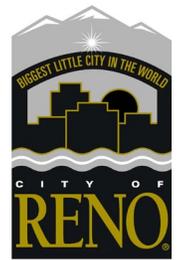
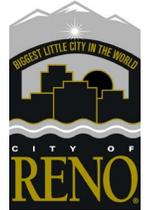


# City of Reno 2012 Cultural Master Plan



# COVER LETTER

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On behalf of the City of Reno, it is the pleasure of the Reno Arts & Culture Commission to introduce the 2012 City of Reno Cultural Master Plan as a measure of our commitment to preserving and advancing cultural resources that define the expressive beauty that is Reno, Nevada.

Reno is proud of its dynamic and thriving landscape of arts and culture. In past plans, the City of Reno developed a strong cultural community with active arts organizations, performance venues, and a recognized population of artists and supporters. This Cultural Master Plan builds upon that success as a guide to the Reno City Council and Arts & Culture Commission and is crucial to an evolution of success for arts and culture.

We fully recognize that the Plan's update is presented at a time when our city and state attempt to emerge from the deepest and most serious recession our nation has experienced in nearly a century. Citizens chosen for their professional experience and cultural insight have adhered to presenting goals that are proactive and creatively attainable. This new plan follows the format of the 2001 Plan by providing tools necessary to achieve each recommendation, such as Suggested Resources and Convening Parties that will help accomplish objectives, with Initial Steps toward completion.

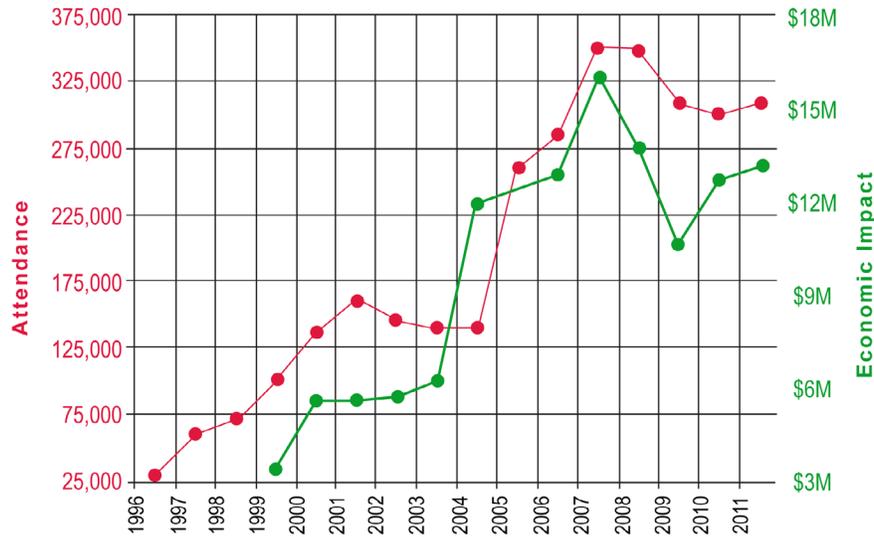
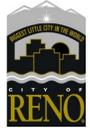
Despite the extreme financial difficulties we face, the Commission understands the importance of updating this document as it pertains to progress made in the arts and culture offerings in the City of Reno – a “leader in arts and culture.” The Commission further believes that our local arts industry has been key to providing creative solutions for our economic challenges while helping citizens maintain a strong sense of place during challenging times.

The Arts & Culture Commission will regularly review the 2012 City of Reno Cultural Master Plan to maintain focus and to analyze progress of each recommendation. Through collaborative efforts, with Convening Parties, the Commission will work to identify realistic performance measures, balanced with current economic realities, while striving to achieve completion of each recommendation.

As stated in the *Business Week.com* article “Bohemian Today, High-Rent Tomorrow” (February 2007, Maya Roney):

*It has been proven that artists—defined as self-employed visual artists, actors, musicians, writers, etc.—can stimulate local economies in a number of ways.*

We know this to be true, first hand, through the impact of the Artown Festival, collaboratively created in 1996 by the Arts & Culture Commission and a group of visionary citizens. In 2009, Artown reported a \$14 million impact on the local economy, an estimated 14,348 room nights, and an estimated 34,160 out-of-town visitors who attended Artown events...in just one month



Artown Attendance and Economic Impact

It should be noted that Artown, though one organization, reports economic impact for a community-wide arts festival involving many local and touring artists and organizations. However, overall impact of the arts annually is believed to be much higher.

In October 2009, the Reno City Council identified arts and culture as a priority for the City of Reno and has continued to include arts and culture as a priority. It is a fact that arts and culture activities held in the Reno downtown corridor bring prosperity to local business and wealth to the region. Through the additional use of social media and online marketing, communication has improved between local arts organizations and Reno residents, as will outreach to a nationwide audience. As detailed in the 2012 Cultural Master Plan, the abilities to think critically and act creatively are potent strategies for future success of Reno’s position as a leader in our regional arts industry.

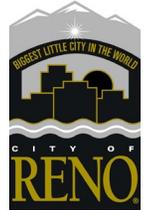
The 2012 Cultural Master Plan is a smart and resourceful document recommending partnerships between organizations, and collaboration with local corporations and small businesses to achieve goals in the realm of arts and culture. Accomplishing the goals outlined in this Plan will continue to improve the quality of life for Reno residents while providing that same element for prospective businesses considering relocation to our city.

With appreciation,

**Amanda Rookey**  
 Chair, Cultural Master Plan Ad Hoc Committee  
 City of Reno Arts & Culture Commission

# INTRODUCTION

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How we as a community see ourselves, present ourselves to others, and find a creative spirit within, defines our community as a dynamic and fruitful place to live, work, visit and explore. It is this “soul” of place that forms the fabric of where we live, and it is the creative and artistic profile we put forward that allows each of us to culturally express ourselves openly as citizens of a community. It is this collective “personality” through which we share our experiences with each other and with others who come to visit.

Reno’s arts and culture scene has reached a vibrant adolescence. The City’s most recent Cultural Plan, established in 2001, embarked on a seven-year vision to revitalize the community’s downtown core. The plan provided a response to growing needs to enhance local participation downtown, engage tourists in activities along the Truckee River Corridor and to continue to position Reno as a community less dependent on the gaming industry. Reno’s cultural metamorphosis has, until recently, been predominately focused on a revitalization of its downtown core running along the Truckee River and specifically within the vibrant Arts & Culture District. The time has come to showcase the arts across an even broader canvas – impacting surrounding neighborhoods linked to downtown development, but seeking to impart their own cultural “personalities.” These areas include all five wards and associated districts that represent Reno, also including emerging merchant districts along Wells Avenue, East Fourth Street, and California Avenue.



