodic evaluation of the effectiveness of their programs and utilize this knowledge to identify improvements and other changes to adapt to changed circumstances.

**Long-Term Recommendations:**

21. Continue to leverage relationships with local colleges and universities in support of the goals of this plan, including the SJSU-City Collaboration, and seek opportunities to attract to San José new institutions of higher learning that include arts and creativity as part of their educational mission.

San José’s institutions of higher learning are an invaluable arts and cultural resource for the community. The City has strengthened some relationships, such as with San José State University, that have, among many other results, identified new partnership possibilities for the downtown community. There are more opportunities with educational institutions to partner and leverage arts and cultural resources that can be identified and pursued as this plan is implemented. In addition, there may be opportunities for the City to attract new institutions to San José that include arts and creativity as part of their mission and curriculum. This would generate new arts and cultural resources for the community, and would provide new partnership opportunities.
GOAL 6. FOSTER “DESTINATION QUALITY” EVENTS IN SAN JOSÉ.

Support existing events, and attract new events, that reinforce San José’s distinct cultural identity, enhance economic development, and increase tourism revenues.

There is a history in San José of support for “destination quality” events, high-quality events that serve residents while attracting visitors. These are often arts, cultural and/or entertainment events. Policy in support of this interest has grown in recent years. San José’s Economic Strategy 2010 includes the goal of developing a distinctive set of arts, entertainment and sports offerings aligned with San José’s diverse, growing population. In addition, respondents to Envision San José 2040’s Wikiplanning survey ranked “attending world class arts and cultural events in San José” as their highest cultural preference. Moreover, they consider cultural facilities (museums, theaters, festivals, etc.) by far the most effective way to draw visitors to San José.

With “destination quality” events, there is a strong connection between San José’s cultural policy and tourism. Providing a rich cultural environment that attracts visitors is part of the mission of the OCA, which is funded in part by revenues from the Transient Occupancy Tax. The San José Redevelopment Agency’s strategy for downtown includes enhancing cultural amenities to enliven the area. San José’s many festivals, its arts and cultural organizations, and its cultural scene—many of which receive City support—are considered to be amenities for the City’s visitors. Nonetheless, San José is currently not viewed as a major cultural destination, and professionals in both the tourism and cultural industries have discussed ways to build on, or create, local cultural attractions that would bring people to San José. All agree that attracting more people to the city, especially downtown, is desirable economically and culturally. They also agree that the raw materials are available to begin making San José a regional and national destination. The next step in San José’s cultural destination tourism is to create a way for the sectors to collaborate and forge a strategy that serves the interests of both.

Short-Term Recommendations:

22. Cultivate existing and attract new signature events and cultural attractions.

San José has a collection of well-established, signature events that include festivals, such as O1SJ Biennial, Cinequest, San José Jazz Festival, and the Mariachi and Mexican Heritage Festival. In addition, it produces cultural attractions such as “blockbuster” exhibits at the San José Tech Museum. Enhancing support for such events, and identifying opportunities to attract additional or one-time events, will add to San José’s cultural “critical mass.” For the success of this recommendation, events should be supported on the basis of criteria that include high standards of programming and customer experience, and the ability to generate visitor spending. It is also essential to
focus on events that reflect San José’s distinct cultural characteristics, as described in the Cultural Identity section of this plan (page 2). Organizers of outdoor events face particular challenges of rising costs and a more competitive environment for sponsorships and grants. The City can improve event viability through strategies to control City service costs and increase event revenues.

Some of San José’s festivals now include informal or “amateur” elements that reflect the community’s distinct participatory culture. There may be special opportunities to build on this and attract destination events that feature amateur participation. An example of this kind of event is the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition for Outstanding Amateurs™ in Fort Worth, Texas which draws amateur pianists from around the world for a six-day competition (www.cliburn.org).

Long-Term Recommendations:

23. Establish a Cultural Destination Task Force, including representatives of key stakeholder groups, to develop a tourism strategy that reinforces San José as a cultural destination, and to develop projects that serve interests of both the tourism and cultural sectors.

Creating a forum to address opportunities of cultural destination tourism in San José will bring together the vantages and resources of the interested parties. Team San José, the OCA, Redevelopment Agency, arts and cultural organizations, festivals, and commercial entertainment presenters should be represented in this task force. Developing a cultural destination tourism strategy will require a facilitated planning and research process at the start, although it can draw on the CVB’s research capability. A key element of success will be to commit to creating a strategy that meets the interests of both the tourism and cultural stakeholders. The strategy should address issues that include: developing cultural destination tourism “products” (i.e., major festivals and events) as well as enhancing year-round cultural amenities; hotel-based travel as well as visitors from within the region; investing in product development as well as marketing; tapping the visitor marketplace (impromptu spending by visitors on goods, services and experiences while they are in the community); and defining appropriate success measures. Implementation of a cultural tourism strategy will require a dedicated staff position with the appropriate professional qualifications.

Cultural tourism dollars are most often spent on marketing. However, a successful cultural destination tourism strategy will also require funding for development of cultural products and services. This need can be met by creating a fund dedicated to investing in cultural destination tourism efforts that support a return on investment, similar to tourism investment in other sectors. Funding can come from re-allocation of existing TOT revenues going to General Fund, an increase in TOT dedicated to cultural tourism, or other sources. An initial investment of approximately $1 million is a reasonable target.
24. Develop a collaborative marketing “umbrella” for a season of events sharing a compelling theme.

San José’s events can be enhanced by developing a voluntary collaboration among cultural institutions, festivals, artists, schools, businesses and other partners. The purpose of the collaboration is to increase public participation through joint marketing of programming around a shared theme. This is already done in San José to some extent and developing these efforts further would leverage even greater community benefits. Such collaborations are conducive to non-traditional partnerships and attractive to funders seeking greater leverage for their philanthropic investment. With sufficient planning, a theme can be identified that is both compelling and accommodates the diverse interests and capacities of the partners. Programming can include events that occur over a season of several months, as well as single, highly public events that focus attention on the collaboration. Partners’ individual marketing efforts can be coordinated and augmented with joint marketing. An excellent model is 01SJ Biennial’s “Build Your Own World,” which employs an integrating theme. Another excellent example is Arts & Ideas, the periodic citywide cultural festival in Pasadena, which began in 1999 (http://www.artideasfestival.org/). Arts organizations collaborate with universities, local businesses and artists to produce season-long, ideas-based programming. Themes have included the Radical Past (Pasadena’s relationship with radical thought in diverse fields), the Universe (art and science), the Tender Land (ecology), SKIN (cultural identity), and Origins (celebrating the Darwin centennial).
GOAL 7. STRENGTHEN COMMUNITYWIDE MARKETING AND AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT.

