Contents

How the 2006–2011 Plan Developed 2

Values, Goals, Philosophy for Implementation 3

Broad Planning Themes 4

Outcome #1: Access to the Arts 5

Outcome #2: Skills and Resources for Arts Groups 7

Outcome #3: Support for Art and Culture 8

Outcome #4: Quality Arts Learning Opportunities 9

Outcome #5: Oregon Artists Create 11
How the Plan Developed

The Oregon Arts Commission and arts supporters across the state began a series of conversations in summer 2005, working together to build consensus around key needs and issues to accomplish two things: in the long term, to develop a strategic plan that builds on the many ways the arts contribute to Oregon, and, in the short term, to develop an "advocate’s budget" to bring to the Governor and Legislature in Fall, 2006. Because the Oregon Arts Commission is housed administratively within the Economic and Community Development Department, the Commission also sought ways to more strongly link the arts with Oregon's economic development efforts by communicating the strengths of our state’s growing creative economy and the ways that artists and arts groups are integral to community and rural development efforts.

The planning process included five key elements:

• Focus group discussions with individual artists in Eugene, Portland and Medford.

• Seven listening tour “town hall meetings” in Salem, Eugene, Medford, La Grande, Hood River, Newport and Bend.

• A statewide arts education leadership meeting convened in Portland in December, 2005. Participants included the state’s major foundation leaders, education leaders, key arts educators and arts organizations offering arts learning experiences to students.

• The Arts Commission’s participation in a strategic planning process for the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department, looking at the intersections of the arts and Oregon’s growing creative economy.

• An online survey to test ideas and priorities with the public.

Alternate Formats Available

Upon request, Arts Commission publications can be made available in alternate format such as Braille, large type, or on audiotape. Please give us one-week notice. For applicants who are hearing-impaired and require TTD/TTY assistance, call (800) 735-2900.
Our Values

Arts and culture are touchstones of community and civic life and it is essential to preserve, stabilize and develop their central role to benefit Oregonians and Oregon’s quality of life.

Our Beliefs:

- The arts help us discover who we are.
- The arts bring people together, strengthening communities.
- The arts are critical for our students.
- The arts add value to Oregon’s economy.

The Arts Commission’s Role Is To...

- Lead through advocacy, policy development and planning.
- Seek funding for and make grants to the arts.
- Build coalitions between the public and private sectors and between arts and culture organizations.
- Ensure the arts touch the lives of all Oregonians.

Goals

1. Oregonians have wide access to the arts and their intrinsic and extrinsic benefits.
2. Oregon arts organizations have the skills and resources to offer high quality programs across the state.
3. Public and private support for arts and culture is increased and leveraged.
4. Oregonians have access to quality arts learning opportunities.
5. Oregon artists create work of acknowledged high quality.

Philosophy for Implementation

The Oregon Arts Commission will work toward realizing these goals using four primary means:

- Leadership activities that link and leverage the arts with other issues and sectors.
- Grant funding to arts organizations, artists, and other nonprofit entities.
- Partnerships with other agencies, funders, and sectors to increase funding and other resources to assist arts groups and others in realizing these goals.
- Communication and technical assistance.
Using those themes, the Commission developed a major proposal for the Governor and Legislature, the "Creative Oregon" Initiative. Through Creative Oregon, using increased technical assistance, targeted funding and services, the Arts Commission proposes to:

- Build the capacity of Oregon's arts and creative resources to both make the state more competitive and offer programs to benefit more Oregonians.
- Grow Oregon's cultural and creative sector to attract artists and creative workers.
- Take advantage of the increasingly entrepreneurial arts sector as it crosses nonprofit and for-profit lines.
- Use technology to expand access to the arts and innovative creative efforts.
- Employ art and culture as a strategy for rural and community development.

The Creative Oregon Initiative was endorsed by the Oregon Economic Development Commission in July, 2006 and was forwarded to the Governor in September, 2006.