Considering the current economic conditions, the City of Reno has done a good job of supporting funding of the Arts and Culture Commission. At the same time, there have been significant budget cuts directly affecting the Nevada Arts Council and other arts organizations on a state and national level. Private philanthropy has also seen declines and with that planning efforts outlined here have had to defer proposed large-scale financial commitments in favor of a more conservative approach. Efforts now require the arts community to flex its creative capacity, to regroup and rethink programming on a smaller budget, while also consolidating political, strategic and business alliances amongst ourselves and within the broader community. With a “can-do” and resourceful approach, this will be accomplished. The day will soon come when the “stage lights” of a brighter economy will once again highlight our stellar presence in the community.



## INTRODUCTION

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### **History**

The City of Reno's first planning document was designed in 1994, addressing the need for arts and culture development. The newly established C.I.T.Y. 2000 Cultural Plan outlined goals to: strengthen citizens' involvement in the community's cultural life, encourage a high quality of design that reflected Reno's uniqueness, and create an environment that encouraged artistic excellence throughout the community.

In 2001, the City of Reno further updated this plan with the appointment of a 42-person steering committee to represent a broad and diverse range of cultural interests. The findings and final recommendations, from this eight-month collective project, were presented to the Commission and adopted as the City of Reno Cultural Master Plan in 2001.

Until now, the 2001 Plan has served as a map for success in infusing our community with expanded arts and cultural offerings. The 37 recommendations contained within the plan provided a guide to further engage Reno citizens in the arts and culture of our city, while fostering awareness of the resources required to maintain a vibrant arts and culture identity.

As the Arts & Culture Commission addressed the arts and culture needs of a growing population [the 2010 Census indicates Washoe County's population totaled 421,407, an 24% increase from the previous Census in 2000], the 2001 Cultural Master Plan became in need of a thorough review to determine its continued relevancy.

In the Fall of 2007, the Commission formed a Cultural Planning Committee to investigate the completion of initial Plan recommendations, as well as the feasibility of goals that remained. Comprised of 25 community stakeholders, the Committee concluded the City had indeed made great strides in seven years, but the design of a completely new plan was unnecessary. The committee instead recommended updates to the existing plan with a re-write of narrative overviews and timelines, including an annual review by the Reno Arts & Culture Commission.

### **Funding**

The nationwide economic recession became a significant consideration when reviewing the feasibility of residual goals from the 2001 Plan. Lack of funding presents challenges toward progress that compromises the development of expanded programs, new construction, and the stability of arts organizations. The Commission feels it essential to think critically and act creatively to make progress on the future of the arts in Reno. It is for this reason the Plan covers a ten year period, with short-term recommendations for the next 1-3 years, most goals spanning from 1-7 years, and long-term goals for 10+ years. Due to the nature of the economy the Committee understands that long-range goals are perhaps more akin to vision statements, with an awareness that the foreseeable future of our economic landscape will remain in transition.

Throughout the recent economic downturn, the Commission's budget was reinstated or remained intact in large part due to advocacy efforts of the Commission, grantees and the City Council liaison. The Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department budget did,



## INTRODUCTION

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however, undergo budget reductions for arts and culture programs and projects. There are goals and recommendations included in this plan which identify the importance of re-instating these funds in the future.

### **Planning Process**

The Cultural Master Plan Committee met regularly with much discussion focused on whether to maintain all eight initial issue areas from the 2001 Plan. The only change that ensued was to combine Leadership with Collaboration and Coordination. Seven issues remained including: Civic Aesthetics; Leadership, Collaboration and Coordination; Support for Artists; Arts Education; Funding; Facilities and Parking; and Image and Marketing.

The Committee then assigned experienced community stakeholders to act as co-chairs for each issue area. Each co-chair was provided with past plan documentation and a list of individuals from the community to assist in a sub-committee capacity.

### **Findings and Vision**

The Plan Committee felt a revised vision statement would help frame the 2012 Cultural Master Plan:

*The City of Reno embraces the arts as essential to a healthy, progressive community, bringing life, hope, energy, insight, and wealth that endures. Its citizens support the entire range of cultural and artistic expression and celebrate the relevance of the individual artist. This culture of art salutes the past, honors the present, and illuminates the future.*

The following are the recommendations for each issue area as forwarded by the co-chairs, approved by the Cultural Plan Committee, and as refined by the Arts & Culture Commission:

#### **1 - Civic Aesthetics**

- 1.1 Recommendation 1.1 – Re-hire the Public Art Specialist laid off in FY2010.
- 1.2 Engage in discussion with the Planning Commission regarding urban design focusing on the downtown core.
- 1.3 Encourage Planning Commission to give preference to a licensed Nevada architect for at least one position.
- 1.4 Develop writers workshops for architecture and arts review and critique for publications and blogs.
- 1.5 Continue to use the arts as a tool for creative renovation and improvements in the downtown area such as arts projects on fences, flood walls, bike racks, signal boxes, and barricades.

#### **2 - Leadership, Collaboration and Coordination**

- 2.1 Initiate partnerships between key arts support and advocacy groups and local business agencies to create and implement the first in a series of programs that link business with the arts.

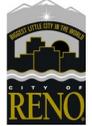
- 2.2 Support the establishment of a dedicated arts incubator to provide joint services for developing and emerging cultural organizations.
- 2.3 Provide business, leadership, and marketing training to arts and culture organizations
- 2.4 Develop a technical assistance program to expand local services provided by the Nevada Arts Council, Sierra Arts Foundation and Arts4Nevada.org.
- 2.5 Market, and, if necessary, expand the roles of the community's two local arts agencies (Reno Arts and Culture Commission and the Sierra Arts Foundation) to maximize delivery of support and services to cultural organizations and artists.
- 2.6 Expand the role of the Reno Arts Consortium to provide consensus-building, renewed leadership, diversity awareness, advocacy forum, and mentorship program for local cultural organizations.
- 2.7 Explore the creation of a private regional arts and cultural agency through collaboration of existing organizations and agencies.
- 2.8 Support private local arts agency(s) to ensure a continuum of service to artists and arts organizations.

### **3 - Support for Artists**

- 3.1 Further develop and expand free or low cost support services and technical assistance for individual visual and performing artists.
- 3.2 Support and develop a "one stop" artist resource site providing information on regional funding, employment and professional development opportunities.
- 3.3 Explore group health and liability coverage policies to provide affordable insurance options to individual artists.
- 3.4 Continue to develop the availability of affordable artists' studio/practice spaces and live/work housing.
- 3.5 Establish more visual arts exhibition and performing arts performance spaces in public buildings, and initiate a program for monthly temporary occupation of empty buildings and store fronts.
- 3.6 Develop and expand financial assistance to artists through grants, artist fellowships, scholarships, and internships.

### **4 - Arts Education**

- 4.1 Create a City of Reno-sponsored Arts Education Collaborative Committee.
- 4.2 Seek funding for a full-time Arts Education and Outreach Specialist position within an arts organization to house this position and its functions.
- 4.3 Enhance and increase the outreach of current City of Reno community art education programs through marketing and targeted distribution of bilingual media pieces.
- 4.4 Support integration of the arts as a core-curriculum component of the K-12 program in all Washoe County public schools.
- 4.5 Create a central, affordable arts center for young people for all-age activities, and explore methods of increasing arts education opportunities for neighborhoods.
- 4.6 Support the establishment of a summer arts camp by utilizing an existing regional ski area (or other suitable venue) during non-peak summer months.