Provide better communitywide access to information about, and more effective opportunities to engage in, arts and cultural activities.

San José has a strong desire to “tell its story” and promote itself to the broader region, the nation and the world. While it is recognized internationally as the capital of Silicon Valley, and widely associated with technology and innovation, its cultural assets are not as well known, even to locals. There are new opportunities and methods, based on San José’s strengths, for telling this story and increasing cultural engagement among residents, employees who live outside the City, and visitors. Knowing what is available and how to participate is a consistent need in San José. Only half of survey respondents consider that they can easily learn about cultural activities that interest them.

San José is an innovator in arts marketing. For example, development of Artsopolis.com by the Silicon Valley Arts Council in 2003 represents a conceptual and technological advance that has been adopted in 24 communities throughout the nation. Changes in the field now require new approaches, based on this sophisticated marketing capacity, to foster greater public engagement in cultural activities. People increasingly seek more than a passive experience of “watching” a cultural event. This requires next-generation methods of connecting people with cultural activities they are interested in, and with each other. “Marketing” attendance at events (watching performances, exhibits) is often best when intermingled with personal participation and social experiences (opportunities to meet other people, practice one’s own art, and discuss the experience).

Short-Term Recommendations:

25. Develop a communitywide marketing/audience engagement collaborative, including arts and cultural organizations and creative businesses, to identify and pursue cooperative initiatives.

San José has had collaborative marketing efforts in the past and now relies on Artsopolis as its communitywide voice, along with other more targeted marketing efforts. Given the need for better communications with and among the audience, more can be done both communitywide and in specific areas (downtown) or disciplines (music, festivals). Convening arts and cultural organizations and creative businesses is an immediate and efficient way to explore potential collaborations. Convenings should include a broad range of stakeholders, including arts and cultural organizations, 1stACT, OCA, Team San José, festival producers, entertainment companies such as Broadway San José and HP Pavilion, and restaurants and clubs. Possible collaborations to be explored include e-marketing of opportunities by interest, themed programming, incentives, contests, cross-marketing, sampler packaging, etc. Once the collaborative establishes itself, it may be possible to explore cross-sector collaborations that include heritage, sports, the...
environment, and other interests.

In addition, OCA can build on its current communications, such as its online newsletter Public Art e-News, to enhance communitywide awareness of arts and cultural activities, organizations and people.

26. **Support technology projects that engage and connect people around cultural interests.**

Provide support for technology projects (whether produced by an unincorporated group, individual, nonprofit, or collaboration) that reflect the spirit of “cultural connection,” such as electronic “culture maps” of the community, social networks for shared interests, and cultural activities and public artworks that include a strong technological component (e.g., Unsilent Night, or Show Your Stripes “Design-it-Yourself Holiday Light Sculpture Contest”).

27. **Expand access to training in arts marketing for arts and cultural organizations, including National Arts Marketing Project workshops.**

Quality arts marketing training services are currently available to San José’s arts and cultural organizations. For example, the Arts Council of Silicon Valley provides training in arts marketing to arts managers in the region and OCA’s Creative Entrepreneur Project has provided training for individual artists that includes marketing. However, demand exceeds supply and there is a need for additional services, especially training that emphasizes adapting to changing market realities. The National Arts Marketing Project, a program of Americans for the Arts, is an excellent resource for information and workshops, and local providers in the Silicon Valley are potential sources of this type of training.

**Long-Term Recommendations:**

28. **Develop an electronic, communitywide cultural audience list, building on the Big List and other existing lists, and conduct a market analysis of the list.**

In connection with the above recommendations, development of a comprehensive audience list would be a powerful tool. Currently, organizations maintain their own lists and, although some are large, there is no comprehensive list. Moreover, a whole-community list would make possible the use of powerful electronic tools for marketing and audience engagement. For example, a communitywide list can be analyzed to learn the composition and interests of the audience, and identify opportunities for engaging people in new ways. Also, email lists require permission for their use. A communitywide list allows people identify their own interests, which facilitates social networking, improves targeting of messages and reduces user frustration (less spam in the inbox). Finally, a communitywide list is the basis for revenue-generating programs, such as low-cost box office and other services, and advertising. A model program is the L.A. Stage Alliance’s Arts and Culture Census, which is combining the audience lists of hundreds of Los Angeles arts organizations and businesses, and developing a platform for box office, fundraising, advertising and other fee-based services. 

*(http://lastagealliance.com/artsandculturecensus.asp)*
GOAL 8. ENHANCE SUPPORT FOR CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS AND THE COMMERCIAL CREATIVE SECTOR.

Build the capacity of artist entrepreneurs and arts-related businesses with enhanced tools, information, connections and support.

The importance of the creative economy in a community is well-established. Two decades of national and local studies have documented the economic impact of arts and culture: generating jobs, local spending, and government revenues. In addition, creative enterprises and the jobs they create are considered by many economists to be a competitive advantage. As Robert Lynch, an issue expert for this plan, argues, “…the arts are about growth, economic growth. In today’s economy, arts-centric jobs are core to building a new kind of workforce to compete in the 21st century global economy, one that is skilled in innovation, design, and communications.” San José’s creative economy is not one of the region’s largest sectors. However, it plays an important supporting role in the City’s economic strategy, and San José has for many years invested in its creative economy in a variety of ways, including through the Office of Cultural Affairs and through small business support.

