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# DURANGO CREATIVE DISTRICT SUPPORTERS

The Durango Creative District wishes to acknowledge and thank the following supporters. A more complete list of people and organizations who contributed to this Cultural Plan is listed at the end of this document. Thank you donors and contributors!

## FOUNDERS CIRCLE DONORS

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Durango Business Improvement District  
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The final version of the Durango Creative District Cultural Plan will include an Executive Summary. This summary will provide a broad review of key findings and recommendations. A reader of the plan searching for an overview of the plan will find sufficient information here. The Executive Summary will be written upon final completion of the Cultural Plan with guidance from the DCD Board of Directors and City Council.

# NEED FOR A CULTURAL PLAN

## CULTURAL PLAN IN CONTEXT

The Durango Cultural Plan provides a clear and shared vision that supports continuity by anchoring a collective sense of purpose and set of goals. Over time, as leadership changes within various organizations and government offices, the Cultural Plan provides a consistent tool that defines and maintains agreed-upon and collaborative goals. These goals serve to unite, celebrate, and expand Durango's local creative-economy through both long-term aspirational plans and short-term community projects. The Durango Cultural Plan serves as a future collaborative vision for Culture, Arts, and Science in the Durango community.

Currently, Durango has a demonstrated need to increase local government cultural funding. The 2015 STEAM Park Group reviewed the Arts/culture budgets of ten cities and compared those findings with Durango's arts/culture spending. Their research concluded that:

1. Durango lags behind other cities in arts/culture spending.
2. Durango is last, by a wide margin, in per capita spending on arts/culture.

The review stated that the top three cities in Colorado had between \$59.00 and \$538.00 in per capita cultural spending between the years of 2016 and 2020. By contrast, Durango had between \$1.00 and \$4.00 in per capita cultural spending during this same period of time.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CULTURAL PLAN

In alignment with the City 2017 Comprehensive Plan, the Durango Creative District serves as an umbrella organization for Durango's arts and culture entities. One of its goals is to support Durango's creative economy in securing sustainable public funding.

In partnership with other entities, the DCD conducted an analysis of multiple public funding options such as sales tax increase, property tax increase and special taxing districts. The DCD recognized a potential increase to the lodgers tax as the ideal funding mechanism for Durango's creative sector, as the DCD's constituents provide highly marketable content for outside visitors. Together, the representatives of the DCD, DAHLA (Durango Area Hospitality and Lodgers Association), Visit Durango, and DACE agreed to work with the City and the Creative Economy Commission to place an increase of the lodger's tax on an upcoming ballot.

The draft Cultural Plan will be presented to stakeholders, with the intention of gathering input and further developing the plan for eventual presentation to the City Council for adoption. Upon direction from the Council, further development can include more stakeholder input, public input, and the engagement of a Cultural Plan consultant. We anticipate the Cultural Plan will evolve and be reviewed and updated periodically.

## COLLABORATION AND NETWORKING WITH THE CULTURAL PLAN

Another goal of the Durango Creative District is to foster greater collaboration and networking among participants. Currently, key stakeholders include the City of Durango citizens, CEC, Durango Business Improvement District, Visit Durango, Urban Renewal Partnership, The Durango Chamber of Commerce, First Southwest Community Fund, local creative business owners, artists, and more.

The Cultural Plan working group contacted over 60 creative organizations, businesses, public artists and individuals to contribute to the Cultural Plan and attest to the needs of the creative community. Their responses were synthesized and included in the Goals, Strategies and Action Steps section.

The DCD identifies twelve occupational groups within the creative arts. These categories include:

Visual Arts	Culinary Arts & Craft Beverage
Design	Historic Hoteliers
Artisan Products	Venues
Performing Arts	Film & Media
Literary & Publishing	Education
Culture & Heritage	Outdoor Recreation

As part of a coalition of cultural non-profits, participating organizations are each more resilient and capable to serve in perpetuity under the united front of the Durango Creative District. The Cultural Plan serves as an overall plan and vision for the creative economy facilities, organizations, individuals and events.

# OVERVIEW OF DURANGO AND OUR CREATIVE HISTORY

## HISTORY OF AREA AND INDIGENOUS LAND

Centuries before Durango, Colorado was officially founded as a city in 1880, the Ancestral Puebloans settled the special area where the desert meets the mountains. Although not definitively proven, archaeologists suggest that this distinct culture emerged around the 12th century BC.

Evidence of their dwellings such as pit houses, kivas, pottery, pictographs and more are well-preserved within several national parks in the Four Corners area, including Mesa Verde National Park.

While the exodus of the Ancestral Puebloans in the 12th and 13th centuries BC remains a mystery, research suggests that they may have migrated to other areas of the country with more favorable environmental conditions. The discovery of many unburied and dismembered human remains in the area by archaeologists also suggests an invasion from other nomadic settlers, resulting in fatal conflict and warfare.<sup>1</sup>

Research suggests the Ute Indians first sheltered in the Ancestral Puebloans' dwellings around 1300, occupying much of the present state of Colorado by 1600. There were 12 historic bands of Utes who traded regularly with other neighboring Native American tribes such as the Puebloans.

As Europeans colonized the area (primarily the Spanish), the Utes were pressured to leave their ancestral lands. Some bands were able to negotiate treaties with the new United States government to stay on their lands, and some were relocated to reservations. Today, the majority of Ute live on these reservations.

When the Spanish explorers Dominguez and Escalante passed through on August 9, 1776—while the American War of Independence was beginning on the East Coast—the Animas River had already been named (El Río de las Ánimas Perdidas, or rather “River of Lost Souls”).<sup>2</sup>

Fast-forward to the year 1880. Gold and silver were being discovered in the area, and settlements were being made in the area by miners. The Denver and Rio Grande Railroad Company established a depot in the Durango area as a hub for mining operation, flanking the south side of Animas City (founded in 1876). A vibrant downtown area began to emerge and the population slowly grew.

Today, approximately 19,000 people live in Durango and the city receives thousands of visitors each year. The Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad remains in operation today as a popular tourist attraction. Durango primarily reflects three cultures: Anglo, Hispanic and Native American.<sup>3</sup>

Durango is a special juxtaposition of historic Southwest roots paired with lively, contemporary businesses, restaurants, and galleries. When walking downtown, visitors will be greeted by the whistle of operational historic locomotives. They will see buildings that have stood proud since the late 1800s, and they will be hard-pressed to choose a restaurant out of the dozens that exist on Main Avenue. Durango currently maintains its position in the Top 10 cities with the most restaurants per capita in the United States.<sup>4</sup>

## HISTORY OF AREA AND INDIGENOUS LAND (CONTINUED)

Durango is overflowing with many different creative assets, events and opportunities that are always waiting to be discovered by locals and tourists alike. Whether you are visiting downtown, Fort Lewis College, North Main, Bodo Park, or College Avenue, local makers are consistently ushering in new exhibits, products and ideas. Durango also has a growing manufacturing industry with corporations such as Ska Fabricating, Stoneage Waterblast Tools, Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, and Tailwind Nutrition having originated here.

In 2017, the City of Durango held a large-scale public process to discover the community's vision for the future. This led to the revision of the Comprehensive Plan to include an Arts, Culture and Creative Economy section, which describes our town's commitment to "enhance the quality of life and regional economy by coordinating, focusing, empowering, and celebrating the community's creative and cultural resources" via accommodating and equitable policy choices.

## DURANGO'S CREATIVE HERITAGE

Durango has a long and rich arts and cultural history that both history buffs and curious folks of all ages enjoy. Founded in 1880 by the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad, by July of 1882, tracks to Silverton were completed and the train began transporting both freight and passengers.

As a small city in southwestern Colorado, near the New Mexico border Durango encompasses all that is the "Wild West." Our mining and railroad history are well-documented everywhere in and around the area. It's no wonder why Hollywood continues making movies in our secret slice of heaven that is the San Juan Mountains. However, there's more to the southwest than meets the train. This wild western frontier found its footing as a mining town, but decades of hard work, love, and commitment by its community are what brought Durango to notoriety today.

We've seen award-winning movies filmed, books written, and ideas created here. Athletes have shattered national records and made global news from our small town. Humble adventurers have achieved overnight success. From hungry cowboys and daring coal miners to America's most famed athletes, artists, and movie stars, Durango has welcomed individuals from all walks of life.

Durango is truly where the old west survived and where the new west thrives. Making a concerted effort to retain the historic flavor helped Durango become very popular. Preservation and restoration of historic buildings was tastefully completed. Establishing Main Avenue on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 resulted in the preservation and renovation of many old structures in the downtown area. Before this time, private developers made attempts to recognize the historical sanctity.

The Main Avenue preservation has extended to East Second Avenue and beyond. The former Pat Murphy Motors became the home of Steamworks Brewing Company. Murphy's Garage, built in the 1930's became the Durango Arts Center, and the Durango Light and Power Company building is now the home of the Powerhouse Science Center, to name a few notable historic renovations.

## DURANGO'S CREATIVE HERITAGE (CONTINUED)

Home to not one, but three, historic hotels, Durango has hosted a number of famous artists and writers over the years as they worked. At the Strater Hotel on Main Avenue, you can find the exact room where Louis L'Amour wrote his famed western novels. At the Rochester Hotel, you'll find a tribute to Durango's motion-picture history, as each room is decorated with inspiration from a different locally-filmed western movie. The General Palmer Hotel, built by civil war General William Jackson Palmer in 1898, has hosted a number of celebrities.

In 1988 Tony Schweikle, Harry Carey J and Fred Wildfang founded the second Western Film Festival. Today, the Durango Independent Film Festival continues the association with moviemaking.