### **5 - Funding**

- 5.1 Increase City funding to continue support of the Reno Arts and Culture Commission's granting and service programs to a level equal to 10% of all cultural grantee operational budgets.
- 5.2 Local foundations should convene a forum to discuss the creation of an "Institute for New Philanthropy," an initiative to encourage corporate and individual giving to charitable causes, including cultural programs.
- 5.3 Promote a workplace-giving initiative focused on local corporations as one of the major focus areas for the "Be Instrumental" Fund at the Community Foundation.
- 5.4 Explore the creation of a designated tax revenue source for the arts to be applied regionally.

### **6 - Facilities and Parking**

- 6.1 Cross reference and expand the cultural facility assessment survey with other surveys that may exist, to include categories such as technical capabilities and accessibility.
- 6.2 Determine the need to complete the rehabilitation of the Southside Cultural Center Auditorium to include fire suppression system, HVAC, and theatrical furnishings.
- 6.3 Discuss options for re-raking the auditorium at the Masonic Building and enhancing the HVAC, sound systems and lobby space.
- 6.4 Complete plans to enhance City Plaza to accommodate outdoor special events, art installations and allow for expansion of cultural festivals.
- 6.5 Explore collaborative cultural uses for unused commercial spaces and shopping areas downtown, working in partnership with landlords and others to minimize the negative effects impacting nearby active and future properties.
- 6.6 Continue plans for a mid-sized theatre complex hosting 1,200 + seats.

### **7 - Image and Marketing**

- 7.1 Market programs to increase awareness and attendance of cultural programs and events.
- 7.2 Develop a coordinated effort to encourage Reno Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority, EDawn, the Chamber of Commerce and other tourism and economic development agencies to recognize the contribution of the arts in boosting tourism efforts and promoting the region's quality of life by including the arts in their marketing efforts.
- 7.3 Continue to produce and distribute print and electronic publications to tourism and redevelopment agencies, as well as the general public, such as the City of Reno Public Art Guide and the City of Reno City Hall Art Collection Guide.
- 7.4 Present periodic cultural tourism forums and seminars for organizations, artists, city leaders, redevelopment agencies, historical groups, and tourism agencies to reinforce the critical role culture can play in attracting visitors to the region, boosting economic development.
- 7.5 Convene a summit to discuss on-line ticketing options for non-profit organizations as well as commercial promoters, including subscription modules, assigned and general seating for the coordination and commitment of one ticketing system for northern Nevada.

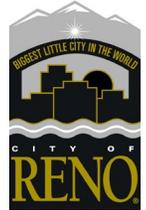
- 7.6 Provide marketing, education, and professional development seminars for local arts, culture and historical groups focusing on social media, on-line calendar resources, on-line ticketing options and working with regional and national media. seminars in the arts

Many thanks to the Cultural Plan Committee chaired by Amanda Rookey, of Michele Attaway, J. Damron, Tim Jones, Jim Kidder, Nettie Oliverio, and John Shelton for their guidance, and to Co-Chairs Mary Bennett, Jill Berryman, David Branson, Joan Dyer, Mercedes de la Garza, Zanny Marsh, Jim Nichols, Karen Ross, Tamara Scronce, Peter Stremmel, Joyce Trombley, CJ Walters, and John Worthington for their tremendous efforts. Significant thanks to The Reno City Council and Christine Fey, Resource Development and Cultural Affairs Manager at the City of Reno, for their unyielding support and continued enthusiasm to cultivate a thriving arts community in Reno.



# 1 - CIVIC AESTHETICS

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Reno has vibrant historic neighborhoods, a stunning natural setting, a beautiful river, and an energetic cultural community that is growing in quality and sophistication. In other regards, however, the approach to civic aesthetics in Reno presents a challenge. Today, with closed casinos, vacant storefronts, temporary souvenir and liquor stores, the image is one of a city with its central downtown core in transition, struggling to define itself as progressive and forward-thinking. To accomplish this, there must be a greater focus on quality design and noteworthy architecture.



There have been some notable successes, however. There are now mandated public art elements required on many City and private development projects, and the City has done a good job of keeping new parking structures from becoming eyesores. Downtown has also benefited from the addition of a AAA baseball park embraced by locals and instilling a new vibrancy to the downtown core. Other developments include efforts to raze closed or abandoned buildings, creating open spaces which could eventually become new parks and/or public use spaces.

Works of architectural significance must be encouraged. One of the most important steps the City can take in advancing its image is to develop an overall urban design vision, including tighter sign ordinances, the adoption of architectural standards, the use of design review committees, and a process that brings together city planners, historians and the arts community in discourse to enhance the urban aesthetic. Reno needs to continue facilitating architecture and design forums, engage artists and the humanities in the process, and pursue standards with political courage towards rebranding the City's image.

## **Public Art**

The City implemented the Public Art Ordinance and Public Art Master Plan in 2002, providing a thoughtful process for the selection of more than 170 works of art. The standard procedure includes a call for artists and the formation of review panels, comprised of stakeholders, community members and experts in public art, to identify appropriate artists of local, national and international stature. Selections are made based on both the panel's knowledge and a strong sense of context through inclusive public participation. Quality artwork is selected to reflect the identity and aspirations of the neighborhood and entire community.

## **Marketing & Arts Criticism**

The City has promoted Reno's public art collection, historic sites, and significant buildings and attractions through a public art brochure for both outdoor and indoor collections. Additional



## 1 - CIVIC AESTHETICS

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steps should now be taken to develop presentations to educate local service groups, business and community organizations. Marketing efforts should include taking advantage of all media, including support and improvements of mobile applications to help make Reno's collection more accessible to the public.

Reno would benefit from a more robust platform for review and criticism of the arts. We encourage thoughtful, informed and educated critiques of architecture and the arts through the development of writers' workshops and additional print and electronic outlets.

### Recommendations

**Recommendation 1.1 – Re-hire the Public Art Specialist laid off in FY2010.** This position supports civic improvements in the downtown area, in City parks and throughout the community. The Public Art Specialist is responsible for administering the selection, installation and maintenance of the Public Art Collection; managing City galleries; maintaining the artist registry, and coordinating arts programs for the City of Reno to enhance the cultural life of the community.

*Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

*Resources Needed:*

\$102,000 per year (ongoing)

*Initial Steps:*

- Arts & Culture Commission will advocate for reinstating the position through the City Council Liaison.

**Recommendation 1.2 – Engage in discussion with the Planning Commission regarding urban design focusing on the downtown core.** The discussion should include a call for a higher standard in design and a broader diversity of architectural components to ensure a rich and interesting urban texture, rather than focus on a singular style. The discussion should also explore developing a realistic Urban Design Plan for the downtown core. Provision should be made for street-front commercial and service institutions, including grocery, beauty salons, cleaners, restaurants, bars, and other small businesses necessary to support existing and future medium-high rise residential development.