San José’s Creative Economy Includes Diverse Cultural Activities and Businesses
San José’s culture encompasses a broad range of economy activity. Its nonprofit arts and cultural organizations function in the economy as small businesses and their impact has been measured over time. The great majority of San José’s individual artists participate in the economy as sole proprietors and employees, and in 2009, the City adopted a plan, the Creative Entrepreneur Project, to support their business activity. There are also many for-profit, arts-related businesses in such fields as design, the music industry, digital arts, commercial performing arts, and others. The entire scope of San José’s creative economy has not yet been mapped or its impact calculated. Still, supporting the full range of this activity is clearly a necessary element of cultural policy.

Supporting the full spectrum of San José’s creative economy represents a next step in cultural development. Since the 1970’s the City’s investments have focused primarily on building the nonprofit arts infrastructure and this remains an essential policy. Acknowledging the importance of artist entrepreneurs and for-profit, arts-related businesses will yield new economic and cultural dividends. Moreover, treating the creative economy as an integrated cultural ecosystem better reflects the reality of San José’s cultural identity.

City Economic Strategy Includes the Creative Economy
San José’s current economic strategy (City of San José Economic Strategy 2010) calls for strengthening the creative economy through goals that include:
• Develop a Distinctive Set of Sports, Arts, and Entertainment, Offerings Aligned With San José’s Diverse, Growing Population
• Continue to Position Downtown as Silicon Valley’s City Center
• Nurture the Success of Local Small Businesses
• Create More Walkable, Vibrant, Mixed-Use Environments to Spur Interaction and Attract Talent
• Prepare All Residents to Participate in the Region’s Economic Opportunity

“...during these troubled times, the arts are actually part of the solution not part of the problem. The arts are not a special interest; they are an essential component of the economy and an especially crucial one as our nation’s future depends increasingly on its creative economy.”

Robert Lynch, President & CEO
Americans for the Arts

These economic development goals align with goals in this plan in a variety of ways. The thrust of many recommendations is to strengthen and diversify cultural activities downtown and throughout the neighborhoods. Creative businesses are primarily sole proprietorships and small businesses, so City support for small business can be adapted to their specific needs. And there are many opportunities to connect residents with desirable job opportunities in the creative economy.

Successful Artists and Arts-based Businesses Require Specific Assistance
The needs of San José’s creative sector can best be met with a range of small business assistance, building on the City’s current support for small business development, such as BusinessOwnerSpace.com. Assistance can include convening, information, and access to resources, training, and funding.

Short-Term Recommendations:

29. Convene a Creative Economic Forum, including a resource fair for creative businesses.

OCA, in coordination with Work2Future and BusinessOwnerSpace.com, can convene a periodic forum for creative businesses that builds on similar past events, such as the town halls for the Creative Entrepreneur Project. The purpose is to provide access to available resources in the community, foster a sense of “creative community,” promote communication and connections, and promote available small business services. Participants can include individual creative entrepreneurs, arts-related for-profit businesses, and nonprofit arts and cultural organizations. OCA can lay the groundwork for this by developing a list of local arts-related businesses; Work2Future can assist in this effort by providing Geomapping, a tool to locate existing businesses by NAICS code.

30. Initiate a Creative Business Committee at the San José Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Creative businesses currently lack a forum for their sector. Convening business and artistic leaders from the creative economy is an immediate and efficient way to identify needs and opportunities for this sector. The Chamber has expressed interest in convening a group of this kind, including arts and business leaders, especially to focus on opportunities in downtown San José. This group can define its own agenda. There are opportunities to serve as a forum for information exchange and networking, provide
support for artistic initiatives, advocate in support of creative business needs, and assist with projects such as enlivening the downtown music scene.

31. **Create a web-based resource for San José artists and creative entrepreneurs.**

To best support their business development, artists have a need for a central source of information exchange and resource opportunities. One of the best examples of such a site is Chicago Artists Resource/CAR ([www.chicagoartistsresource.org](http://www.chicagoartistsresource.org)), a project of the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs. Content for a similar San José artists’ website would ideally include: a) artist-to-artist information sharing and social networking (see “Facebook” example at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)); b) resources for business development; and c) listings of activities/events to connect to artists to audiences.

32. **Continue to offer training to artists through arts service organizations or the City’s Public Art or Workforce Development programs.**

Based on research findings, community feedback and the results of the pilot Business of Art training program, continued training and professional development is needed by San José artists to ensure their economic viability and sustainability. Such programming could be provided through existing organizations and/or City agency efforts aimed at artists through the Public Art program or as workforce development training sponsored by Work2Future.

33. **Provide a jobs development program focusing on employment in creative businesses.**

Work2Future is currently providing two related internship programs, one for at-risk youth (ages 15 – 24) and one for college students. OCA can assist with the development of this program to provide internships in creative businesses, both for-profit and nonprofit, by providing access to potential employers.

**Long-Term Recommendations:**

34. **Provide access to small business services tailored to creative businesses.**

OCA, in partnership with Work2Future and BOS (BusinessOwnerSpace.com), can provide access to small business services such as information & referrals, technical assistance, business skills training, mentorships and networking. Many of these services are currently available through BOS at low- or no-cost but are not necessarily focused on the needs of creative businesses. OCA can help to identify these specific needs and create a pool of providers available to work with creative businesses.

35. **Facilitate access to group services, such as health, liability and other insurance.**

Many creative workers, especially those who are self-employed, have difficulties securing appropriate insurance and other professional services (e.g., legal, accounting), and information about those services. OCA can help identify and promote participation in existing group services, including Benefit Opportunities for Artists ([http://benefitsforartists.com/](http://benefitsforartists.com/)). OCA can also promote the development of other services, and their availability and use in San José.
36. *Facilitate access to funding for start-up and expansion of creative businesses.*

Micro-finance—business loans for start-up and operation—is essential yet relatively unavailable for many creative businesses. OCA can provide access to such lending through development of a partnership with an existing micro-lender, such as Opportunity Fund ([http://www.opportunityfund.org/small-business-loans/loans-and-services](http://www.opportunityfund.org/small-business-loans/loans-and-services)), that addresses the specific needs of creative businesses. A good model is Innovation Philadelphia’s Creative Economy Investment Fund, providing loans between $25,000 and $150,000 ([http://www.innovationphiladelphia.com/initiatives/creative-economy-fund.aspx](http://www.innovationphiladelphia.com/initiatives/creative-economy-fund.aspx)).