Named the "Hollywood of the Rockies", movies began being made in Durango in 1917 but it wasn't until the 1940's that Durango's cinema industry boomed. From a staged train collision to man-made Indian villages, films were staged in numerous locations in and around Durango. Many famous movie stars journeyed to Southwest Colorado to perform, including:

- *In 1965, Rosemary DeCamp played Durango newspaper editor Caroline Romney in the episode, "Mrs. Romney and the Outlaws" of the syndicated television series, Death Valley Days. In the story line, Romney sounds the alarm for citizens to fight the Kimball/Sykes gang. Willard Sage played Marshal Christy.*
- *Much of the 1953 western movie The Naked Spur starring James Stewart was shot in Durango.*
- *Several parts of the 1955 western film Run for Cover starring James Cagney, were filmed just north of Durango in and around the upper Hermosa Valley area.*
- *Portions of the 1957 western Night Passage starring a returning James Stewart, as well as Audie Murphy and Brandon DeWilde were filmed near Durango and on the Duranf the 1969 film Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid were filmed north of town along the Animas River.*
- *The television series Cannon, episode "Sky Above, Death Below" was filmed in and around Durango, Purgatory Resort, and Chimney Rock.*
- *Part of the 1991 film City Slickers was shot in Durango.*
- *The 1999 movie Durango Kids describes a time tunnel in the old mines outside of Durango.*
- *Parts of the 1993 film Cliffhanger were shot in Durango.*
- *The 1978 Roger Corman film Avalanche, starring Rock Hudson and Mia Farrow, was filmed mainly at Durango Mountain Resort and at the Lodge at Tamaron in north Durango.*

Film, hotels, cowboys, music festivals, major events and dressing up the creativity continues to develop through our rich diversity in arts and culture nonprofits, including the Community Concert Hall at Fort Lewis College, Wild West Rodeo, The Cowboy Poetry Gathering, Music in the Mountains, San Juan Symphony and Snowdown. The community is very active and supportive of the arts by donating their time and money to support our creative industries, purchasing local art, buying tickets, attending events, volunteering, and becoming board members.

The folks are friendly in Durango and a good mix: Cowboys, Native Americans, professionals, young entrepreneurs, artists, writers, creative businesses and a lot of rugged outdoor types, to name a few. Many community members have chosen to live here in Durango with genuine intentions to help it develop and prosper.

# CREATION OF THE DURANGO CREATIVE DISTRICT (DCD)

The Creative District certification process was first introduced in 2011 under Colorado Creative Industries (CCI), a subdivision of the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT).

This certification process was developed with the intention to help Colorado communities attract artists and creative entrepreneurs, infuse new energy and innovation and enhance economic and civic capital. CCI offers financial and technical assistance to communities that become certified through the rigorous application process.

As of 2020, there are 26 communities in Colorado with a certified Creative District. While each one is unique, there is one thing they all benefit from: a positive impact on their local economy. Communities with Creative Districts are able to galvanize their resources and align creative and non-creative stakeholders to identify, promote and grow their creative industries.

Some Creative Districts have developed signature events, marketing materials and increased public art installations. Some have also hit larger “home runs” with implementation of affordable housing for the creative sector, increased measures for public safety and capital campaigns launched for new multipurpose buildings. Creative Districts often bring in considerable grant funding for their communities and show significant returns on investment with public funds.

Through previously-conducted impact studies and community engagement, the City of Durango found that members of our community are interested in expansion and better representation of our many creative and artisan industries, as well as increased funding for arts and cultural activities and organizations. Many Durangoans believe creative industries are vital fuel for our local economy and that a Creative District is a fitting umbrella organization to educate the public and policymakers on this notion.

## DCD STAKEHOLDER PLANNING PROCESS

The City of Durango had twice before investigated the Creative District certification process and found they did not have the staff capacity and broad stakeholder buy-in from the Durango community to move forward.

In May 2018, Local First (a nonprofit 501c6 organization serving the local, independent business community in La Plata County) convened a steering committee to review the application process and be the championing organization to lead an official stakeholder process. The organization was interested in helping fulfill a critical goal in the 2017 Comprehensive Plan: Form a Creative District (Section 11, Policy 23.3.3).

Local First opted to conduct the “D.I.Y. Call Yourself Creative” stakeholder process offered by Colorado Creative Industries as opposed to hiring a consulting firm.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The first step was to get broad community support and financial buy-in. The newly formed “Durango Creative District” (DCD) steering committee held an initial stakeholder meeting on October 4, 2018 to get the community’s support to move forward with this yearlong process. 60 attendees gave a resounding “yes” to moving forward and many joined various working groups and steering committee.

The DCD fundraised approximately \$38,000 in cash and in-kind donations for this stakeholder process, providing staff capacity to Local First.

The stakeholder process was divvied up by working groups, which are listed below:

- Steering Committee (led by Local First and Bill Carver)
- Shared Visioning and Strategic Planning Group (led by Hayley Kirkman)
- Legal Structure and Funding Group (led by Local First and Bill Carver)
- Creative Assets and Geographic Inclusion Group (led by Colleen O’Brien of the City of Durango)
- Branding Group (led by Sara Olsen of Sara Olsen and Associates)

Over 300 people self-registered their businesses, nonprofit organizations and public artworks in a map of Durango’s “creative assets”, which provided information on where to set the boundaries of the physical district, per CCI’s application request.

Between 2018-2019, the DCD held 33 working group meetings and saw 2,616 individual engagements with volunteers.

# DEFINING “CREATIVE” INDIVIDUALS AND INDUSTRIES

The Creative Assets and Geographic Inclusion group explored the ambiguous term “creative” and developed definitions that felt agreeable with the broad community. Utilizing information from Colorado Creative Industries, they determined that “creativity” is defined by anything that is made or produced locally, whether by hand in or in the mind.

They identified the following categories for our local creative industries:

## **VISUAL ARTS**

- Painting
- Sculpting
- Photography
- Ceramics
- Mixed Media

## **DESIGN**

- Graphic Design
- Architecture
- Interior Design
- Fashion
- Advertising

## **ARTISAN PRODUCTS**

- Textiles & Fashion
- Beauty Products
- Health Products
- Jewelry
- Pottery

## **PERFORMING ARTS**

- Theater
- Dance
- Music
- Comedy
- Writing
- Festivals

## DEFINING "CREATIVE" INDIVIDUALS AND INDUSTRIES (CONTINUED)

### LITERARY & PUBLISHING

Journalism  
Writing  
Publications  
Blogging

### CULTURE & HERITAGE

Events  
Agriculture  
Recreation  
Museum  
History  
Cultural nonprofit

### CULINARY ARTS & CRAFT BEVERAGE

Craft Food  
Craft Beer  
Craft Liquor  
Coffee Roasters  
Farmers & Growers

### OUTDOOR RECREATION

Trails  
Custom outdoor products  
Festivals

### VENUES

Theaters  
Performance Spaces  
Events

### FILM & MEDIA

Film  
Videography  
Media  
Advertising

### EDUCATION

School  
Nonprofit  
Arts & Culture classes

### HISTORIC HOTELIERS

Recognized historic hotels

## DURANGO CREATIVE COMMUNITY VALUES

The following community values were derived from a DCD initial stakeholder forum held in 2018 between 30 community members. Participants were asked to share the values that they believed applied to the creative community in Durango. The results were compiled into the following list:

### 1. We value our landscape and sense of place.

We live in a beautiful and inspiring part of Southwest Colorado where the desert meets the mountains.

### 2. We value our remoteness and isolation.

Locals believe scarcity makes us more cooperative, more resourceful and more conscious of our actions.

### 3. We value our rich heritage and history.

We strive to preserve our city's unique story.

### 4. We value access to multiple forms of self-expression and individualism.

Whether you are learning to salsa dance, become a craft beer connoisseur or are trying your hand at photography: Durango warmly welcomes experts and dabblers alike.

### 5. We value community engagement.

In Durango, it is common to meet folks who are involved with multiple jobs, boards, committees, clubs and creative pursuits.

# DURANGO BROAD COMMUNITY VALUES

As an integral part of the City of Durango's planning process to update its Comprehensive Plan in 2017, grassroots community forums were held in 2016 to develop a vision statement and a list of the broad Durango community's core values.

The following core values can be found in the finalized Comprehensive Plan document.

## **1. Sustainability**

We embrace public and private actions to preserve and enhance our natural and built environments for future generations.

## **2. Healthy Community**

We flourish as a community by caring about everyone's needs and supporting efforts to reach our full potential.

## **3. Environmental Stewardship**

We honor and respect our natural environment, realizing that our lives are interdependent with the Earth's well-being.

## **4. Vibrant Culture**

Our community thrives as a welcoming and creative people who honor and learn from history and tradition.

## **5. Economic Vitality**

Our community experiences economic prosperity through diversification, self-reliance, interdependence and adaptability.

# COMMONALITIES BETWEEN CREATIVE AND BROAD VALUES

Results from the forums held in 2016 (Comprehensive Plan revision) and 2018 (Durango Creative District stakeholder process) show several areas of overlap in core values.

Both the creative and broad communities value the preservation of Durango's natural environment. Locals and visitors alike acknowledge the inspiration and sense of place that our lands evoke, and it is of utmost importance to protect the wild lands that make Durango such a special place.

It is also evident that community engagement is a core value of Durango's inhabitants. Whether one views Durango as a "small town" or a "big City", our individuals, businesses and nonprofits are strongly connected and regularly engage in collaborative efforts. This interconnectedness makes Durango a rewarding place to live and gives everyone a sense of belonging.