*Convening Parties:*

- Redevelopment Agency and Redevelopment Agency Advisory Board
- Planning Commission
- Arts & Culture Commission
- Historical Resources Commission



## 1 - CIVIC AESTHETICS

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### *Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

### *Resources Needed:*

Approximately \$100,000

### *Initial Steps:*

- Develop a scope of services and Request for Proposals.
- Solicit proposals from qualified consultants.

### **Recommendation 1.3 – Encourage the Reno Planning Commission to give preference to a licensed Nevada architect for at least one position.**

#### *Convening Parties:*

- Community Development Director
- Planning Commission
- City of Reno Mayor
- City Council
- City Manager

#### *Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

#### *Resources Needed:*

Commission By-laws; time commitment from convening parties; volunteer architect to fill the position.

#### *Initial Steps:*

- Convene a meeting to discuss the importance of appointing an architect to the Planning Commission to further elevate urban design in Reno.

### **Recommendation 1.4 – Develop writers workshops for architecture and arts review and critique for publications and blogs.**

#### *Convening Parties:*

- Arts & Culture Commission
- Reno Gazette-Journal
- Reno News & Review
- University of Nevada, Reno
- NMA
- Black Rock Design Institute
- American Institute of Architects
- American Institute of Graphic Arts
- American Planning Associations



## 1 - CIVIC AESTHETICS

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- American Society of Landscape Architects
- American Institute of Certified Planners

*Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

*Resources Needed:*

Commitment of time from the convening parties; professional writers to offer workshops; funds to compensate writers conducting workshops

**Recommendation 1.5 – Continue to use the arts as a tool for creative renovation and improvements in the downtown area such as arts projects on fences, flood walls, bike racks, signal boxes, and barricades.**

Convening Parties:

- Cultural Affairs Division
- Arts & Culture Commission
- Public Works Department
- Redevelopment Agency
- Sierra Arts or other fiscal agency

*Timeline:*

Long-term goal (1-10+ years)

*Resources Needed:*

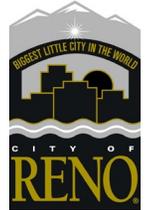
Funds to purchase materials and hire artists as dependent upon the needs of each project; Public Art Specialist to manage the call for artists and maintenance of new artworks.

*Initial Steps:*

- Convene a meeting between the Resource Development and Cultural Affairs Manager, Public Works Deputy Director and Redevelopment Agency staff to advance the idea and provide concepts for projects.
- As approved by City Council at a joint meeting with the Arts and Culture Commission on November 2009, the Arts & Culture Commission's public art selection process should be utilized.

## 2 - LEADERSHIP, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION

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The remarkable success of Artown, Nevada Museum of Art, Pioneer Center, Reno Jazz Festival, Reno Chamber Orchestra, Reno Philharmonic, Sierra Arts, plus associated business, recreation, cultural and civic investments in our city have attracted national attention. As a result, Reno has been realizing its cultural potential through a network of vibrant arts professionals, individuals and organizations intent on working cooperatively and in collaboration with the community. If provided a framework, Reno can support even greater aspirations for cultural emergence and – if energized by a more open perspective of what arts activities can entail – has pledged its support in encouraging ways. For example Truckee Meadows Tomorrow has recognized arts and culture as a community quality of life indicator, and recently, greater community



*MarchFourth Marching Band on Artown Opening Night, 2011*

participation embraced the selection of the new music director for the Reno Philharmonic. Also, the collaborative arts group International Arts Megacrew selected Reno as the site to build “The Temple” for Burning Man in 2011. This brought artisans from all over the world to work with local builders and artists to put Reno on the map for the creation of art projects bound for Burning Man and beyond. There exists an encouraged persistence, tenacity and momentum to advance the scope, depth, capacity, and vitality of local artists and cultural organizations. Within this positive climate, however, remains a need for leadership to advocate for the collective interests of the arts and culture community.

Leadership, collaboration, and coordination encompass the need for promoting greater communication within the cultural community, furthering internal and external partnerships, and identifying opportunities to support the realization of the Cultural Master Plan. Positive change is most successful with dedicated and visionary civic leadership. Those interests are not best served by competition, but rather “co-evolution,” implying a trajectory on which cultural groups move together, each approaching and achieving individual and shared goals. Naturally, the needs of cultural groups and artists in Reno differ. However, there is a collective need to encourage consensus, and provide structure to share in broader goals and common opportunities.

### **Local Arts Agencies**

A local arts agency (LAA) is defined as a multi-disciplinary organization that provides funding, programming, arts service and planning for the arts in the community. The Arts & Culture Commission and Sierra Arts each display appropriate characteristics of an LAA although the



## 2 - LEADERSHIP, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION

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goals of these groups and their target constituencies vary. A perceived drawback of having two agencies with similar roles is that neither is central to the broader community and neither can operate fully as a rallying point for cultural organizations and artists. However, there are distinct advantages to having two local arts agencies—one public and one non-profit. The public agency can work toward stable governmental funding, granting, support for cultural organizations and facilities, and the development of public policies that promote arts and culture development in the community. The private sector partner can seek major private funding; provide direct support for artists and for potentially controversial programming; work across and beyond municipal and county jurisdictions; and respond quickly to changing needs in the community.

Cultural organizations have repeatedly voiced interest in an entity to act as an informational clearinghouse for events, activities and schedules – and perhaps provide a central box office for ticketing services. Sierra Arts and the Arts & Culture Commission can collaborate to either identify an external contractor or coordinate existing resources to meet arts and culture groups' critical scheduling needs. One such example could be to expand Arts4Nevada.org's online calendar to achieve more comprehensive and juried listings, provide central box office services, and convene quarterly scheduling meetings among major producers and presenters.

A Washoe County (government) arts agency does not exist, leaving a void in countywide cultural services delivery. Without an ongoing and vocal presence inside county government, there is little likelihood of significant progress in arts and cultural programming within Washoe County. Sierra Arts provides some services that meet the demands of a county agency, including acting as the fiscal agent for emerging nonprofit organizations and offering technical assistance to arts groups outside city limits. However, these services are predominantly focused in the immediate Reno area, with the most notable exception being an arts-in-education program delivered to all Washoe County School District schools.

Since 1999, the Reno Arts Consortium (comprised predominantly of arts executives from 40 member organizations) has convened intermittently to discuss legislative issues, marketing, education and advocacy. Existing infrastructure may be sufficient to address this need. However, future research may indicate a role for a regional arts agency that includes City, county, private interests, and advocates for visionary and innovative planning, programming, and projects that will promote arts and culture education, encourage demographic inclusion, cultivate support from private industry, and make northern Nevada a destination for arts and culture tourism.