37. *Encourage opportunities for exchange between business executives, government and nonprofit leaders, and experienced entrepreneurs to help catalyze creativity and innovation in San José.*

The Creative Entrepreneur Project report emphasizes the relationship between Silicon Valley innovation, businesses, workforce development, and artists’ creative and employment needs. One way this nexus can be strengthened is through the creation of a formalized “Innovation Institute” in San José. A promising model exists at the McColl Center for Visual Art in Charlotte, North Carolina, whose Innovation Institute provides 12-weeks of hands-on, experiential training taught by renowned professional artists/innovators, supported by a professional development coach and organizational development consultant. Participants in the McColl program include a mix of corporate executives, government and nonprofit leaders, and entrepreneurs with 10 or more years of experience.

Dance club in the SoFA District
GOAL 9. STRENGTHEN THE CULTURAL COMMUNITY’S INFRASTRUCTURE.

Adapt the infrastructure of support for arts and culture in San José to address environmental challenges, reflect changes in the culture, and provide an effective platform for implementation of this plan.

San José has many cultural strengths yet it also faces a variety of environmental challenges to cultural development. Some challenges are financial. The relative lack of arts philanthropy and declining public support has posed major obstacles to sustainability for many nonprofit arts and cultural organizations. The Great Recession presents additional problems in competing for residents’ discretionary spending.

There is an ongoing need for public education regarding the role and value of arts and culture in the community, messages that reframe the traditional arguments and ground “arts support” in residents’ direct personal cultural interests and involvement. As issue expert Bob Lynch notes in his paper, The Arts and Economic Prosperity (see summary, page 45), the problems are structural and local arts agencies, such as OCA, have a responsibility to “make the case” for arts and culture in their communities.

Effective leadership, and the voice of leadership, of the arts and culture sector is a critical component of cultural development. Supporting the people who lead, and assisting their development with training and new tools, will promote leadership needed to implement this plan.

Addressing structural issues requires structural remedies. Changes to San José’s cultural infrastructure are needed to adapt to changes in the culture, and to provide a more effective platform for implementation of this plan.

Short-Term Recommendations:

38. Develop an ongoing, community-based advocacy network.

The needs for public education about arts and culture, as well as for effective advocacy, in the local community strongly suggest the creation of a comprehensive new network. The advocacy network should incorporate both a long-term focus on education regarding the public value of arts and culture, and a short-term focus on immediate issues. Membership should extend beyond the professional arts and culture community to encompass diverse community participants, parents, students, teachers, and other supporters. Arts for LA is a useful model (http://www.artsforla.org/), emphasizing the use of online tools for ongoing communications and political action in a local community. That organization has also effectively used communitywide process to define its agenda and priorities. Arts for LA is the first adaptation by a local community
of Americans for the Arts powerful online advocacy software, Capwiz (http://capitoladvantage.com/capwiz).

39. **Continue to foster a vibrant, sustainable ecosystem of healthy nonprofit arts and cultural organizations.**

The recession, coupled with other environmental challenges, has created stress for many of San José’s nonprofit arts and cultural organizations. As a result, some organizations cannot sustain operations in their current form and need to adopt new approaches in order to fulfill their missions. It is important to offer assistance to these organizations and to facilitate a transition process that helps assure the continuity of their cultural services to the community.

40. **Provide training for boards of directors of nonprofit arts and cultural organizations, and their senior executives, that encompasses the specific needs of the sector.**

The boards of directors of arts and cultural organizations, and their senior executives, face challenges arising from the environment, the recession, and the difficulties inherent in leading a nonprofit organization. There is an ongoing need for quality training as well as new needs arising from the changes in the culture described throughout this plan. A limited funding environment, changing audience interests, and new possibilities for audience engagement are examples of factors that influence the job of stewardship of a nonprofit arts organization. The Demand Analysis for Small-Scale Cultural Facilities study recommended such training as necessary to assisting organizations in meeting their operations as well as their facility needs. Training that acknowledges and addresses these realities will assist organizations with navigating the challenges of change and innovation. The most effective arts leadership training involves both board members and CEOs or a small group of senior executives in both parallel and joint learning experiences. There are quality providers of nonprofit board training in the region, including CompassPoint (http://www.compasspoint.org/), and national resources available through BoardSource (http://www.boardsource.org/). It would be beneficial to explore partnerships with providers that could tailor training for San José’s specific needs.

41. **Support enhanced leadership development, including multicultural, emerging and business leaders.**

Planning participants spoke eloquently about the role of leadership development in arts and culture. 1stACT’s Multicultural Arts Leadership Initiative (MALI), for example, focuses on future and emerging multicultural arts leaders, providing training and mentoring to a group of people from the nonprofit as well as commercial arts sector. MALI and other initiatives to develop young leaders will help provide a necessary generational perspective, and new energy and diversity to the sector.

42. **Streamline the OCA grants process to create efficiencies for both applicants and City staff.**

Because OCA’s grant-making program has undergone substantial change in recent years, it is valuable to review the process and identify ways to simplify it for applicants and economize on staff resources in its administration.
Long-Term Recommendations:

43. *Develop an innovation in arts management initiative.*

As issue expert Ben Cameron states in his white paper on innovation for this plan, the magnitude and rapid pace of change in the culture makes innovation essential, particularly for nonprofit arts and cultural organizations. Innovation in this context means changes in management practice that are discontinuous from past practice, reflect an underlying shift in assumptions, and reflect an orientation of anticipating the future. Such change requires a process of creative thinking and analysis, risk and experimentation. This is best approached through a facilitated process that guides and supports change. OCA can develop, or facilitate the creation of, an innovation program that focuses on arts management practice in San José’s nonprofit organizations. This program should be highly selective and demanding, with a corresponding high level of assistance and engagement. Because organizational change requires a sustained effort, the program should also be of sufficient duration to meet the requirements of an innovation curriculum, probably a multi-year effort. There are models for programs that facilitate innovation, such as the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation’s Innovation Lab for the Performing Arts (http://www.ddcf.org/page.asp?pageid=772), and the Rockefeller Foundation’s New York City Cultural Innovation Fund Competition. These programs combine technical assistance, group process and funding.