Finally, a prevalent core value between creative and the broad Durango community is Vibrant Culture. People in Durango are not interested in a homogenized "big box store" culture. They are interested in cultivating and celebrating businesses, institutions, events and activities that are truly unique.

# DURANGO CREATIVE DISTRICT MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

*The vision of the Durango Creative District is a thriving local economy stimulated by essential creative experiences.*

*The mission of the Durango Creative District is to unite, celebrate, and expand our local creative economy.*

Between December 4, 2018 and August 26, 2019, four community meetings were held to determine the Durango Creative District's vision and mission statements. Between the four meetings, we welcomed 47 participants, most of which were creative professionals and City of Durango staff members.

## IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS RELATED TO DCD STATEMENTS

**Values:** Beliefs, principles, and philosophies that support and shape our culture

**Vision:** What we aspire to and picture for ourselves; our hopes and worldview of the future.

**Mission:** How we will achieve our vision; statement of an action that is clear and achievable.

## DCD DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) COMMITMENTS

Durango Creative District respects and encourages our Board of Directors, staff, and volunteer differences in age, color, disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, and other characteristics that make our organization unique.

## DCD'S DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) MISSION STATEMENT

*To support a full creative life for all, Durango Creative District commits to implementing policies and practices that respect, celebrate, and promote diversity, inclusion and equity.*

## IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS RELATED TO DCD'S DEI POLICY:

**Diversity:** Diversity is the presence and acceptance of difference within a given setting. This can be individual characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, political ideologies, sexual orientation, age, physical abilities or socio-economic status. These characteristics also may include life experiences and cognitive approaches toward problem solving.

**Equity:** Equity is an approach that ensures everyone has access to the same opportunities. We recognize that we don't all start from the same place, because advantages and barriers exist; equity is a process that acknowledges this and seeks to correct the imbalance. Equity ensures people with marginalized identities have the opportunity to grow, contribute, and develop.

**Inclusion:** Inclusion is the act of making people with different identities feel valued and welcomed within a given setting. Longtime Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion educator, Verna Myers, said: "Diversity is being asked to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance." Inclusion isn't a natural consequence of diversity. You can have a diverse team of talent, but that doesn't mean they feel welcomed or valued or are given opportunities to grow.

## DCD'S DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION GOALS:

1. Acknowledge and report any inequities within our policies, systems, programs, and services, and report organization progress
2. Cultivate an inclusive workplace where Directors, staff, and volunteers' unique talents, skills and perspectives are valued and leveraged
3. Create a sense of belonging within the organization where every Director, staff person and volunteer can contribute to the organization in a unique and meaningful way
4. Ensure respectful and appropriate communication among Directors, staff and volunteers
5. Employ caring and empathetic leadership that values diversity and inclusion
6. Ensure equal opportunity with proactive workplace resolutions
7. Identify and utilize change cohorts outside of the organization that can train Directors, staff and volunteers on practices and strategies
8. When practical for the organization as a whole, accommodate flexible work arrangements in recognition of the needs of individuals to balance their personal and professional lives
9. Ensure programs and projects of the DCD use consistent, structured and objective criteria and processes
10. Identify and address any barriers that inhibit inclusion in development and leadership opportunities
11. Advocate for public and private-sector policy that promotes cultural equity

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND AFFIRMATIONS

- In the United States, there are systems of power that grant privilege and access unequally such that inequity and injustice result, and this systemic inequity must be continuously addressed and changed.
- Cultural equity is critical to the long-term viability of the creative sector.
- We must all hold ourselves and others accountable, because acknowledging and challenging our inequities and working in partnership is how we will make change happen.
- Everyone deserves equal access to a full, vibrant creative life, which is essential to a healthy and democratic society.

## DCD'S DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION POLICY:

All Board of Directors, staff and volunteers of the Durango Creative District have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect at all times. All Board of Directors, staff and volunteers are expected to exhibit conduct that reflects inclusion. Any staff person found to have exhibited any inappropriate or discriminatory conduct or behavior against others may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Board of Directors and Volunteers found to have exhibited any inappropriate or discriminatory conduct may be asked to vacate their seat on the Board or committee.

Directors, staff and volunteers who believe they have been subjected to any kind of discrimination that conflicts with the organization's diversity policy and initiatives should seek assistance, in writing and with notice, to any of the following parties:

Executive Director Hayley Kirkman: [hayley@durangocreatedistrict.org](mailto:hayley@durangocreatedistrict.org)

Board President Bill Carver: [billdurango@gmail.com](mailto:billdurango@gmail.com)

Board Vice President Charles Leslie: [leslie\\_c@fortlewis.edu](mailto:leslie_c@fortlewis.edu)

Board Secretary Brenda Macon: [brenda@durangoarts.org](mailto:brenda@durangoarts.org)

Board Treasurer Monique DiGiorgio: [foundation@local-first.org](mailto:foundation@local-first.org)

# PUBLIC ART AND PLACEMAKING

In Durango, public art improves our public spaces, represents our cultural heritage and values, and supports our creative economy. Incorporating visual art into our communal spaces fosters our sense of community and challenges us to engage in meaningful dialogue. Unlike certain private art, public art in Durango is freely accessible to all residents and visitors. This accessibility increases the public's appreciation of art, enhances community pride, and improves our overall quality of life.

Thoughtfully curated public art that reimagines and reinvigorates our intentionally designed and curated spaces is known as "Placemaking". In Durango, we practice placemaking through public collaboration that builds upon our unique assets, shared values, and history. By cultivating public art and designed spaces through a hands-on public process, we can strengthen the bond between people and our public spaces.

For example, the Moments Project Photographs compiled by Shan Wells are historic photographs placed throughout the City of Durango. By placing these photos in the location where they were snapped, the Moments Projects Photographs not only pay homage to our local history but allow viewers to reflect on our past and question how our community should grow.

The public art piece Trout Wall - installed along the Animas River Trail by The Arts Collaborative, a group of art educators and local middle school students - highlights our community's commitment to environmental stewardship and the Animas River. Endurance, a sculpture in the Florida Road roundabout by Joshua Wiener, exhibits Durango's strong outdoor recreational culture.

Durango's public art program is administered by the City's Creative Economy Commission (CEC). As defined by the CEC the goals of the City's public art program are:

## **Goal 1: Enhance Durango's quality of life by promoting art in public places**

Strategy 1: Foster an environment that values artists and artistic expression

Strategy 2: Forge partnerships with community organizations to create opportunities for public art

Strategy 3: Cultivate the community's understanding of public art

## **Goal 2: Build an artistic legacy that celebrates Durango's unique sense of place**

Strategy 1: Ensure a stable source of long-term funding for public art;

Strategy 2: Encourage the integration of art in all public spaces

Strategy 3: Establish Durango as a leader in public art programs

## **Goal 3: Demonstrate responsible stewardship of the City's public art collection**

Strategy 1: Preserve the integrity of the collection

Strategy 2: Ensure an open and transparent process for acquisition

Strategy 3: Promote awareness of the collection.



City of Durango's Public Art Collection. Photos courtesy of City of Durango's Creative Economy Commission.

## DCD STRUCTURE AND PUBLIC BENEFIT PROJECT PROCESS

After the Durango Creative District became officially certified by Colorado Creative Industries, the organization formalized into a state 501c3 nonprofit operating under the fiscal sponsorship of the Local First Foundation. Beginning in January 2020, the DCD organized the following groups:

*Board of Directors: Oversees and fundraises for organization*

*Executive Committee: Conducts business on behalf of the Board as needed; plans Board functions, hires and supervises Executive Director and reviews finances*

*Strategic Planning Committee: Seeks and coordinates with community stakeholders on aspirational projects; engages in strategic planning and visioning for organization, reviews Cultural Plan, works on ballot issue funding*

*Cultural Plan Working Group: Prepares and leads Cultural Planning process to be presented to the City of Durango for adoption*

*Projects and Placemaking Committee: Vets and coalesces incoming ideas from project proponents to help prepare application for Board approval; plans, coordinates and executes Board-approved projects*

*Loan Fund Advisory Committee: Reviews, recommends and approves Creative Loan Fund applications with First Southwest Community Fund; promotes loan fund*

*Events and Community Engagement Committee: Presents prioritized Events and Marketing Plans to Board for approval; plans events, engages in DCD marketing*

*Regional Creative Districts Marketing Committee: Identifies and presents collaborative Creative District marketing plans to Board for approval; works with Colorado Creative Industries and other regional partners*

*Durango Art Brigade Selection Committee: Develops criteria for and issues call to artists; reviews and approves proposals; coordinates with artists, property managers, City of Durango and business owners to execute projects*

When a community member has an idea for a project or program the DCD can support or execute, they are referred to a Project Proposal Form through the Executive Director and the designated Projects and Placemaking committee ambassador. This form gathers more information about the nature of the project, identified funding sources, projected timeline, and alignment with the City of Durango's Comprehensive Plan goals as well as City Council's.

After the form is reviewed by the Projects and Placemaking committee, that group works with the proponent to further develop their project concept and presents it to the DCD Board of Directors. If approved, the Projects and Placemaking committee helps coordinate with the proponent and other community partners to execute the project.

Similarly, when a community member or DCD affiliate has an idea for an event or program, they are connected with the Events and Community Engagement committee through the Executive Director to discuss the proposal. If the event is DCD mission-aligned, it is presented to the DCD Board of Directors for approval. From there, the Events and Community Engagement committee works with the proponent and other community partners to implement the program.