*Related descriptions of existing arts agencies are in Appendix C.*

### **Arts Consortium**

Expanding the roles of the two local arts agencies, while also re-building leadership within the Reno Arts Consortium, may alleviate the need for a regional arts agency. However, the importance of maintaining clear communication between existing agencies must be preserved to identify funding streams, promote inclusion, broaden advocacy efforts, formalize the



## 2 - LEADERSHIP, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION

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expression of ideas, develop progressive strategies, and promote best practices. The challenge is to instill an overarching leadership that transcends existing collaborative efforts into a more unified voice that speaks to all of the arts in northern Nevada. To organize around the elements of our cultural fabric and contribute to a unique sense of place, an ideal model would involve diverse partners including arts organizations, heritage organizations, tourism entities, educational institutions, ethnic groups, libraries and archives, historical societies, and environmental organizations.

The Consortium and Truckee Meadows Tomorrow (TMT) could solicit and cultivate an arts and culture “vitality compact” in collaboration with the City of Reno and other identified partners. Quality of Life Compacts are formal, voluntary agreements between TMT and one or more organizations, individuals, businesses, and or local governmental entities that work together to measurably improve performance on targeted quality of life indicators. Criteria used when TMT plans a compact will:

- Be of general community benefit
- Have a high probability of success
- Be visible, tangible and measurable
- Have a defined timeline for measurable success and reporting
- Provide opportunities for individual and group involvement
- Provide for stewardship following the compact agreement

### **Statewide Cultural Organizations**

Nevada has two statewide cultural organizations: the Nevada Arts Council (NAC), based in Carson City and Nevada Humanities (NH), headquartered in Reno, with both maintaining offices in Las Vegas. There is potential for further collaboration between NH and the NAC, by strengthening the capacity to provide enhanced leadership and technical assistance to cultural nonprofits. These organizations should collaborate with Reno LAAs to fulfill the Cultural Master Plan, avoid duplication of effort, and build on collective capacity to increase impact.

### **Promote Improved Resources**

The greatest source of tension and competition between arts institutions and artists is centered on the lack of resources in the community. Despite advances and improvements implemented since the adoption of the C.I.T.Y. 2000 Plan in 1994, the paucity of appropriate performance and exhibition venues and the lack of stable, ongoing, sizeable funding resources are significant issues. This provides an impetus for collaboration and cooperation in fund and resource development, networking, advocacy, and education.

### **Board Leadership**

In creating a new level of cultural dialogue, it is important that all members of the diverse Reno community are welcome to participate, and have avenues for becoming involved. While some boards have succeeded in attracting representatives of racial minorities (e.g., the Sierra Arts board, comprised of approximately one-third minority members), the overwhelming majority of cultural boards and arts audiences is Caucasian; about 30-35% of the Reno

## 2 - LEADERSHIP, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION

population is non-Caucasian. While most cultural organizations have made an effort to establish relationships with minority groups, overall diversity is still not present in the arts to a great degree. A formal process should be established to encourage diversity amongst board members, including protocols for reaching minorities when there are board vacancies. [See Cultural Engagement in California’s Inland Regions, as an example that illustrates a fresh understanding of participation and creative capital (Appendix A)]. An expansive approach to understanding participation and defining cultural activities will encourage diversity and inclusion on a broader scale. Linked to this is a creative approach to research and evaluation that helps give a more accurate picture of participation and hopefully increase the capacity and energy associated with local cultural programming and initiatives.

In some cultural organizations, board members tend to be unclear in their service to the institution. While a board member’s primary mandates are to provide vision and policy direction, connect the organization to the community and raise funds, many boards focus on administrative functions, continuing to perform staff roles beyond the youth of the institution. These organizations can suffer from poor planning and a lack of cohesive vision. The result can be a high rate of staff and board turnover that compromises operational continuity and the realization of long-range plans. Indeed, attracting dedicated and sophisticated board members is a challenge endemic to nonprofits nationwide. As more pressure is placed on personal schedules, board members struggle to find time and appropriate roles in their commitment to governance. This change in board profile demands a new kind of nurturing. It is necessary to cultivate leadership initiatives focused on emerging professionals in Reno’s cultural sectors, and beyond.

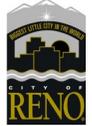
It has been reported that local nonprofits do not fully understand how to identify and invite board candidates to serve, or how to utilize the board to its full potential. Poor protocol and unclear expectations hinder the growth, vitality, and innovation associated with a healthy board’s diverse perspective, contribution, and service. Moreover, the composition of cultural boards does not reflect the ethnic diversity of the city, suggesting the need for developmental programs geared to training boards to promote inclusivity.

### External Partnerships

Local cultural organizations that have achieved a professional, nonprofit board model have met with a high degree of success in raising operating and capital dollars towards implementing long-range plans. Artown and the Nevada Museum of Art have had highly visible track records proactively nurturing and cultivating partnerships with local businesses. The Sierra Arts’ Business and Arts Luncheon recognized cultural leaders in the business community and celebrated a relationship between the business and arts communities. This type of program should be expanded and partnerships with the business community



*Leo Villareal’s “Animating Light” exhibition at the Nevada Museum of Art.*



## 2 - LEADERSHIP, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION

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replicated. Other advocacy relationships to be cultivated include the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN), Reno Tahoe Young Professionals Network, architecture firms and design professionals, the Washoe County School Board, the University of Nevada, Reno, Truckee Meadows Community College, and local media outlets.

### **Training**

Training efforts should address skills that include board and organizational development, business practices, capacity building, inclusion, marketing and image, fund development and communications. Curriculum should result from direct consultation with constituent organizations on an ongoing basis. The program could be in the form of grants to organizations, or workshops and training seminars that could serve multiple organizations, with participation linked to other types of grants from the city. In some cases, participation might be required as a condition of annual funding support. Similarly, the Commission may have policy objectives that could be reinforced through technical assistance, such as enhancing the diversity of grantee organizations. When possible, technical assistance training must include the use of social and new media as tools of collaboration and expertise.

### **Recommendations**

**Recommendation 2.1 – Initiate partnerships between key arts support and advocacy groups and local business agencies to create and implement the first in a series of programs that link business with the arts.** The American Leadership Forum provides an excellent model for creating such a partnership.

#### *Convening Parties:*

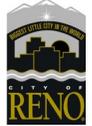
- Nevada Museum of Art
- Sierra Arts
- Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority
- Chamber of Commerce
- EDAWN
- Washoe County School Board
- University of Nevada, Reno
- Truckee Meadows Community College
- Architecture firms and design professionals
- Reno Arts Consortium
- Black Rock Arts Foundation

#### *Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

#### *Resources Needed:*

Commitment of time from convening parties; an organization to act as host to the series of programs linking business with the arts.



## 2 - LEADERSHIP, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION

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### *Initial Steps:*

- Determine partnership and program approach best suited to Reno.
- Solicit sponsorship and partnerships.