44. *Provide support to arts and cultural organizations to increase artistic capacity through experimentation and other professional development.*

Experimentation and creativity are an intrinsic part of the artistic process. While there is funding available for nonprofits to produce and create art, it almost always requires an artistic product that can be presented to the public. Funding does not often support experimentation and artistic professional development for its own sake. Similarly, efforts to build capacity in nonprofit arts and cultural organizations almost always focus on non-artistic capacities. However, as issue expert Ben Cameron asserts in his paper, "Innovation and the Arts" (see summary, page 42), changing times require reevaluating not only how we deliver the arts, but what arts we deliver. Even modest amounts of support for individual artistic professional development, or group/company artistic experimentation, can be valuable in assuring that artists and artistic directors, of all disciplines, can reinvigorate their creativity, and discover new ways of advancing their art forms and serving an audience. Support can be provided for such activities as personal artistic research, artist residencies, mentorships, peer critiques, and experimental artistic processes (including collaborations).
GOAL 10. INCREASE FUNDING FOR CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT.

Address the funding challenge for arts and culture in San José by creating new revenue sources and target existing resources to identified goals for cultural development.

The level of available funding for cultural development is and has been an issue in San José for many years. Structural problems in the City’s budget, impacts of the recession, and the relative lack of arts philanthropy have created the need for additional, ongoing revenues for arts and culture. In recent years, the debate has been about how to divide a shrinking pie. Meeting the community’s cultural needs requires a larger pie. While funding is not the whole solution, it is an essential element of moving forward with cultural development. Creating new revenue sources and directing existing resources to priority needs, such as those identified in this plan, will better ensure cultural development with broad and lasting community benefits.

Cultural Connection is also shaped in no small measure by the City’s fiscal issues. The City has a structural budget deficit and has experienced shortfalls in each of the past seven years. This is partially, but not entirely, due to the impact of the Great Recession. Gaining control of the budget and restoring fiscal health is understandably a primary goal and the City is refocusing its efforts on its “core functions.” The City’s fiscal circumstances reinforce the probability that City resources for arts and culture are not likely to grow in the near future. Sharing in the City’s fiscal cuts in recent years, the OCA’s budget shrank by 46% between FY2008 and FY2010 from approximately $8.3 million to $4.5 million. This emphasizes the need for new revenue sources and for targeting and leveraging of existing resources.

Short-Term Recommendations:

45. Explore a fiscal structure to facilitate development (fundraising and sponsorships) that supports communitywide cultural development, including implementation of this plan.

Many local arts agencies have opportunities to garner private contributions in the community, especially for implementation of a communitywide plan such as this one. Creating a City fund that is separate from the General Fund, and dedicated to supporting the City’s efforts in fulfilling communitywide cultural goals, can provide the necessary fundraising structure and vehicle. An analogy is a foundation created to support parks or a “friends of” organization for a library.

46. Explore new public revenue sources dedicated to San José’s arts and culture.

California cities face ongoing structural challenges to their budgets. While the current recession has reduced their revenues, other factors are increasing costs faster than revenues. This makes it more difficult for cities to fulfill residents’ expectations from local government, including providing cultural amenities. OCA has experienced substantial budget cuts in recent years, reflecting this downward pressure on City
the cultural community is interested in new public revenue sources, especially those that can be dedicated to arts and cultural uses. These include a potential tax or surcharge on admissions (tickets) in the City that could be limited to commercial and sporting events only.

An additional approach is a quality of life tax, which dedicates a portion of property or sales taxes to arts and cultural programs and facilities. This approach has been successful in communities throughout the US, including Denver, Salt Lake, St. Paul, Allegheny County (Pittsburgh), Broward County (Ft. Lauderdale, Florida), and Montgomery County (Dayton, Ohio). Generally, enacting these taxes involves a coalition of “quality of life” interests such as arts, libraries, parks and sports. Because such an effort involves complex coordination and a voter education campaign, it represents a larger and longer-term effort, although it can and should be explored immediately. It also represents substantial potential revenues for arts and culture. It would require substantial leadership, financial investment, preparation and advocacy to garner the support of voters and political leadership.

California poses a high standard of voter approval for such taxes and the proposed initiative would require a two-thirds majority. This means that any measure that passes has strong public support, which would negate arguments that the public does not prioritize support for arts and culture. San José has a history of passing tax initiatives dedicated to meeting quality of life needs, such as the library and parks bonds measure in 2000. The public has also supported countywide initiatives, including a sales tax increase for public transit and a measure supporting the County’s public hospital. A quality of life tax could be either citywide or countywide; both options should be explored. A tax could take the form of a parcel tax, sales tax augmentation or other mechanism.

47. **Encourage private funding for communitywide initiatives, such as marketing and audience engagement, cultural participation, and advocacy.**

This plan identifies a number of communitywide initiatives that have the potential for substantial community benefit, and would presumably require philanthropic investment. Demonstrating unified community support for these initiatives will help foundation, corporate and individual funders acknowledge the need and make the case for their participation.

48. **Preserve the level of and, as funding becomes available, increase grant support for nonprofit arts and cultural organizations.**

The OCA’s grant funding program has been reduced in recent years, reflecting decreases in Transient Occupancy Tax revenues and the City’s General Fund. Grantees have experienced dramatic and successive drops in their funding, placing on them a double burden of less money and less predictability in their financial planning. Especially at the current reduced funding levels, it is important to preserve grant funding, to the extent possible, to help sustain grantees during the recession. Moreover, the need for and efficacy of this funding program has not diminished. It is important to restore and increase funding levels as revenues become available.
Long-Term Recommendations:

49. *Enact a private development contribution requirement to provide on- or off-site arts and cultural funding.*

Public Art NEXT! recommended instituting private financial participation in public art. At present, public art funding in San José currently applies only to City and Redevelopment Agency-funded construction, and to private development assisted by the Redevelopment Agency. Private developers who receive Agency assistance are encouraged to expend 1% of project costs for on-site public art or contribute .6% of project costs to a public art pool. Public Art NEXT! recommended that this private development contribution become a citywide requirement, as it is in many other California cities.