# DCD APPROVED PUBLIC BENEFIT PROJECTS (AS OF OCTOBER 2020)

## 1. CDOT Creative District signs on Highway 550 and Highway 160

Colorado Creative Industries and CDOT offer two free metal “Creative District” signs to certified districts. The DCD Board of Directors have requested an additional third sign to welcome visitors from multiple highway entrances. These signs are slated to be installed in Winter 2020.

## 2. DCD Signage Map and Marketing Materials

The DCD received a \$10,000 grant for promotion, marketing and signage for the physical district. The organization will be working with Visit Durango and other partners to determine the most effective signage displays for visitors this year. This signage will give visitors and locals a sense of place and inclusion within the Creative District.

## 3. Spark Series Events

This series was created at the request of the stakeholders who participated in the initial DCD stakeholder meetings, who wanted to have community events that showcase local creative individuals and businesses, provide valuable knowledge on various topics pertaining to creative industries, and share inspiring messages.

In January 2020, the DCD received a \$1600 grant from Durango Friends of the Arts to pay guest speakers for their time. The first Spark Series event was held in person at the Durango Arts Center and was attended by over 50 people. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Spark Series has been held online, where sessions are recorded and uploaded on the DCD website.

Topics that were discussed in 2020 are as follows: Origin Stories, How I Started My Business, Marketing and Promotion, How To Take Feedback in Stride, and Resources for Creative Entrepreneurs to Survive COVID-19.

## 4. Durango Art Brigade

This initiative was launched in May 2020 in partnership with the City of Durango’s Creative Economy Commission, Local First, the Dumpster Beautification Project, and the Durango Business Improvement District. The mission of this initiative is to promote economic resilience and recovery after quarantine during COVID-19, activate the social sphere, foster community partnerships and engage youth through art.

The Durango Art Brigade selection committee identified objective ranking criteria to host an open call to local artists for paid temporary art installations in the central business district, review and approve proposals, and coordinate with property managers, business owners, artists and the City of Durango to implement the projects. 11 projects were funded through this initiative and were on display for the month of October 2020. Photos of projects can be found on the DCD website.



Durango Art Brigade projects installed in October 2020. Photos courtesy of Imagesmith Photo, Debra Greenblatt, Jeff Wise, Cristen Alexandria and Hannah Wilson.

## CRITERIA FOR APPROVING PUBLIC BENEFIT PROJECTS

In its first year as an official organization, the DCD has been seeking and accepting proposals for public benefit projects from members of the community. The criteria that the Projects and Placemaking committee considers and reviews are as follows:

- Project aligns with DCD mission
- Project has identified possible funding sources
- Project implementer is a local creative
- Project aligns with City Comprehensive Plan Goals (Section 11, Creative Economy)
- Project aligns with City Council goals
- Project can be sustained and have longevity
- Project has broad community support (identified through committee members and public surveys)

# IMPACT OF OUR CREATIVE ECONOMY

## POSITIVE IMPACTS OF A HEALTHY CREATIVE ECONOMY

The priorities of the Cultural Plan are to focus efforts, to identify funding that achieves a shared vision, and to implement cultural infrastructure and social activities that improve the lives of residents and visitors. City support is the building block to foster the conditions that inspire residents and visitors through a variety of arts and culture programming for all ages.

The collective impact of cultural facilities, organizations, and events contributes to a consistent feed of authentic content designed to attract people to live in, work in and visit Durango.

In the present digital and social media age, what used to be “top-of-mind advertising” is now replaced by “top-of-feed experiences”. In other words, the “crowd-sourced event machine” that the DCD envisions for Durango will provide continuous content resulting in more potent marketing. These events can be presented in coordination with Visit Durango’s evolution from a “DMO” (Destination Marketing Organization) to a “DMMO” (Destination Management and Marketing Organization), as outlined in Visit Durango’s white paper on lodger’s tax.

In addition to the aforementioned impact on our local creative economy, many communities support their cultural institutions for the following reasons:

- Communities see a positive economic impact including ancillary revenues from restaurant and hotel sales, as well as their generated sales taxes and increases in property values from increased community amenities.
- Communities receive better social benefits and improved quality of life, greater access to creative learning opportunities across all income strata, and more social opportunities through increased events and workshops.
- Communities recognize better educational benefits from increases in informal learning institutions and opportunities that help augment formal education provided by school districts.
- Communities are better able to demonstrate local support, a critical criteria for grant approval from agencies and foundations that are willing to fund large projects.

# FORT LEWIS COLLEGE SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS 2020 STUDY: "Review of Economic Impact Factors for the Durango Creative District"<sup>5</sup>

## EXCERPT: HISTORY OF THE CREATIVE CLASS

*Richard Florida made a significant contribution to literature when he established the creative class and defines this group as, "Those workers in science and engineering, architecture and design, education, arts, music and entertainment, whose economic function is to create new ideas, new technology and/or new creative content...these people engage in complex problem solving that involves a great deal of independent judgment and requires high levels of education or human capital" (Florida, 2004).*

*Florida considered the factors that contribute to the economic, environmental, and social well-being of a city (Long, 2009). Essentially, there is a formula for constructing a creative city that is viewed by city planners as comparatively inexpensive and easy to implement so long as the given city has the potential for creative sustainability (Long, 2009).*

*According to Chapple, Jackson, and Martin (2010), the implementation of the creative class can be both informal and formal. Informal networks are reflected in organic and spontaneous association of creative class members. Formal networks are reflected in a class with a heightened degree of intentionality and collaboration with city or regional planners. Typically, a district that applies for and earns a designation by a regional or state-wide association is considered a formal network.*

## EXCERPT: DURANGO ART AND TOURISM

*Impacts from formal networks are expected to include more long-term stability, opportunities, and protections for artists. In December 2019, the Durango Creative District was the 26th location to earn its designation from Colorado Creative Industries and is now considered a formal network, aligned with the goals and accessing the sources for designated districts in Colorado. The goal of Colorado Creative Industries is to support the development of Creative Districts to: Attract artists and creative entrepreneurs to a community; infuse new energy and innovation into the community, which in turn enhances the economic and civic capital of the community; create hubs of economic activity, thereby enhancing the area as an appealing place to live, visit and conduct business (Colorado Office of Economic Development, 2020).*

*Specifically, in Durango the short-term goals of the District include: developing regional marketing materials with neighboring creative districts, create an approachable and affordable online directory, and implementing an advisory committee for a creative loan fund. The long-term goals of the District include: the pursuit of dedicated ballot funding, conducting an impact study to demonstrate the ROI of the District, and writing grants for collaborative projects. Success of districts in formal networks is dependent on the alignment with the city's strategic plan as well as community engagement, community leadership, and community support (McIntyre Miller & Olberding, 2014).*

## CULTURAL PLAN AND THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

The Cultural Plan aims to foster the unique character of Durango's creative economy. The "creative economy" is purposely broadly defined as artisanal, authentic products and events made in the mind or made by hand, and includes both nonprofits and for profit businesses. Together, the Culture, Arts, and Science organizations, events, artists and entrepreneurs create a shared sense of place. This placemaking is a nexus of intentional design and the organic, creative process. It seamlessly reflects the unique characteristics of the community's people and landscape. Achieving this requires intentional planning and a richness of events, experiences, and encounters. Even small investments can lead to big outcomes. These placemaking investments can include wayfinding, pedestrian zones, curated businesses and organizations located in reimagined and new facilities, and coordinated marketing. Intentional cultural planning is good for both the business community and the city's residents.

Former Governor Hickenlooper, who established the CO Creative District model, refers to this sense of place as "topophilia", or the "love of place". He recognizes that the community's cultural investments are directly correlated with civic engagement and community well-being.

## DCD GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF PRIORITY

During the DCD stakeholder process between 2018-2019, regular meetings were held between the Creative Asset & Geographic Inclusion group, which was composed of over 15 community volunteers.

This group worked on identifying what "Creative Assets" the Durango Creative District should highlight (i.e. local businesses, nonprofits, performance spaces, public artworks, and schools). From there, they developed an online registry for individuals to list their creative assets. Over 300 assets were self-registered on this form. The group also utilized business and nonprofit listings from the Durango Chamber of Commerce, Local First and the City of Durango to ensure the most comprehensive list possible with the resources available.

Finally, the group utilized the City of Durango's GIS system to make a density map, which helped inform the group of creative "hot spots" in Durango. With this information, the group reviewed potential boundary areas of the physical Creative District that the Colorado Creative Industries application requested.

Consideration was given to create a larger boundary area around La Plata County, but the group ultimately decided to contain the boundary within City limits. This provided an opportunity for other La Plata County communities to undergo their own Creative District stakeholder process and recognize the unique needs of their local community.

The DCD recognizes the strong regional ties and has made several services available to the whole of La Plata County, including the online Creative Directory listings and the Creative Loan Fund (in partnership with First Southwest Community Fund).

## DCD BOUNDARY AREA

The Creative District's northernmost boundary point starts between 34th and 35th Street in the North Main District, and the southernmost boundary point ends at Turner Drive in Bodo Park. The dots on the map represent the creative assets that were identified by the Creative Asset and Geographic Inclusion group.

The Creative District is connected and accessible by car, public trolley, or by taking the Animas River Trail by foot or bike. The scenic Animas River Trail is the connecting "artery" of our town and possesses several artworks from the 5-mile stretch to the southernmost part of the Creative District.

The District incorporates several zones: Downtown, North Main, College Drive, Fort Lewis College, and Bodo Park. Each of these areas is unique and possesses different creative industries that are worth experiencing.