**Recommendation 2.2 – Support the establishment of a dedicated arts incubator to provide joint services for developing and emerging cultural organizations.** Promote space availability to provide business training to individual artists and small start-up organizations to facilitate the best use of incubator space.

### *Timeline:*

Mid-term goal (1-7 years)

### *Resources Needed:*

A volunteer to research successful arts incubator models in other communities; an available space while considering liability, insurance, ownership and zoning; funding to complete a needs assessment.

### *Initial Steps:*

- Research successful models in other communities.
- Initiate and complete a needs assessment to identify potential roadblocks and costs associated with the objective.
- Identify incubator space, preferably within the Cultural District, McKinley Arts and Culture Center, or the 4th Street Corridor.
- Establish program policies, guidelines and eligibility criteria.

**Recommendation 2.3 – Provide business, leadership, and marketing training to arts and culture organizations.** Likewise, opportunities should be identified that encourage collaboration between organizations and businesses of all types. See attached correspondence from the Nevada Arts Council (October 22, 2009), outlining current priorities for an online grant process, communications to arts organizations, and professional development activities (Appendix B).

### *Convening Parties:*

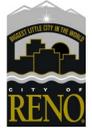
- Arts & Culture Commission
- Sierra Arts
- Nevada Arts Council
- Reno Arts Consortium
- Arts4Nevada.org

### *Timeline:*

Mid-term goal (1-7 years)

## 2 - LEADERSHIP, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION

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### *Resources Needed:*

Organization and business representatives to compile, and regularly update, information regarding existing opportunities; a method to distribute or make this information available to all arts and culture groups.

### *Initial Steps:*

- Disseminate information about educational opportunities that encourage staff and board members of cultural organizations to participate.
- Establish a uniform grants submission process and application based on the Nevada Arts Council's online model.
- Identify options for organizational collaborations, including public-private sector partnerships, business, and associations with non-arts service organizations.

### **Recommendation 2.4 – Develop a technical assistance program to expand local services provided by the Nevada Arts Council, Sierra Arts Foundation and Arts4Nevada.org.**

### *Convening Parties:*

- Arts & Culture Commission
- Nevada Arts Council
- University of Nevada, Reno Extended Studies
- Truckee Meadows Community College
- United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierras
- Human Services Network
- Arts4Nevada.org

### *Timeline:*

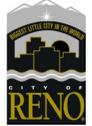
Mid-term goal (1-7 years)

### *Resources Needed:*

Commitment of time from the convening parties; funding to expand scope of services and market opportunities to constituents.

### *Initial Steps:*

- Implement an assessment process with a survey tool or broad capture method to identify technical assistance needed throughout the arts and cultural community.
- Develop and distribute training calendar to arts organizations, artists, donors, and funding institutions. Invite participation and feedback to encourage collaboration, potential underwriting, and engagement.
- Convene potential user groups to evaluate current and projected needs.
- Develop program guidelines and application procedures.



## 2 - LEADERSHIP, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION

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**Recommendation 2.5 – Market, and, if necessary, expand the roles of the community’s two local arts agencies (Reno Arts and Culture Commission and the Sierra Arts Foundation) to maximize delivery of support and services to cultural organizations and artists.** A collaborative effort may better define and increase funds available to serve these constituencies.

Convening Parties:

- Arts & Culture Commission
- Sierra Arts

*Timeline:*

Long-term goal (1-10+ years)

*Resources Needed:*

Funding for additional staff is necessary if either agency is to expand; funding to involve a non-profit consultant as needed; the Cultural Master Plan as the strategic plan for the Commission.

*Initial Steps:*

- Research agencies in similarly-sized communities.
- Produce a report on each agency to identify growth and collaborative opportunities.

**Recommendation 2.6 – Expand the role of the Reno Arts Consortium to provide consensus-building, renewed leadership, diversity awareness, advocacy forum, and mentorship program for local cultural organizations.**

Convening Parties:

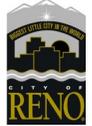
- Reno Arts Consortium
- Truckee Meadows Tomorrow
- Arts & Culture Commission
- Sierra Arts
- Black Rock Arts Foundation
- Burning Man

*Timeline:*

Long-term goal (1-10+ years)

*Resources Needed:*

A larger meeting space for Consortium to gather; representatives from each organization to participate in regular meetings; staff and volunteer infrastructure; a commitment of time from convening parties to fulfill expanded role of the Reno Arts Consortium.



## 2 - LEADERSHIP, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION

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### *Initial Steps:*

- Review the structure of Arts Consortium to ensure representation of all sectors of the cultural constituency.
- Establish a regular schedule of meetings to review issues facing arts community.
- Explore an infrastructure that supports staffing and volunteer management options.

**Recommendation 2.7 – Explore the creation of a private regional arts and cultural agency through collaboration of existing organizations and agencies.** Initial plan development should commence by Fall 2013.

### Convening Parties:

- City of Reno
- Washoe County
- City of Sparks
- Regional Planning Agency
- Sierra Arts
- Reno Arts Consortium
- Nevada Arts Council
- Black Rock Arts Foundation
- Burning Man

### *Timeline:*

Long-term goal (1-10+ years)

### *Resources Needed:*

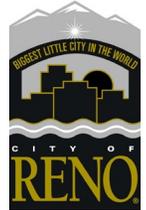
Meeting space for convening parties to gather; funding for a feasibility study or a consultant to gather research.

### *Initial Steps:*

- Research legislative requirements and models in other counties around the nation.
- Establish geographical boundaries of the agency’s operational service area.
- Conduct exploratory discussions with County management and elected officials.
- Explore collaborative and innovative partnerships to help “Be Instrumental” (see pg. 35) as a potential funding mechanism to support the development of the Consortium as an advocacy and public awareness vehicle.

# 3 - SUPPORT FOR ARTISTS

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Perhaps our greatest challenge is to heighten community awareness of the important role the individual artist has in the lives of Reno’s citizens. We understand that all great civilizations encourage, sponsor, and celebrate great art and architecture. A thriving culture signifies a quality of life that produces prosperity, vitality, vigorous business and financial stability.

Reno is home to a growing population of visual and performing artists including, but not limited to musicians, conductors, vocalists, dancers, choreographers, writers, actors, directors, set and costume designers, painters, photographers, printmakers, sculptors and installation/new media artists. This diverse mix of talented individuals, who call Reno “home,” practice their craft locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. They provide our community with outstanding and oft-times world-class visual and performing arts experiences, and garner national and international recognition for Reno as a community rich in cultural expression. In order for arts and culture to evolve here, we must foster a strong means of support and consistent stability for our community’s practicing artists.

Currently, most area artists are not able to make their livings through their art alone. Ongoing and dependable systems of commercial and social support are generally limited and often short-lived. Compared to larger markets, Reno may also be lacking intellectual and cultural capital sufficient enough to be more culturally mature in relation to demographics, income, education, and population levels to have a cultural presence that exists on a broader, more consistent scale. It is not unusual that Reno-based artists find it necessary to practice at higher levels of their work in other communities, or to seek more training and learning opportunities through outside sources.