Since the approval of Public Art NEXT! the Office of Cultural Affairs has evaluated the private arts development contribution recommendation. Working with the firm of Keyser Marston, OCA is studying the viability of requiring private developers to expend a percentage of construction costs for on-site public art or to contribute a lesser percentage to a fund that could be used more broadly for arts and cultural amenities, spaces or activities that emerge from this plan, Cultural Connection.
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A set of five themes or guiding principles underlie the cultural vision plan’s goals and recommendations: 1) Cultural Participation; 2) Innovation; 3) Cultural Pluralism; 4) Arts and Economic Prosperity; and 5) Public Value of Arts and Culture. These five principles were identified as authentic traits inherent in San José’s cultural sector through Envision San José 2040, recent research, trends in the field, and ideas which emerged from the community process.

In addition to identifying the principles, five issue experts were selected to prepare white papers which more fully describe each theme and how San José can strengthen the cultural vision plan through its inclusion. The full text of each white paper is included in the Supporting Documentation appendix of this report; a brief summary of each white paper and information about the issue expert follows here.

The five issue experts selected are:

- Cultural Participation: Alan Brown
- Innovation: Ben Cameron
- Cultural Pluralism: Maria Rosario Jackson
- Arts and Economic Prosperity: Robert Lynch
- Public Value of Arts and Culture: Jerry Yoshitomi

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**Innovation and the Arts—a Parable**  
*Ben Cameron, Program Director for the Arts  
Doris Duke Charitable Foundation*

In Genesis (or alternately in Andrew Lloyd Weber for those so inclined), Pharaoh dreams of seven fat cattle, grazing by the Nile, who are devoured by seven lean, skeletal cattle who suddenly appear without warning. Joseph is summoned to interpret the dream and describes the seven fat cattle as seven years of plenty, and the seven lean as seven years of famine. Recognizing the dream as an omen, Joseph helps institute a new policy of storing grain in anticipation of that famine—a strategy that helps the nation survive.

For those of us in the arts—including many who may believe they never really saw the seven years of plenty—the seven years (or longer) of famine are here. We find ourselves going to those silos where the grain has presumably been stored to find the first silo has been invaded with worms, perhaps, and the grain unusable; the second, we realize, has had a leaky roof, and the grain is rotten with mildew; the third, managed by Bernie Madoff, is altogether empty, and so forth until we come to a final silo, finding it at best half full. “Feed us,” we cry, “We are so hungry.” Yet if we yield to our current hunger and fail to exercise the discipline to put aside grain to replant for future harvests, we will starve next year.

This is the challenge that arts groups face: managing the quest for short-term survival, while having the discipline, the focus and the dedication to free up resources to promote the quest for long-term transformation. We—on both sides of the funding table—must together look beyond the financial and address the crises of urgency and relevance. We must be absolutely clear about our values and our missions. We must protect and bolster those parts of our work which form the heart of our successes, even while we must be ruthless in discarding those things which do not—and will not—serve us well. We must identify and dedicate resources to our reinvention. We must embrace the paths of innovation together.
**Cultural Participation**

*Alan Brown*, a leading researcher and management consultant in the nonprofit arts industry, focuses on understanding consumer demand for cultural experiences and examining the intrinsic impact of arts experiences on consumers. His studies have introduced new vocabulary to the lexicon of cultural participation and propelled the field towards a clearer view of the rapidly changing cultural landscape. In his briefing paper, Brown uses this new approach to assist San José community members and policymakers with developing a cultural vision plan that is relevant and meaningful to its users and beneficiaries. He calls for a plan that “allows policymakers and funders to become architects of impact, not just supporters of delivery mechanisms.” He focuses on key themes that can guide the planning process including: the definition of culture, inclusivity with the forms of cultural activity that definition includes, San José’s cultural ecology, and how impact is measured.

Brown begins by suggesting that San José’s cultural vision plan adopt a broad and inclusive definition of culture that: 1) recognizes the many forms of cultural expression that are meaningful to San José residents; 2) values different modes of engagement; 3) recognizes multiple levels of artistic skill; and 4) embraces the various settings in which cultural expression and participation occurs. Further he recommends looking at cultural activity, and the forces that shape it in San José, in a new and different way that better reflects not only the ethnic, generational and socio-economic differences, but also takes into account the role of advanced technology and funding concerns that are specific to San José. Brown suggests that the plan be guided by a model for cultural ecology that is based on conceptual framework found in the *Creative Community Index* (see summary in the Relevant Plans and Studies section of the Supporting Documentation appendix) which acknowledges both the important place that “participatory cultural practice” plays in the local environment and the fact that this kind of cultural engagement is most often “off the radar” and “off the cultural policy table.” To paraphrase Brown, cultural life in San José cannot flourish without support for both participatory as well as consumption-oriented cultural activities.

Finally, Brown asks “how will you know that San José has a healthy and vital cultural system?” While he stops short of recommending a means for assessing outcomes, Brown identifies several bullet points that could be included in an outcome rubric that more holistically measures the creative health of a community, including creative workforce opportunities, local support for artists and other cultural role models, and visible signs of creativity in the community.
Innovation and the Arts

...the ultimate crisis facing us in the arts is not really financial: the ultimate crisis is a crisis of urgency and relevance. ...the challenge that arts groups face...is managing the quest for short-term survival, while having the discipline, the focus and the dedication to free up resources to promote the quest for long-term transformation. ...We must identify and dedicate resources to our reinvention. We must embrace the paths of innovation together.

Ben Cameron

“aware of new developments and changes, and deeply attuned to impulses, patterns and trends” in the arts and how the next generation is choosing to produce and consume arts and culture. He further quotes PopTech curator Andrew Zolli stating “innovation is about creating new forms of value in anticipation of future demand.”