- Downtown features iconic historic buildings, the Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad train depot, a plethora of eateries, shopping outlets, galleries and music venues
- North Main features a variety of local restaurants and shops, the historic Animas Museum, public artworks, the Durango Public Library, and several schools
- College Drive features local eateries, shopping outlets, the Durango Natural Foods Co-Op, and several works of public art
- Fort Lewis College features several public artworks, galleries, displays and a number of yearlong events in several notable buildings including the Community Concert Hall and the Center for Southwest Studies. Fort Lewis College also features a renowned panoramic view of the town from above
- Bodo Park features the notable Ska Brewing Company and several industrial creative manufacturing businesses such as Zuberfizz, Ska Fab and Rocky Mountain Chocolate

A live, interactive map of the DCD can be found at [www.durangocreativedistrict.org](http://www.durangocreativedistrict.org).

# ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE DCD AND CREATIVE DISTRICTS

One of the goals of the DCD is to organize and evolve the creative economy sector of the community. The DCD plans to measure the baseline economic impact of the creative economy along with tracking the economic impact over time through public surveys and studies in partnership with Fort Lewis College's Economic Department.

In this way, the community can track the effectiveness and rates of return of the various programs and funding strategies employed. This economic impact is in addition to the more subjective qualities that can come from developing the cultural assets of a community, such as quality of life impacts, access to creative activities, and the attractiveness of the area to potential new residents looking to relocate to the Durango area.

Durango has a baseline economic impact study from the 2015 Durango Nonprofit Arts & Culture AEP5, that estimates \$18M of Economic Activity and \$975k of "Revenue Generated to Local Government".

The Denver Metro Science & Cultural Facilities District (SCFD) is the most well-studied forerunner of all Creative Districts in Colorado. Formed in 1990, the SCFD covers 7 Front Range counties and is primarily funded through ballot measures that passed four times by wide margins. The 2017 Denver Metro report shows the 2017 SCFD Funding of \$57M to over 300 organizations created \$1.9B Economic Activity (33X SCFD Multiplier) from 15M visitors and 11,820 jobs.

Colorado Creative Industries, a subdivision of the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT), also has economic impact data available for the Creative District program. The 2017 CO Creative District Annual Report shows 18 Creative Districts with \$6.3M in funding created \$262M in Cultural Nonprofit revenue (42X Multiplier) from 5.2M visitors and 1,183 jobs.

In regards to public funding with Creative Districts, multipliers between 33X-42X have been exemplified in the most current economic impact studies. While the data shows there is a monetary impact that can significantly benefit Durango's economy, there are many variables. These considerations include, but are not limited to:

- Support of city government
- Partnerships between the creative district and nonprofits
- District leadership
- Concentration of creative enterprises
- Strength of tourism prior to the district
- Recognition of the place as a creative center
- Quality of food and drink
- Lodging and accommodation choices, along with parking and accessibility

The districts with the greatest impact and the most clear relationship between the Creative District and economic impact are those that are strong on all or nearly all of these variables. They are the places where creativity is part of the fabric of the town. The Creative Districts that are strong in all, or nearly all, of these variables have the greatest economic and overall impact.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE DCD AND CREATIVE DISTRICTS (CONTINUED)

Public funding allocated to the Durango Creative District will stabilize local Non-profit Cultural Organizations. These organizations generate significant revenue for Durango’s local government, even while they have been operating under the severe economic conditions caused by the current Covid crisis, along with marginal public funding since the budget cutbacks of the 2008 Great Recession. Funding the DCD will also improve the quality of life and sense of place for local citizens, while growing Durango’s economy through more robust grant writing and capital campaign fundraising, which requires demonstration of local public support.

The chart below from the AEP4 and AEP5 studies demonstrates Durango’s Arts & Culture nonprofit sector impact. Please note the doubling of expenditures and attendance to Arts & Culture events during the 7 year period ending in 2017, which corresponded to a 132% increase in “Revenue Generated to Local Government.”

Durango	Industry Expenditures	Revenue to Local Governments	Attendance to Arts & Culture Events	Event Related Spending per Person
AEP4 2010	\$9,053,126	\$420,000	143,340	\$22.47
AEP5 2017	\$18,096,610	\$975,000	287,519	\$32.95
% Change	99.90%	132.10%	100.60%	46.60%

Source: AEP4 and AEP5

“To these community leaders, Arts & Economic Prosperity 5 offers a clear and welcome message: the arts are an investment that delivers both community well-being and economic vitality” (Robert L. Lynch, President and CEO, Americans for the Arts, 2015).

Dr. Debra Walker, Professor of Economics at Fort Lewis College (FLC), agreed to prepare annual, economic impact studies on the local creative economy for the Durango Creative District, starting in 2020. Dr. Walker worked with colleagues Lorraine Taylor, Wade Litt, and Elizabeth Cartier, as well as with economic students at The College, to complete the study and its resulting document. Below is an excerpt from their “2020 Review of Economic Impact Factors for the Durango Creative District”.

*In Colorado, there was \$21.6 billion in travel spending and 178,470 jobs in the travel industry in 2018 (U.S. Travel Association, 2020). Although recreation has traditionally been a focus of Colorado Tourism, in Colorado (Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, Arts & Culture, 2020) the arts have more recently become an important aspect of this state with over 20 different creative districts (Hughes, 2019) focusing on such offerings as galleries, performances, music, museums, and local artwork.*

*Per the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (2020), “Colorado has one of the nation’s highest concentrations of creative occupations and continues to attract people and companies focused on design, film and media, heritage, literary and publishing, performing arts, and visual arts and crafts.” The travel and tourism scholarship focusing on the relationship between art and tourism spans many avenues. Some research focuses on specific communities, notably Kimmel (1995) researched the impact of art on Santa Fe tourism highlighting the importance of art to the economy but noting that it is one piece of the “tourism picture” (p. 30).*

## ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE DCD AND CREATIVE DISTRICTS (CONTINUED)

Other research focuses on specific areas of the arts such as creativity (Richards, 2011) suggesting that “tourism has itself become a creative arena” (p. 1,227) where the development of creative spaces is often aimed toward gaining a competitive advantage.

However, specifically helpful in making decisions regarding art in Durango, several scholars make recommendations to decision-makers focused on marketing and developing art areas. Kimmel (1995) suggests areas interested in emphasizing art: (1) become an “authentic art center” with working artists not just galleries, (2) must have a “context for pedestrian browsing” with the area being favorable for looking, and (3) promote the area in two markets – art collectors and “visitors who are not primarily interested in art, but who are attracted to the ambience that accompanies an art district” (p. 30).

Further, other scholars note mistakes that impact communities interested in a focus on art that should be taken into consideration. For example, Markusen and Gadwa (2010) offer that, “Decision makers often favor ephemeral tourists over their own residents as patrons, overinvest in large-scale arts facilities that may become expensive white elephants in the longer run, focus on particular districts (and the real estate interests that have a stake in them) rather than the mosaic of offerings that already exist, and fail to build decision-making frameworks where artists, smaller scale arts organizations, and a multiplicity of distinctive cultural communities can participate in cultural planning” (p. 11).

From this research, we can deduce that arts and tourism are intertwined, but the way in which arts are supported and structured within communities impacts the success of the community’s focus.

## OTHER ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF CREATIVE DISTRICTS

- Rural arts organizations draw more non-local audiences to their venues and report greater civic leadership and customer connectedness than their urban peers. Those visitors spend money on admissions, parking, dining, etc. adding to the local economy. (Rural Arts, Design, and Innovation in America 2017 report)
- Two-thirds of all businesses (rural and urban) consider having local arts and entertainment organizations important for attracting workers. (Rural Arts, Design, and Innovation in America 2017 report)
- Rural counties that host performing arts organizations tend to have greater population growth and residents that are better educated and earn higher incomes than residents of other rural counties. (Rural Arts, Design, and Innovation in America 2017 report)
- Two out of three rural businesses report that arts and entertainment are important to attracting and retaining workers (National Governors Association Rural Prosperity through the Arts & Creative Sector 2019 report)

## ECONOMIC TESTIMONIALS FROM CO. CREATIVE DISTRICTS

- The town manager of Mancos, Colorado (pop. 1,400) said that since the district was implemented, they have seen sales tax raise by approximately \$600,000. Though approximately \$250,000 of this increase is attributed to marijuana sales and the rest is spread among other businesses, it is the creative district that has brought attention and activity to the area.

- In Trinidad, Colorado (pop. 9,000), between 2013 (when they received their designation as a Creative District) and 2016, the retail vacancy rate in downtown decreased from over 60% to 20%. Additionally, the average sale price of residential properties increased to 40%. Unlike Mancos, Trinidad is unable to host marijuana shops in the downtown area because of school zoning. This situation provides evidence of a direct connection between the economic growth and the investments in placemaking in Corazon de Trinidad (Creative District).

- Ridgway, CO (pop. 1,016) Creative District reports over \$11 million dollars earned in grant funding alone since they became certified in 2010. In addition to leveraging the Main Street program to transform their downtown area, they were selected to be a pilot town for the Space to Create program. This program is building affordable housing complexes that will house 26 studios, one-bedrooms and two-bedrooms.<sup>6</sup>

## CREATIVE ECONOMY FUNDING SOURCES

Until 2008, the City of Durango allocated annual funding to local, cultural nonprofits through the City's General Fund, which is primarily supported through City sales tax revenue. Some of the more prominent cultural organizations such as the Durango Arts Center and the Community Concert Hall at Fort Lewis College received up to \$100,000 annually. Unfortunately, the 2008 economic recession forced the City to make budget cuts, leading to reductions in funding for cultural non-profits. The recession demonstrated that general fund requests are subject to economic fluctuations and competing City services, creating a need for an organized and sustainable funding stream.