The challenge persists as federal, state, local agencies face tight budgets that lead to deep cuts in grant support and arts education. These limitations whittle away at cultural programming across the country and diminish our sense of value and respect for the arts. Currently, Sierra Arts is an important provider of individual artist support in our community, but that support is in jeopardy with budget shortfalls and as the feeder funding support is cut back. We must strive to develop further visual and performing arts venues, artist live/work communities, and financial and technical support for practicing artists.

## **Technical Assistance**

Artists in all disciplines are in need of technical support for professional development opportunities, such as classes, workshops, and presentations that help advance their careers through web-site development, grant and fellowship application procedures, professional portfolio presentations, self-marketing tools, business related work plan development, and artist-related income tax policies and procedures. Currently, the Nevada Arts Council, Sierra Arts, and the City of Reno Arts and Culture Division offer grant writing workshops specific to their respective grant application processes. However, the scope and breadth of these kinds of support services need to be expanded and addressed by initiating, promoting, and supporting partnerships with established businesses and institutions such as University of Nevada, Reno

### 3 - SUPPORT FOR ARTISTS

and Truckee Meadows Community College. Organizations with volunteer business counselors such as SCORE, although not associated with specific art-related business practices, could provide valuable counseling to small businesses and artists regarding general business “best practices.”

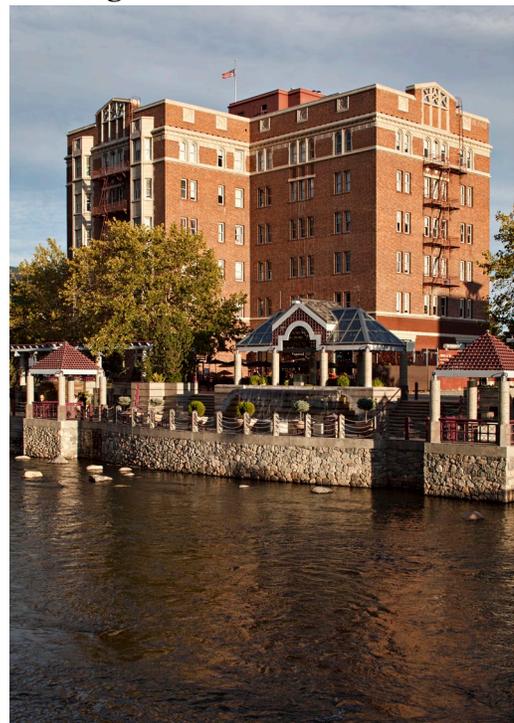
It would very beneficial to create an “artist resources” website that would provide local and regional grant/fellowship/internship information, and professional development course/workshop/presentation offerings. This one-stop resource would greatly increase accessibility and utilization of available services provided by local and regional businesses, agencies, and institutions.

#### **Grants, Artist Fellowships, Scholarships, and Internships**

Several arts service entities provide direct financial support to local artists through existing grant/fellowship programs, scholarships, internships and employment opportunities. However, few artists are afforded the opportunity to make their living through art. The availability of financial assistance for artists is essential to a vigorous and active arts and culture community. Finding ways to further expand this assistance to artists could be facilitated by initiating, promoting, and supporting partnerships with established businesses and non-arts service institutions. For example, the City of Reno could play an instrumental role in developing internships/artist-in-residence opportunities by identifying a variety of City offices and positions that would be benefited by an artist-in-residence program. Such partnerships would produce a broader community impact.

#### **Artists’ Studio/Practice Space, Live/Work Space and Housing**

The City of Reno and the Arts and Culture Commission played a vital (and a large financial) role in supporting ArtSpace and Sierra Arts to cross a major threshold in providing artist live/work space in the Riverside Artist Lofts, which opened in October, 2000. The Riverside offers low income and affordable housing for artists of all disciplines. Art Space is once again working with Sierra Arts to conduct a feasibility study for the development of a second artist live/work space in the Reno area. The success of the Riverside Artist Lofts provides proof of the community’s support of its artist residents, matching the priorities of the City through its sensitive renovation of an existing historic building located within the boundaries of the Arts and Culture District. The Riverside development garnered the support of a number of different local and national entities including the City of Reno, the HOME Consortium, and the State Commission for Cultural Affairs.



*Riverside Artist Lofts*

### 3 - SUPPORT FOR ARTISTS

As our community of practicing artists grows in number, the need for appropriate, safe, and affordable studio space, practice areas, and live/work accommodations continues. New developments and partnerships should be investigated and pursued. Most artist communities are subject to rigorous zoning requirements and health and safety regulations. With the high cost of appropriately zoned space, artists in Reno and throughout the Truckee Meadows are forced to rent space that is inadequate and ill-suited to the creation of their work.

We suggest working further with the City of Reno to establish programs and policies that encourage existing residents and businesses to engage artists by creating environments and incentives that promote the use of artists for public and private activities, and to establish easier licensing and permitting for artists. These efforts will stimulate greater neighborhood participation and integration of creativity that will raise cultural values within the community. Through this heightened presence, it then becomes appropriate for the City to proceed with identifying methods, techniques, and opportunities to develop visual arts studio space, performing arts practice space and live/work housing for artists in all disciplines. Existing City-owned buildings and/or spaces available for acquisition should be identified for such uses. Within areas zoned downtown that are currently industrial, there are possibilities to consider historic structures suitable for renovation/rehabilitation as artist live/work space.

#### **Exhibition and Performance Venues**

The need for more visual and performing arts presentation spaces is significant to the support of practicing artists and to the vitality of our arts and culture community. Venues for presenting arts and culture increase exposure to the arts and promote the work of local artists, enhancing neighborhood vitality. The energy and enthusiasm generated by the Artown festival, revealed by its incredible growth, is an example of how our community responds to the arts.

NadaDada Motel shows how artists can inhabit existing spaces, even temporarily, and have a lasting impact – the event was featured in the New York Times Arts Section in Summer 2009. We should capitalize on this enthusiasm and explore ways to develop and expand venues for individual artists in our community, as in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York City where the vitality of a neighborhood is rejuvenated by artists moving in to work, live, and present their art.



*A gathering of local artists representing the NadaDada Motel event.*

The City and development agencies must investigate planning policies and issues that encourage art-related occupancy of empty buildings and store fronts. While empty, properties are eyesores that promote blight, inviting vandalism and crime, and discourage people from visiting or living in the area. It is in the City's and developers' best interests to enliven



### 3 - SUPPORT FOR ARTISTS

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streetscapes to promote viable and engaging pedestrian areas. The City should seek to work with a non-profit arts agency to place monthly art-related activities in these spaces.