Cameron advocates that a cultural vision plan which is part of a thirty-year, citywide general plan requires a certain form of forward looking, innovative thinking, while recommending the creation of innovation teams and beta-testing of potential strategies. He further reminds us of the importance of making a long-term commitment to innovation rather than merely trying to take on innovative projects. While many often feel that ideas for new initiatives need to be fully formed and proven in order to be viable, Cameron cites Robert Sutton’s Weird Ideas that Work in which he reminds us of Thomas Edison’s adage that innovation often requires “a good imagination and a pile of junk.” Creating new and transformative programs and ideas often necessitates shifting from a producing perspective to an inquiry-based one. To paraphrase, he suggests that the community challenge its thinking with deep probing questions about the nature of the agency or organization’s work, what it can do better than anyone else, how the community would be damaged by its loss, and finally how the agency can adapt, behave and be structured to be the optimal conduit for its mission.

Cameron recognizes the dichotomy arts and culture organizations and agencies face today: both the need for short-term survival and the quest for long-term transformation. One can take away from his work that some of the basic tenets of planning—creating mission-centered goals, developing short and long-term initiatives, and being ready to respond to changing outcomes and conditions while providing clear indicators for success—are just as critical in this new economic environment as ever.
CULTURAL PLURALISM

Dr. Maria Rosario Jackson, is Senior Research Associate in the Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center of the Urban Institute, and Director of the Urban Institute's Culture, Creativity and Communities Program. Dr. Jackson’s research focuses on urban policy, urban poverty, community planning, the role of arts and culture in community building processes and the politics of race, ethnicity and gender in urban settings. She applies this research to helping us understand the role of cultural pluralism and the challenges it presents to cultural planning for San José.

Jackson believes that much of the work of diversifying communities does not focus enough on the importance of arts and cultural participation and the role it plays in “the actual processes by which people express and/or work to change the racial, ethnic and other dynamics within and among groups.” She further posits that, in general, well-meaning efforts to bring diverse groups of people together rarely provide sufficient time for planning, bridge building and implementation to really succeed. In her paper, she provides us with three “distinct and interrelated steps that are necessary for real and lasting diversity to be achieved.” These three steps are 1) Affirmation; 2) Critical Assessment; and 3) The Cultural Commons and Building Bridges.

Affirmation is the ability of culturally specific groups to affirm and preserve their own, unique cultural identity. Critical Assessment follows and it is the process that helps people understand who they are as a group within the context of the broader society. It includes the opportunity to debate and challenge sometimes deeply held assumptions about who they are and how they identify themselves as a group. The final process has two parts; “stepping into the cultural commons” with an understanding of their social standing and history within broader contexts and then bridge building with other culturally distinct groups.

She provides us with five key ideas for placing this work within the context of cultural planning and policy making that is concerned, as San José is, with encouraging and sustaining diversity and cultural pluralism.

1. Arts and cultural activity are an essential component of a healthy, diverse community.
2. For groups that are not of the dominant culture, ethnic-specific activities are essential to nurturing diversity.
3. There is a need, in addition to ethnic-specific spaces and activities, for common spaces in which diverse groups can come together with “equal footing” as well as to host one another. This last space she describes as similar to hosting someone in your home instead of taking them to a generic restaurant. It changes the intimacy of the relationship and enables better bridge building.
4. Arts and cultural activities are important because they reveal the real differences inherent in a world-view that takes a number of human differences (race, citizenship status, class etc.) into account, which in turn highlights the “inadequacy of the binary black/white model, which is still prevalent on many socio-economic analyses of community.”

5. It is imperative to recognize that true racial and ethnic diversity takes time, will, focused intention and resources. The quest for diversity and the state of being in a diverse society are not always comfortable, but worth striving for.

Creating a cultural vision plan for San José, a community for whom diversity is a distinct and highly valued aspect of its collective identity, requires more carefully developed thinking about its spaces and places and the ways in which it develops policies and initiatives to foster the growth and maturation of its culturally specific arts groups and the communities they serve. In addition, it must look at the ways in which it can begin to encourage bridge building between and among groups so that the community can become better connected and fully experience the richness that comes from the diversity that it has inherited. Lastly, it must consider the outcomes of these efforts to be long-term goals rather than short-term projects.
The Arts = Growth = Jobs

The arts are about growth, economic growth. In today’s economy, arts-centric jobs are core to building a new kind of workforce to compete in the 21st century global economy, one that is skilled in innovation, design, and communications. It is critical to remember that musicians, dancers, painters, actors and arts administrators pay taxes, rent, and doctor’s bills like any other workers. The arts are not a special interest; they are an essential component of the economy and an especially crucial one as our nation’s future depends increasingly on its creative economy. In fact, data from the Arts and Economic Prosperity study conducted by Americans for the Arts indicates that the total combined effect of every $1 billion in spending by nonprofit arts and culture organizations and their audiences is creation of almost 70,000 full time equivalent jobs.

Robert Lynch

Arts and Economic Prosperity

Robert L. Lynch is the President and CEO of Americans for the Arts, the national organization dedicated to advancing the arts and arts education in people’s lives, schools, and communities. With a large portion of Americans for the Arts constituency representing state and local arts agencies, Lynch has a keen understanding of the role that government can play in the arts and cultural experiences of all Americans. He has particular expertise in understanding the importance of the arts to local, state and national economies. Lynch provides us with insight into both the changing role of the local arts agency, of which the City of San José’s Office of Cultural Affairs is one, and its intersection with creating a healthy economy and a healthy citizenship.

Lynch describes the traditional roles of the local arts agency: service organization; gap programmer; grantmaker; communitywide cultural planner; leadership cultivator; change agent for at-risk youth; and arts advocate. The character of each local arts agency is the result of the environment in which it resides, addressing the needs and priorities of the community it serves. But generally speaking, the work of the local arts agency has become more complex over time even while economic challenges have required them to downsize, working harder with less.

He describes several current trends facing the arts that are the result of a 2007 environmental scan conducted by Americans for the Arts. They include:

- Sustaining the capacity of arts organizations has become a greater challenge in the last 10 years, with arts production exceeding demand. One in every three organizations failed to achieve a balanced budget during the strongest economic years of this decade.