To support the formation of a Creative District in Durango, a group of business, non-profit, civic, and community leaders formed the Durango Creative District Steering Committee. This Committee, which was initially under the umbrella of the Local First Foundation, raised funds locally to support creative projects and submit an application to the Colorado Creative Industries for state certification. Due to the hard work, time, and vision of these community leaders, the Colorado Creative Industries certified the Durango Creative District and provided \$10,000 in seed funding to help jumpstart the new organization.

Following this certification, the City of Durango invested \$40,000 into the Durango Creative District in 2020, helping support the operations and activities of the newly-formed organization. This source of local funding came from the City's general fund and was approved by a City Council vote on the 2020 budget. These two sources of funding - \$10,000 from the state and \$40,000 from the City - along with local donations have been the primary source of revenue for the DCD in its early stage.

## CREATIVE ECONOMY FUNDING SOURCES (CONTINUED)

There are ample opportunities for the Durango Creative District to pursue grants and other sources of funding. At the state level, the Colorado Creative Industries (CCI) is the most prominent grant provider for Colorado Creative Districts and artists. CCI created new grants and changed existing ones due to COVID-19. However, this section will focus on the permanent and most impactful CCI grants, including:

**Project and technical assistance fund for Certified Creative Districts:** This grant provides support to advance strategic goals in Certified Creative Districts

**Colorado Creates Grant:** This program provides operating support for organizations and communities to produce arts and cultural activities that equitably benefit residents across the state

**Career Advancement Grant:** This matching grant provides up to \$2,500 to support Colorado creative entrepreneurs and artists to help stimulate their commercial creative businesses

**Arts in Society:** This grant is designed to foster cross-sector work through the arts by supporting the integration of arts and culture into multiple disciplines critical to the health and well-being of Coloradans

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs and the Colorado Tourism Office (DOLA) also provides small grants that support creative organizations and placemaking efforts. At the federal level, the National Endowment of Arts (NEA) awards matching grants to nonprofit organizations, regional and local arts organizations in support of arts projects across the country. The City of Durango's Creative Economy Commission has received NEA grant funding in the past that's helped finance new public art projects.

Additionally, there are several foundations such as the Boettcher Foundation and the Gates Foundation that provide grant funding and technical support to non-profit arts organizations. The Durango Creative District has already begun to search for and submit grant applications from various government and institutional organizations in 2020.

# CRITICAL NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE FUNDING AND PROPOSED LODGERS TAX INCREASE

The City of Durango's Creative Economy Commission (CEC), formerly known as the Public Art Commission, receives funding from the City to support the arts, culture and creative economy. The CEC has provided small grants – generally around \$3,000 - to the Durango Creative District to support the Empty Store Front and Durango Art Brigade projects. However, the CEC, like many public art agencies across the nation, has seen drastic budget cuts due to the impact of COVID-19 on city finances. Prior to COVID-19, the CEC has also faced inconsistencies in funding each year.

This demonstration of the need for sustainable fiscal support is why the Durango Creative District is pursuing funding through an increase in the lodgers tax. The DCD is seeking a 1% increase that could result in approximately \$500,000 in 2023 (see associated budgets for detail). A dedicated funding stream through the lodgers tax can help to protect the local creative economy, as well as the arts and culture organizations, from economic fluctuations. This approach can add resilience to the economy. The revenue from the lodgers tax, that is paid by visitors to Durango, would go towards local cultural facilities, organizations, and events in Durango. The allocation of the lodgers tax in this manner would help increase visitation and support our larger economy. The stakeholders respectfully request that City Council place the proposed increase on the April 2021 ballot.

The majority of the Cultural funding from the lodgers tax will support the Cultural Block grant program. The remaining funds will support the Creative Economy Commission for Durango's Public Art Program and the operations of the Durango Creative District. The Cultural Block grant will then be disbursed, as a pass-through grant, to local Cultural facilities, organizations, and events. The intent of the Cultural Block grant is to drive visitation and create a better Durango experience.

The recipient organizations will receive only a small percentage (7% to 8%) of their annual budget from their Cultural Block grant. For example, the Powerhouse Science Center will receive approximately 7% to 8% of their budget from the grant, leaving the organization responsible for the remaining 92%. By comparison, the average US Science Center receives 28% of their budget from public support. Funding Durango's Cultural organizations at the suggested rate is both modest and extremely helpful. This level of funding will stabilize the organization while preserving their fiscal responsibility. The recipient nonprofit organizations will remain responsible for the vast majority of their revenue.

The Creative Economy Commission and the Durango Creative District both strongly advocate that 1% of the lodgers tax be allocated in the above manner. Given the large number of organizations and their need for public funding, we feel that a 1/2% allocation, as suggested by DAHLA, will be inadequate. The 1% allocation will contribute greatly to the stabilization and the success of this important sector of Durango's economy, while helping to drive visitation.

# CONNECTION TO APPROVED CITY & DCD PLANS

While the Cultural Plan for Durango will identify the community's cultural resources and strengthen the management of those resources, it is not an exclusive document. There are other City documents that provide cultural reference information and oversight. These documents include the City's 2017 Comprehensive Plan and the 1990 Historic Preservation Plan. This Cultural Plan will compliment these City Council adopted documents.

In 2017, the City of Durango adopted a new Comprehensive Plan. Per Article VIII Section 1 of the City's Adopted Charter, "The council shall adopt and may from time to time modify a comprehensive plan, which may be integrated into the plans of other governments, and which shall set forth policies concerning the future development of lands, public facilities, and public services." and "The comprehensive plan shall serve as a guide for all future council action concerning land use and development regulations and expenditures for capital improvements."

The 2017 Comprehensive Plan reflects a shared community vision of Durango's future through 2040, and guides decision-makers towards that vision through goals and implementation strategies. As part of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan process, the City hired a consultant to help create the first Arts, Culture and Creative Economy element of the Comprehensive Plan. This element defines the City's roles in supporting the creative economy and its contributions to the local culture.

The goal of the Arts, Culture and Creative Economy element is to "Enhance the quality of life and regional economy by coordinating, focusing, empowering, and celebrating the community's creative and cultural resources." This is accomplished through the following objectives:

**Objective 23.1** Creativity as a Community Resource: Advance understandings of the ways the cultural and creative sectors contribute to the community fabric, economy, and well-being of the people of Durango and the region; strategically apply this knowledge in ongoing decision-making.

**Objective 23.2** A Naturally Creative and Welcoming Community: Foster and promote an internal and external brand identity grounded in Durango's breadth of cultural activities, wealth of creative people, and welcoming nature.

**Objective 23.3** Communicate, Convene, Collaborate: Develop a more collaborative and engaged creative and cultural sector capable of marshaling its resources for the improvement of the wider community.

**Objective 23.4** Space to Make and Partake: Improve and expand facilities and spaces needed for creative and cultural activities, artist live/work spaces, and for support of arts and cultural organizations.

**Objective 23.5** Stories of Place and Legacies: Expand the City Public Art Program to recognize and tell stories of the City's geology, diversity, heritage, and aspirations in meaningful places across the City.

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

In 1990, the City of Durango adopted a Historic Preservation Plan. The purpose of this plan is to preserve Durango's History by addressing historic resources within the City of Durango and determining the necessary actions to preserve historically important properties.

The plan includes the following goals:

1. Create and support continuous methods of historic preservation in Durango to protect and enhance our City's character for both residents and visitors.
2. Provide educational opportunities to increase public appreciation of Durango's unique heritage.
3. Encourage methods to enhance property values of historically significant properties and to contribute to Durango's economic prosperity.
4. Investigate and implement the best methods possible for incorporating Durango's past into the future.
5. Support comprehensive, responsible planning practices involving preservation of historic resources, and coordination with the stated preservation objectives of the Durango Comprehensive Plan.
6. Meet the requirements necessary to obtain certified local government status to qualify for state and federal assistance.

# GOALS, STRATEGIES AND ACTION STEPS

This section of the DCD Cultural Plan details the primary goals, strategies and action steps recommended to support creative professionals, creative organizations and expand Durango's creative economy. The GOALS are the primary and overarching objectives we want to achieve during the 2020 - 2025 period. The STRATEGIES are major supportive steps to the goals in order to accomplish our desired outcomes. The ACTION STEPS are detailed tactics to specifically support and accomplish the higher level objectives. Taken together in a building and pyramidal form we believe our Cultural Plan can have the maximum positive impact on arts and culture in Durango.

## KEY GOALS

- 1 Support Local Cultural Organizations**
- 2 Expand Art Displayed in Public Spaces and Business Locations**
- 3 Create and Enhance Performance Venues, Creative Work/Live and Rehearsal Spaces**
- 4 Promote our Creative Economy**
- 5 Emphasize and Celebrate Diversity and Local Heritage**
- 6 Support Creative Professionals**
- 7 Advance Civic and Community Dialogue on Creative Matters**

# 1

## SUPPORT LOCAL CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations in the region with a mission of supporting and expanding creative activities and culture are the backbone of Durango's creative economy. The goal of "Supporting Local Cultural Organizations" is central to helping our individual artists, creative organizations and Durango's creative economy, especially as we handle and emerge from the results of the COVID-19 pandemic. This goal is the foundation of the Cultural Plan and leads to success with all other goals.