Multiple elements of this plan will require new public investment. The Creative Oregon Initiative requests an additional $2.9 million to increase the ways the arts benefit Oregonians. The plan calls for accomplishing that through increased technical assistance and training, expanded grant support to arts organizations, strengthened arts education efforts and the development of new systems of support for Oregon artists.

This plan was adopted by the Oregon Arts Commission on September 26, 2006, with the understanding that it is an "organic" document that will evolve in continued partnership with the statewide arts community and the public.
The Plan – Outcome #1:

**Oregonians have wide access to the arts and their intrinsic and extrinsic benefits.**

The arts provide broad public benefit to Oregonians and Oregon communities. Oregon is home to a wealth of arts groups, ranging from the largest regional theatre in the United States to emerging new creative ventures in its urban cores to small, rural community-based groups. This plan calls for stronger communications about the public benefit of the arts and increased efforts to promote the arts beyond Oregon. The plan also calls for the Arts Commission’s continued leadership to realize the bold fund development vision of the Oregon Cultural Trust and to be a powerful voice in arts advocacy efforts.

- Support high-quality arts programs across the state and tell the story of the art works that are created and produced here.
- Serve as lead advisor to the Governor and other state agencies regarding the value of the arts, and encourage investment in the arts by other public sector entities, such as education, tourism, economic and community development.
- Strengthen and communicate key messages of the value of the arts to Oregonians and the public benefit of arts and culture. Maximize communication efforts to increase their reach such as cross-marketing information between the Cultural Trust and Arts Commission, and Oregon’s cultural partners working in heritage and the humanities.
- Maximize use of technology to disseminate news and best practices; expand information offered online through the Commission’s website.
- Recognize the work and contributions of artists, arts advocates, and arts organizations through the Governor’s Arts Awards and other means.
- Oversee the Cultural Trust advocacy plans, developing strategies and linking elected officials with the Trust’s ongoing work and accomplishments.
- Facilitate marketing and outreach for the Cultural Trust, ensuring that outreach and communications materials are as innovative and persuasive as the Trust’s unique revenue strategies.
- Provide leadership in the Cultural Advocacy Coalition, developing new strategies to ensure legislative support for the Arts Commission and Cultural Trust.
- Link the arts with economic development issues through staff leadership in the management of the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department.

Sustain and Strengthen Current Oregon Arts Commission Efforts:
Implement New Efforts:

- Convene an annual Arts Summit for professional development of the field, to facilitate advocacy strategies, and celebrate accomplishments.

- Develop a leadership network of 100 key individuals, “grass tops,” who can facilitate communication and contribute to strategic advocacy efforts.

- Convene the statewide arts community on multiple levels:
  - for professional development of the field;
  - to facilitate advocacy strategies; and to
  - celebrate accomplishments.

- Initiate an advocacy and training program for elected officials regarding public art policies and the potential of the arts to contribute to community development.

Research and New Program Development:

The Commission will consider the following:

- Investigate the feasibility of developing and implementing an over-arching arts advocacy campaign, potentially linking with the promotion of the Oregon Cultural Trust.

- Establish a designated group of local elected officials who can champion local arts efforts and contribute to statewide advocacy efforts.
The Plan – Outcome #2:

Oregon arts organizations have the skills and resources to offer high-quality programs across the state.

Almost 1,200 cultural organizations provide programming for Oregonians and visitors to our state. Most are arts organizations - museums, dance companies, orchestras, festivals, galleries, community schools of the arts, public radio and television stations, local and regional arts councils and more in communities east and west of the Cascades. These organizations offer public programs, employ staff and artists, and contribute to cultural understanding, community building and Oregon’s economy. This plan calls for new investment in Oregon’s arts organizations, building their capacity through technical assistance and funding to increase public benefit.