- Key arts leadership has suggested that the arts environment is “overbuilt” and that there might be a process of winnowing out. While one would expect the marketplace to determine which organizations should stay, it appears that this hasn’t been the case. Lynch suggests that local arts agencies can be helpful here by assisting organizations with technical assistance in the business development and audience development arenas.

- Consumer demand for the arts is changing, as is the way that people choose to participate in the arts. An increase in the modes of Americans’ cultural participation (these include increased amateur arts creation and production, decreased attendance at mainstream nonprofit arts organizations, and changes in our relationship with technology) requires that we look at how to “build on a natural love of the arts as a pathway to new vehicles for arts delivery and to help renew interest in professional arts offerings as well.”

- The arts and cultural organizations continue to lose a market share in philanthropy to other charitable areas. The traditional model of subsidizing earned revenues with
contributed income is becoming more difficult to sustain and organizations are struggling.

Lynch suggests that there are a number of strategies that should be employed to address these challenges including doing a better job of communicating the value of the arts to the economy, and making the case that the arts also have an inherent value to society including “beauty, ideas, creativity and new ways of seeing.” In addition, he suggests more and better technical assistance and professional development for arts organizations and help with marketing and advocacy. He sees recruiting of new leadership communitywide as an opportunity for the “creation of new necessary marketable services in a changing business landscape.”

Finally Lynch provides strong evidence about the importance of the arts and creative industries to all levels of the economy stating that the US Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that there are 2.2 million working artists in American today. The economic impact of the arts reaches into every community with employment for artists and arts administrators as well as all those industries which support arts production including plumbers, accountants, printers and the like. Data from the Arts and Economic Prosperity study conducted by Americans for the Arts indicates that the total combined effect of every $1 billion in spending by nonprofit arts and culture organizations and their audiences result in almost 70,000 full-time equivalent jobs. He concludes that the arts need to continue to make the case that they are not a frill and that they provide both cultural and economic benefits along with real jobs for real people.

The implications of Lynch’s remarks for the cultural vision plan clearly align behind the importance of strengthening the arts community’s ability to communicate the value of the arts to San José residents and visitors, the local economy and the well-being of the city. In addition, he points to the need for technical assistance and professional development opportunities for arts organizations in a time when financial subsidies are more scarce or nonexistent. Redefining the role of the local arts agency could be an important means for ensuring its role in making the local arts community more viable and sustainable in the next decade.
**PUBLIC VALUE OF THE ARTS**

Jerry Yoshitomi, Chief Knowledge Officer with Meaning Matters, is an independent cultural facilitator/consultant who focuses on new practices for increasing public participation in the arts by audiences, patrons, communities, institutions and business. He has contributed internationally to arts leadership, increasing opportunities for cultural exchange, and in creating multicultural collaborations. Yoshitomi’s goal is to reframe what’s often considered a transaction between consumers and arts makers as a transformative participant experience, one that transforms the whole of society, while engaging communities and their advocates, businesses, artists and art managers and policy makers in the process.

Yoshitomi, and co-authors Farnbauch and Lakin-Hayes, examine “transactional frameworks” for arts participation that have historically driven arts and cultural institutions, and they present newer ones which they believe to be more effective in the current environment. The goal with this analysis is to help communities better understand and reveal the public value of the arts and how San José arts organizations and artists can make stronger cases for their role in creating meaningful and transformative arts and cultural experiences for residents and visitors. By using these newer frameworks, the Office of Cultural Affairs can more successfully reveal the personal benefit and public value of these experiences and better communicate the effects on people, their lives and their communities to stakeholders and authorizing agents.

The current Transactional Framework assumes a straightforward transaction in which the arts receive dollars from ticket purchasers and contributors in exchange for arts-related services (exhibitions, performances etc.), public recognition, tax deductions etc. The limitation with this model is that although there are valuable experiences and services being exchanged, they are not fully “recognized or articulated by the participant, the artist/arts organization or the public/private funder.”

Yoshitomi believes that a more accurate and informative framework is the Transformational Framework. It is one that acknowledges that arts experiences transform people, their relationships with others and their communities’ economic and social lives. This new way of identifying the meaning of arts participation is seen for example in participation surveys in which people describe personally meaningful and memorable experiences they’ve had as a result of their participation with arts and cultural activities. Unfortunately, Yoshitomi states, many standard reporting formats used to assess the value of the arts only record the number of transactions that occur (how many attended a performance) not the experiences that each of those transactions represents. Using a new metric can help us better understand and thus advocate for the arts as life changing and transformational experiences worthy in and of themselves.

Yoshitomi emphasizes the importance of understanding the values which various stakeholders in the cultural landscape hold. What values drive politicians, funders and education decision-makers for example and how can we connect these with the role that the arts can play in supporting those values? And most importantly how can we best communicate these connections to those in our authorizing environments?
IMPLEMENTATION

*Cultural Connection* is a ten-year plan for the City and its community partners. It has ten strategic goals and recommended actions to support them. The plan balances the practical with the visionary by identifying short-term recommendations that can be accomplished or initiated in the coming two years, often using currently available resources. There are also more ambitious, long-term recommendations that will require substantial preparation, new resources, and other changes before implementation begins.

Implementation of *Cultural Connection* will require coordination of efforts among the City and its partner agencies over a multi-year period. An effective way of accomplishing this is to convene a *Cultural Connection* implementation team, including representatives of partner agencies and other interested leaders. One possibility is to engage members of the Plan Advancement Team that assisted with development of the plan (see roster, page 1). The implementation team can monitor progress towards achievement of the goals and recommendations, trouble-shoot difficulties that arise, adapt to changed circumstances and opportunities, and organize assistance where needed. The team can convene annual public meetings to report on progress made towards implementing the plan, and maintain awareness of and commitment to fulfilling the goals.

For additional details, please refer to the separate Supporting Documentation appendix containing an implementation framework with three tables:

- Table 1. Short-term recommendations (initiated in the first two years): identifies a lead agency for each recommendation, plus partners, resources needed and initial steps.
- Table 2. Long-term recommendations: OCA will take the lead in developing implementation plans for long-term recommendations.
- Table 3. All recommendations: a summary list of all recommendations.
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