### **Provide direct financial support**

1. Locate long-term, sustainable funding for cultural organizations
  - A. Research and support relevant ballot measures
  - B. Assist with creation and management of cultural block grant funds
  - C. Fundraise for and manage a DCD fund for arts and culture activities and public benefit projects

### **Provide resources and guidance for financial assistance**

1. Assist with research and applications for grants supporting cultural partners and the City of Durango
2. Share unique and individual funding opportunities with cultural organizations
  - A. Become the information clearinghouse through personal connections, DCD newsletter, social media and web resources

### **Provide broad educational opportunities**

1. Educate the Durango community on the importance of cultural activity and the economic benefits of this sector
2. Educate cultural entrepreneurs and leaders on business development
  - A. Partner with organizations on collaborative business development trainings

### **Take every step possible to support and reduce the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Durango's creative organizations**

1. Become a central source of information for recovery and business resources
  - A. List all state, regional and local resources on DCD website
2. Identify hardships among creative community
  - A. Gather information through surveys
  - B. Target DCD assistance and support

3. Maximize Creative Loan Fund with First Southwest Community Fund
  - A. Encourage applications for this low-interest rate loan to help creative business owners and nonprofits bring in cash flow
  
4. Institute emergency business programs for creative business owners and nonprofit institutions
  - A. Share SCAPE, Community Foundation and SW Colorado Small Business Development Center programs
  - B. Develop apprenticeship and mentorship programs between local creative business owners, nonprofits and creative individuals
  
5. Advocate for safety measures and adjustments that can help creative businesses and nonprofits survive
  - A. Encourage the downtown bump-outs as a long-term sustainable option for the future
  - B. Work to help develop outdoor gallery and display spaces
  - C. Share resources on how to start and maintain e-commerce websites
  - D. Connect local business with resources on how to safely hold events in congruence with State and City/County Health Organizations' recommendations

*Potential allied Organizations: Community Foundation Serving SW Colorado, Creative Economy Commission, SW Colorado Small Business Development Center, Community Resource Center, Visit Durango, Durango Business Improvement District, SCAPE*



## **EXPAND ART DISPLAYED IN PUBLIC SPACES AND BUSINESS LOCATIONS**

Art displays are both the physical evidence of a healthy and vibrant creative economy as well important outlets for artists. Durango residents who support the arts also enjoy community art, whether in public spaces or private businesses. The DCD supports a goal of working with the Creative Economy Commission (CEC) to expand art displays throughout our community.

**Partner with the City of Durango’s Creative Economy Commission (CEC) to support their mission to “enhance the quality of life and regional economy by supporting, empowering and celebrating the community’s cultural resources through public art, economic development, advocacy and education”**

1. Continue to distinguish and communicate to the public the roles and responsibilities of CEC and DCD
2. Resolve and present to City of Durango the distinct allocations and overlaps between CEC and DCD budgets and spending
3. Gain CEC approval of public DCD art and infrastructure projects
4. Work with CEC to update Public Art Master Plan (2007) for Durango
5. Work with CEC to develop maintenance plan criteria for public art
6. Include CEC in proposed lodgers tax discussions
7. Work with CEC and other partners to continue public benefit programs (examples: Empty Storefront Project and Durango Art Brigade)
8. Work with CEC to highlight local art installations through DCD website, newsletter and social media
9. Explore local georeference app for public art installations

**Work with real estate developers, existing businesses and public spaces to encourage implementation of art in development projects**

1. Maintain and share a database of working local artists available for art projects
2. Work with the Durango Chamber of Commerce to connect business owners with artists

**Partner with the City of Durango’s Creative Economy Commission (CEC) to support their mission to “enhance the quality of life and regional economy by supporting, empowering and celebrating the community’s cultural resources through public art, economic development, advocacy and education”**

1. Continue to distinguish and communicate to the public the roles and responsibilities of CEC and DCD
2. Resolve and present to City of Durango the distinct allocations and overlaps between CEC and DCD budgets and spending

*Potential allied organizations: Creative Economy Commission, Durango Chamber of Commerce, Colorado Creative Industries, Durango Architect Community, Smiley Building, Commercial Contractors, Parks and Recreation Department*

# 3

## **CREATE AND ENHANCE PERFORMANCE VENUES, CREATIVE WORK/LIVE AND REHEARSAL SPACES**

We recognize the dearth of performance venues, rehearsal spaces, creative work and meeting spaces, and affordable living spaces in Durango. We all need our place to express, create, think, prepare and perform. Durango's healthy creative economy demands more abundant, affordable and available space for creative professionals. Recognizing that Durango suffers from a significant shortage of these creative spaces, the DCD seeks to make more of these places available in varied and useful forms.

### **Create association between leaders of existing performance venues with the goal of sharing ideas, determining best practices, maximizing facility use and creating efficiencies**

1. Include City of Durango, Durango Arts Center, Durango Mesa Park, Community Concert Hall at Fort Lewis College, Stillwater Music, James Ranch, Purgatory Resort, Animas City Theatre, Powerhouse Plaza and other performance venues
  - A. DCD to serve as organizer and facilitator
  - B. Exchange ideas for collaboration and growth
  - C. Identify inventory of various venues and their offerings
  - D. Include Durango Arts, Conference and Events Center (DACE) working group and new proposed venue spaces in discussions about performance venue community's needs and concerns

### **Support the creation of flexible, multi-use community performance and rehearsal spaces**

1. Consult with local performing artists and performing arts organizations to identify essential needs for performance venues and rehearsal spaces
2. Participate in potential feasibility studies
3. Partner with the City of Durango and other organizations to locate potential sites suitable for creation of multi-use performance venues and rehearsal spaces
4. Support grant-writing and other fundraising efforts in support of the creation of performance venues and rehearsal spaces
5. Actively seek out partners to assess needs, vision, design and develop suitable multi-use performance and rehearsal spaces

### **Create association between leaders of existing creative work spaces with the goal of sharing ideas, determining best practices, maximizing facility use and creating efficiencies**

1. Include Durango Space, R Space, Smiley Building, and other work spaces
  - A. DCD to serve as organizer and facilitator
  - B. Exchange ideas for collaboration and growth

C. Identify inventory of various venues and their offerings

**Support the creation of Public Benefit Projects such as work/live spaces, placemaking infrastructure and public amenities**

1. Participate in feasibility studies and funding for redevelopment and infill projects, such as work/live spaces, pedestrian friendly commerce areas, performance venues, etc.
2. Work with the City of Durango and the Urban Renewal Partnership to research feasible sites for work/live spaces
3. Advocate for affordable work/live spaces
  - A. Work with developers and identify funding sources to support creation of creative work/live spaces
  - B. Share impact studies from other successful work/live sites with community (examples: Trinidad Creative District and Ridgway Creative District)
4. Advocate for equitable subsidized artist work spaces and residencies (example: ArtSpace's Space to Create Colorado Grant initiative)

*Potential allied organizations: ArtSpace, City of Durango, Home Builders Association of Southwest Colorado, Durango Area Association of Realtors, Durango Mesa Park, Community Concert Hall at Fort Lewis College, Stillwater Music, James Ranch, Purgatory Resort, Animas City Theatre, Durango Space, R Space, Smiley Building, Durango Arts Center, Willowtail Springs, Music in the Mountains, DOLA, CDOT Main Street Grant Program*

# 4

## PROMOTE OUR CREATIVE ECONOMY

Durango's creative economy is the product of every transaction that occurs within arts and culture sectors. While the front-end measure of a creative economy is the pure enjoyment of Durango's arts and culture, the back-end measure is healthiest when supported by local financial growth and security. DCD supports the goal of promoting and growing Durango's creative economic margins.

### **Generate, increase and share content for marketing and promotion of our creative economy**

1. Marketing of Creative Professionals, Businesses and Organizations
  - A. Include arts and culture as a key tourism marketing strategy, in addition to outdoor recreation and the DSNR railroad
  - B. Manage and promote online Creative Directory on DCD website
  - C. Highlight businesses and events in social media platforms, DCD newsletter, and Colorado Creative Industries materials
  - D. Partner with Durango Gallery Walk to sustain and grow downtown art walks
  - E. Share signature events with Colorado Creative Industries, social media platforms and DCD newsletter (Examples: Durango Autumn Arts Festival, Taste of Durango, Music in the Mountains, Durango Film Festival)
  
2. Partner with Visit Durango and Durango Business Improvement District on wayfinding and signage for the Durango Creative District
  - A. Operate exhibit space in Welcome Center
  - B. Implement CDOT "Creative District" signs on Highway 550 and Highway 160
  - C. Collaborate with regional certified Creative Districts in Colorado on shared promotions
  - D. Attend and represent Durango at the annual Colorado Creative Industries Summit

### **Host future Colorado Creative Industries Summit in Durango by 2024**

1. Cater to and host over 300 attendees

### **Host annual DCD fundraising event to benefit broad cultural community**

1. Seek corporate sponsorship opportunities

### **Locate, Commission and Market Economic Studies and Data**

1. Be the clearinghouse and promoter of current economic data that demonstrates value of Durango's creative economy
  - A. List studies, resources and data on DCD website, available for the public

2. Present current creative economic data to City of Durango and La Plata County leaders to raise awareness and help make informed decisions
3. Use current economic data to support creative businesses and organizations for grant proposals and fundraising
4. Continue collaborating with Fort Lewis College Economics Department to evaluate and promote their annual creative economy impact study

### **Support arts, science and culture education**

1. Encourage meaningful arts programming for youth in public schools and non-profit institutions
  - A. Engage youth in public art projects (example: Durango Art Brigade)
  - B. Advocate for local and state policies that provide more funding to public schools and nonprofit institutions for arts and STEM-related education and informal learning organizations and programs
  - C. Increase civic engagement and youth involvement in our community through active participation in programs that improve and enrich the quality of life in Durango
    - A. Example: Leadership in Art program at Durango Arts Center, internships
  - D. Share studies on the positive impact of arts education and creative problem-solving with the Durango community

*Potential allied organizations: Durango Arts Center, Powerhouse Science Center and MakerLab, Durango 9R School District, Animas High School, Juniper School, GOAL High School, Liberty School, Big Picture High School, Fort Lewis College, San Juan Mountain Association, Leadership La Plata, Be FRANK Foundation, Stillwater Music, San Juan Symphony, 3rd Avenue Arts*

# 5

## EMPHASIZE AND CELEBRATE DIVERSITY AND LOCAL HERITAGE

The DCD respects and fully supports the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion among the Durango community. We also acknowledge the importance and value of understanding and honoring the heritage of the land where we now live. Through our commitment to this goal the Durango community has the opportunity to advance diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and heritage attitudes and practices.