Sustain and Strengthen Current Oregon Arts Commission Efforts:

- Provide strategic operating support grants and other targeted grant funds to enable Oregon arts organizations to fulfill their missions of making the arts accessible to Oregonians.
- Sustain the Arts Build Communities grant program to support local arts projects and activities that link the arts with rural or community development efforts.
- Support Oregon’s regional and local arts councils with training, technical assistance, and communication so their increased capacity will benefit Oregon communities.
- Recognize and support the unique statewide arts programs offered by partner agencies like the Oregon Historical Society’s Oregon Folklife Program and the Portland Art Museum’s Northwest Film Center.
- Guide the Cultural Trust’s grantmaking policies and oversee the development of benchmarks and assessments of the Trust’s county and tribal cultural coalitions.
- Leverage resources, financial and other, to strengthen the offerings of Oregon arts groups. This could mean increased partnerships with foundations, local governments and other entities.
- Identify, support and disseminate “best practices” through the continuation of the Arts Commission’s “Connections” monograph series.

Implement New Efforts:

- With new resources, pending approval by the Governor and legislature, begin the Creative Oregon Initiative, an enhanced program to increase the capacity of Oregon arts groups.
- Offer capacity building, support and technical assistance to:
  - Augment grant support with new Capacity Funding.
  - Maximize the range and depth of technical assistance and training available to arts groups and Oregon non-profits by partnering with organizations like the Regional Arts & Culture Council and TACS.

Research and New Program Development:

The Commission will consider the following:

- Develop new strategies to support the arts: incentives for artists, the development of new or different public art strategies, tax incentives or strategies.
- Initiate a network of peer “best practitioners.”
- Investigate different ways to “recognize” and/or support the work of small and emerging arts groups. The Arts Recognition grant program, piloted in the 2005-2007 biennium, will be evaluated.
The Plan – Outcome #3:

**Public and private support for arts and culture is increased and leveraged.**

Oregon’s arts, cultural and creative sectors contribute to the state’s competitiveness through their innovation and unique products and programming. State support for the arts in Oregon ranks among the lowest in the nation, despite the richness and depth of the artists and arts groups who live and work here. To sustain the vitality of the arts sector, its capacity and infrastructure must be supported and future leadership cultivated and ensured. This plan calls for significant capacity building of arts organizations and new investment in arts groups based on their overall management, leadership and standards. Oregon’s economy of the future will be based on innovation and knowledge. With the right investment, the arts sector will be a vibrant contributor to it.

Sustain and Strengthen Current Oregon Arts Commission Efforts:

- Collect information and data to actively and effectively advocate for increased state funding for the arts in Oregon.
- Form partnerships with public and private partners to increase resources to bring the arts to Oregonians.
- Provide leadership to build the Oregon Cultural Trust Fund, maximizing growth of the endowment through increased use of Oregon’s cultural tax credit, sales of the cultural license plate and outreach to Oregonians about the importance of cultural philanthropy.

Implement New Efforts:

- Develop an annual index that measures Oregon’s “creative vitality,” building on the 2006 initial efforts to create baseline data for Oregon’s arts and cultural employment and participation.

Research and New Program Development

The Commission will consider the following:

- Develop new financial incentives [tax and other public policies] that will grow or leverage assets to benefit Oregon’s artists and arts groups.
- Examine ways that the Arts Commission’s capacity to distribute funds fairly and equitably might be expanded by serving as a conduit for other public or private funders’ support of the arts in Oregon.
The Plan – Outcome #4:

Oregonians have access to quality arts learning opportunities.

Oregon has mandated content standards for arts learning, and recent efforts have been made to increase high school graduation requirements in the arts. More professional development opportunities are available to Oregon teachers, and the arts learning providers who offer these opportunities have become more experienced and skilled.

However, the ramifications of reduced budgets for Oregon’s public education in general and arts education in particular have been far-reaching. School years have shorter weeks, class sizes are larger than ever and the imposition of a “no-frills” approach to education has been widespread. Of particular significance to the Arts Commission is the severe reduction in arts education programming, with fewer arts specialists in schools, decreased numbers of visiting artists’ residencies, and a dwindling amount of art and school supplies for many students.

Sustain and Strengthen Current Oregon Arts Commission Efforts:

- Emphasize the importance of the inclusion of arts education components in all Operating Support grants from the Arts Commission and demonstrate the benefits that arts organizations produce for students, schools and communities.
- Offer discretionary grants to arts organizations to provide arts learning opportunities and experiences for students pre-K to 12, both in schools and in the community.
- Advocate for quality arts education programs for every Oregon student, working together with the Oregon Department of Education and Oregon Alliance for Arts Education.
- Partner with arts education colleagues on statewide or special initiatives such as the Oregon Teacher Art Institute, residencies and other activities.
- Expand the Commission’s “convening” ability to bring together the leaders, key practitioners and known advocates of arts learning in Oregon to network and learn from each other, identify best practices, and build critical mass for the advancement of arts learning across Oregon.
- Identify and disseminate best practices in arts learning and program information to colleagues and other funders.
Implement New Efforts:

- Collaborate on ways to better assess arts learning progress in Oregon and to support Oregon-based research and data collection.

- Offer leadership for the development of a “partnership” or “coalition” to build capacity in the arts learning field; this could include networking opportunities for practitioners, support for increased funding, training and professional development opportunities, and collaborative alternative funding strategies.

Research and New Program Development:

The Commission will consider the following:

- Consider collaborative funding to support demonstration projects whose results can be tracked and tied together with research and data collection. These efforts could attract other support or funding as well as contribute to more understanding of the benefits of arts learning across Oregon.

- Develop a process for identifying and cultivating leadership in Oregon for arts education.

- Build an advocacy plan to support Oregon Department of Education efforts in arts learning and promoting adoption of high standards for arts education requirements. Support increased leadership for arts education in the Department of Education.
The Plan – Outcome #5:

Oregon artists create work of acknowledged high quality.

Oregon is home to an estimated 20,000 professional artists - and more who participate in and create art as a hobby or avocation. The Oregon Employment Department reported that the total covered payroll for the state’s top-20 arts-related industries topped $997 million in 2005. These artists, designers and creative workers are an asset to Oregon and contribute to its image, competitiveness and local economies. Their work and workspaces are now increasingly promoted through Oregon's tourism marketing efforts. This plan calls for increased support for Oregon artists, including the potential development of an all-encompassing artist service organization.

Sustain and Strengthen Current Oregon Arts Commission Efforts:

- Offer competitive Artist Fellowship grants and promote the work of those artists awarded with funding.
- Strengthen Oregon's pioneering 1% for Art program with the addition of a curatorial oversight group and training and skill building for public officials who make decisions about public spaces.
- Continue training, information and capacity building offerings for artists of all types.
- Maximize the Arts Commission’s placement in the State’s Economic and Community Development Department to increase links and leverage with creative industries in Oregon.
- Use technology to disseminate information more effectively and to document achievements.

Implement New Efforts:

- With new resources, pending approval by the Governor and Legislature, begin the Creative Oregon Initiative: outreach, training, technical assistance to serve individual artists.
- Use the Creative Oregon Initiative to forge stronger links with tourism and regional marketing efforts: This might include expansion of the Oregon Crafted model of linking arts training and promotion with regional tourism marketing efforts to additional regions.
- Give greater recognition to Oregon’s artists through the Governor’s Arts Awards, sponsorship of Oregon ArtBeat, and a stronger online presence.
- Research best practices, strategies and funding to protect and maintain Oregon’s pioneering public art collection, established in 1975.

Research and New Program Development:

The Commission will consider the following:

- Support and collaborate in a more focused way with the Oregon arts groups that directly serve and fund Oregon artists. The commission will consider development of a broader support organization for artists like Washington State’s Artist Trust that can leverage public and private support for artists in direct and indirect ways.
- Greater recognition of individual artists through awards programs offered by groups such as Literary Arts, Regional Arts & Culture Council and others.
- Evaluate the potential benefits of implementing different incentives, tax credits or exemptions to attract artists and creative workers to Oregon and to encourage the development of their work.
Cover images: from to back: Murray Sidlin conducts at the Cascade Festival of Music in Bend; “Seal Rocks”, 2004, by Terry Toedtemeier; Millennium glass floats promote tourism at the beach in Lincoln City. Imago, Jerry Mouawad, 2003; Student wheel throwing at Oregon College of Art & Craft.