### **Educate DCD Board members, staff and volunteers to raise awareness on diversity appreciation and value of local heritage**

1. Seek organizational trainings on various DEI topics
2. Represent diverse individuals in all aspects of DCD communication
3. Create and support opportunities that celebrate our diverse community
  - A. DCD Public Benefit Projects and Programs (example: Invite and encourage broad participation in DCD Spark Series events)
  - B. Existing events that celebrate diversity (examples: Dia de Los Muertos, Fiesta on the Mesa, Cinco de Mayo, Pow Wows, Hozhoni Days, Pozole Parade )
  - C. Host guest speakers and presentations (example: DCD hosted Poet Laureate Bobby LeFebre in December 2019, who spoke on race and heritage)
  - D. New and inclusive community events

### **Put into practice broad diversity, equity and inclusion principles and actions in all aspects of the DCD**

1. Ensure DCD's DEI Policy is actively and consistently utilized by staff, Board of Directors, volunteers and affiliates
  - A. Include DEI policy on DCD website
  - B. Annually review DEI policy
  - C. Involve underrepresented individuals in DCD leadership roles, volunteer efforts and work opportunities
2. Engage and develop partnerships with organizations, businesses and individuals from or serving underrepresented communities
  - A. Share funding opportunities
  - B. Engage underrepresented individuals in DCD Public Benefit Projects and Programs
  - C. Collaborate with Community Relations Commission of the City of Durango
  - D. Seek feedback from our larger community via surveys and personal connections on CD's DEI practices

**Elevate and celebrate BIPOC groups and individuals (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) within the context of the DCD**

1. Engage with Ute Mountain Ute, Southern Ute and Navajo tribes and organizations representing people of color
  - A. Involve in DCD leadership roles, volunteer efforts and work opportunities
  - B. Provide storytelling options on DCD website, marketing materials and events, including BIPOC versions of the area’s history, art and culture

**Support the preservation and/or restoration of historic buildings and public places**

1. Examples: Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, Center for Southwest Studies, Southern Ute Museum, Native American Reservations (Southern Ute, Ute Mountain Ute), Durango Arts Center, Animas Museum

**Support art and installations that celebrate history and heritage**

1. Seek opportunities for art installations representing or created by BIPOC communities
2. Support the maintenance and growth of “The Moments Project” history placards in downtown

**Advocate for a welcoming environment for individuals with disabilities**

1. A.D.A. compliance with new and historic buildings and public infrastructure
2. Share educational materials and trainings on alternative options for people with disabilities to engage with the arts and culture community

*Potential allied organizations: City of Durango’s Community Relations Commission, Native American Center at Fort Lewis College, Center for Southwest Studies at Fort Lewis College, Durango Arts Center, Animas Museum, Southwest Center for Independence, Community Connections Inc., Companeros, Toh-Atin Gallery, A Shared Blanket Gallery, Southern Ute Tribe*

# 6

## SUPPORT CREATIVE PROFESSIONALS

Durango's diverse creative community consists of a wide array of professionals representing many different industries. Supporting and lifting up these individuals is a key way to grow our creative economy. DCD can play a significant role in educating individuals on best business practices, providing financial direction and helping market their work output.

### **Provide educational opportunities for creative professionals to develop and maintain business management and technology skills**

1. Host skill share workshops and seminars
  - A. Continue to host and grow DCD Spark Series events
  - B. Collaborate and share existing workshops from economic nonprofits (examples: S.W. Colorado Small Business Development center, Community Foundation Serving S.W. Colorado, Community Resource Center)
  - C. Invite focused on-line learning opportunities through national independent consultants and organizations
  - D. Establish business mentor program

### **Create peer-to-peer opportunities to build business relationships between local creative professionals**

1. Host networking events (example: DCD's Creative Connection Hour)

### **Support creative professionals through financial programs**

1. Sustain and grow the Creative Arts Loan Fund with First Southwest Bank
  - A. Offer micro-loans to creative arts organizations to help artists start, grow and scale their activities
2. Share business grant opportunities through Colorado Creative Industries (CCI) and other state organizations
3. Help direct creative professionals to secure industry-specific funding
  - A. Trade associations including culinary, brewing, artisanal products, performing artist unions

### **Provide outlets for creative professionals to market and sell their work output**

1. Maintain and expand the Creative Directory on DCD website
  - A. Explore e-commerce opportunities to sell creative professionals' work and products on DCD website
2. Highlight creative professional profiles in DCD communications (i.e. Repost on social media)

3. Identify existing venues where local artists and makers can exhibit their work
4. Develop DCD downtown selling space for rotating exhibits
  - A. Have a showroom for local artists

### **Support creative professionals through DCD Public Benefit Projects and Programs**

1. Utilize both DCD's Projects and Placemaking Committee and Events Committee
  - A. Committees will assist with project and program development, grant writing and identifying potential funding sources

*Potential allied organizations: S.W. Colorado Small Business Development center, Community Foundation Serving S.W. Colorado, Community Resource Center, SCAPE, individual mentors, First Southwest Bank, CCI and industry associations*



## ADVANCE CIVIC AND COMMUNITY DIALOGUE ON CREATIVE MATTERS

Growth and support of Durango's creative economy requires robust and active conversation. City and business leaders - together with artists, leaders of creative organizations and residents - must have accessible ways to communicate and share. The DCD supports the goal of facilitating dialogue among all those who care about Durango's creative community.

### **Encourage civic leaders, the business community and creative professionals to build relationships and create partnerships to help enable effective communication**

1. Share relevant information on City Council Study Sessions and other government meetings
2. Create networking events across government, business and creative professionals
3. Propose Cultural Plan to City of Durango for adoption
  - A. Request input from City Council and Staff

### **Increase external media communications from the DCD**

- A. Develop a periodic column with local newspapers featuring articles and information supportive of Durango's creative economy (examples: Durango Telegraph, Durango Herald and regional publications)
- B. Profile creative professionals, creative organizations and upcoming creative events in our newsletter
- C. Host a radio show with DCD staff, Board members and volunteer participants (KDUR, KSUT and other local/regional stations)
- D. Provide quarterly updates to City Council and Staff reviewing key accomplishments, upcoming initiatives, project statuses and support requests
- E. Maintain regular public meetings and surveys allowing community members to provide input and feedback
- F. Collaborate with Inside Durango TV to feature local creative professionals, nonprofits, events and happenings

## **Advocate for the needs of our creative community with local and state government officials and policymakers**

1. Work with key stakeholders to explore potential ballot measures that will help fund Cultural Block Grants for nonprofit institutions
2. Continue working with Durango Area Hospitality and Lodgers Association, Visit Durango, DACE and City of Durango Staff and Council to explore lodgers tax increase in 2021
3. Create a "white sheet" to raise awareness and educate community on objectives of the DCD and proposed Cultural Block Grant program
4. Support policies that increase funding for arts and culture activities and institutions

*Potential allied organizations: City of Durango, regional media outlets, Durango Area Hospitality and Lodgers Association, Visit Durango*

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Animas City Theatre  
Animas Craft Woodworks  
Animas High School  
Animas Museum  
A Shared Blanket  
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DACE  
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DGO Magazine  
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Durango Arts Center  
Durango Bluegrass Meltdown  
Durango Botanic Gardens  
Durango Brewfest  
Durango Business Improvement District  
Durango Chamber of Commerce  
Durango Farmers Market  
Durango Fiesta Days  
Durango Film Festival  
Durango Friends of the Arts  
Durango Gallery Association  
Durango Herald  
Durango Land and Homes  
Durango Mesa Park  
Durango Natural Foods  
Durango Parks and Recreation  
Durango Playfest  
Durango Public Library  
Durango Telegraph  
Durango Wine Experience  
Duthie Savastano Brungard  
E.P.I.C. Magazine™  
First Southwest Bank  
First Southwest Community Fund  
FLC Theatre Department  
FLC Art & Design Department  
FLC History Department

FLC Native American Center  
FLC School of Business  
FLC Theatre Department  
Fox Law Group  
Geocosm  
Handcrafted House  
Heirlooms  
iAM Music Institute  
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Inside Durango TV  
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La Plata County Fair  
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Local First Foundation  
Looking Glass Art Group  
Marc and Jane Katz  
Mariah Kaminsky  
Merely Players  
Music in the Mountains  
Nancy and Bob Ariano  
Ore House  
Painted Playground Studio  
Powerhouse Science Center & MakerLab  
Premier Vacation Rentals  
Region 9  
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R Space  
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Saloman Family Fund  
San Juan Symphony  
Sara Olsen & Associates  
SCAPE  
Ska Brewing Co.  
Snowdown Advisory Board  
Southern Ute Tribe  
Stallings Design Co.  
Startup Colorado  
Stillwater Music  
Strater Hotel  
Studio &  
SW Center for Independence

SW Colorado Small Business Devt. Center  
Taste of Durango Advisory Board  
The Payroll Department  
The Smiley Building  
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Toh-Atin Gallery  
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