Further research reveals how other communities have successfully created viable temporary arts venues in empty spaces. The below link from the National Federation of Artists' Studio Providers (NFASP) in Great Britain presents a strong, full-bodied solution that introduced eased zoning legislation, providing additional funding for creative uses of empty shops. Such use includes community centers, hubs for education and information, exhibition spaces and artists' studios. The NFASP encourages the use of temporary space that integrates artists into a development and regeneration scheme, or into town centers where the presence of artists underpins and contributes to its overall vitality:

[http://www.nfasp.org.uk/media/doc/Temp\\_Space\\_NFASP\\_guidance\\_note.pdf](http://www.nfasp.org.uk/media/doc/Temp_Space_NFASP_guidance_note.pdf) (*Appendix D*).

#### **Group Health and Liability Insurance**

Health and studio insurance is a pressing issue among artists, especially for those striving to earn their living through their art. Like successful programs such as those sponsored by the Arts Council in Buffalo, NY, that offer discounted insurance plans to individual artists, it may be feasible for arts agencies to include health and studio coverage under a group plan that would provide lower cost premiums to artists in Reno and northwestern Nevada.

There are groups like The Alliance of Professional Artists (<http://www.allproartists.org/home.asp>) and Fractured Atlas (<http://www.fracturedatlas.org>) that offer similar plans. Information regarding such groups should be included in the "one stop" artists resource website included in Recommendation 3.2.

### **Recommendations**

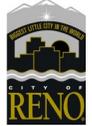
**Recommendation 3.1 – Further develop and expand free or low cost support services and technical assistance for individual visual and performing artists.** Examples include offering classes, workshops, professional development presentations in areas such as website development, grant and fellowship applications, professional portfolio presentation, self-marketing tools, business related work plan development, nonprofit status creation/application, and artist-related income tax policies and procedure

#### *Convening Parties:*

- Sierra Arts
- Arts & Culture Commission
- Nevada Arts Council
- Holland Project
- SCORE – Reno
- University of Nevada, Reno
- Truckee Meadows Community College

### 3 - SUPPORT FOR ARTISTS

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*Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

*Resources Needed:*

Commitment of time from convening parties; a representative organization to produce and present various courses and/or host information on various opportunities online.

*Initial Steps:*

- Research successful artist support programs engaged in technical support in other localities.

**Recommendation 3.2 – Support and develop a “one stop” artist resource site providing information on regional funding, employment and professional development opportunities.** This site could also include the availability of artist studio/practice space, live-work accommodations, and exhibition/performance venues.

*Convening Parties:*

- Sierra Arts
- Arts & Culture Commission
- Nevada Arts Council
- Holland Project
- Arts4Nevada.org

*Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

*Resources Needed:*

Commitment of time from convening parties; a representative organization to produce and present various courses and/or host information on various opportunities online.

*Initial Steps:*

- As a basis for planning and design, research artist resources websites such as [www.artistlink.org](http://www.artistlink.org) and [www.artistcommunities.org](http://www.artistcommunities.org).

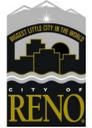
**Recommendation 3.3 – Explore group health and liability coverage policies to provide affordable insurance options to individual artists.**

*Convening Parties:*

- Sierra Arts
- Nevada Arts Council
- Access to Healthcare Network

### 3 - SUPPORT FOR ARTISTS

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*Timeline:*

Mid-term goal (1-7 years)

*Resources Needed:*

Commitment of time from convening parties; a representative organization to host information on various opportunities online and update as needed.

*Initial Steps:*

- Further research successful programs such as the Arts Council in Buffalo, NY.
- Investigate the viability of state and local arts agencies including health and studio insurance plans under a group arrangement ideal to provide lower cost premiums to artists in Reno and throughout northwestern Nevada.

**Recommendation 3.4 – Continue to develop the availability of affordable artists’ studio/ practice spaces and live/work housing.**

*Convening Parties:*

- City of Reno
- Sierra Arts
- Black Rock Arts Foundation
- Burning Man
- ArtSpace
- Historical Resources Commission
- Reno Redevelopment Agency
- Local corporate businesses
- Local merchant associations
- Black Rock Design Institute

*Timeline:*

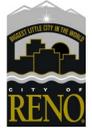
Mid term goal (1-7 years)

*Resources Needed:*

TBD, depending upon available sites.

*Initial Steps:*

- Explore existing structures suitable for rehabilitation.
- Initiate discussions with the City of Reno and other property holders and funding/ support institutions.



### 3 - SUPPORT FOR ARTISTS

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**Recommendation 3.5 – Establish more visual arts exhibition and performing arts performance spaces in public buildings, and initiate a program for monthly temporary occupation of empty buildings and store fronts.**

Convening Parties:

- Sierra Arts
- Arts & Culture Commission
- Reno Arts Consortium
- Holland Project
- Local corporate businesses
- Local merchant associations
- Black Rock Design Institute
- Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts
- RSCVA

*Timeline:*

Mid-term goal (1-7 years)

*Resources Needed:*

Commitment of time from convening parties; a representative organization to host information on various opportunities online and update as needed.

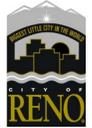
*Initial Steps:*

- Conduct further research into other communities that have established temporary arts venues in empty spaces.
- Initiate discussions with the City and current nonprofit agencies to develop monthly visual and performing arts venues in empty properties/storefronts.
- Initiate discussions with the Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts, RSCVA, and other entities to renovate structures as appropriate gallery and performance space.

**Recommendation 3.6 – Develop and expand financial assistance to artists through grants, artist fellowships, scholarships, and internships.**

Convening Parties:

- Sierra Arts
- Nevada Arts Council
- VSA Arts
- Artown
- Arts & Culture Commission
- Holland Project
- Nevada Museum of Art
- Local corporate businesses



### 3 - SUPPORT FOR ARTISTS

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- Truckee Meadows Community College
- University of Nevada, Reno
- Artown
- Community Foundation of Western Nevada
- Black Rock Arts Foundation
- Burning Man

*Timeline:*

Long-term goal (1-10+ years)

*Resources Needed:*

Commitment of time from convening parties; a representative organization to host information on various opportunities online and update as needed.

*Initial Steps:*

- Research successful artist support programs in other localities.
- Discuss options for developing an artist-in-residence program hosted jointly within the community.

# 4 - ARTS EDUCATION

A strong and innovative arts education component in our schools and community is crucial to the development of a creative workforce that eventually becomes part of Reno’s creative economy.

A great variety of arts education opportunities are available in Reno for all citizens, ranging from early childhood to seniors. Where the arts have traditionally included dance, music, theatre arts, and visual arts, the City of Reno embraces a larger definition that includes literary arts, design and architecture, folk and cultural arts, entertainment, digital art and other new applications of technology.

The extensive nature of arts education offered by local organizations places the City of Reno in a unique leadership position. With a thoughtful collation of resources and deliberate action, Reno has the potential to become a national model in arts education, building upon its appeal as a richly diverse and visionary community.



*Enjoying MarchFourth Marching Band on Arttown Opening Night, 2011*

“No Child Left Behind” provides challenges to offering arts instruction to students when there remains an imbalanced emphasis on testing in math, science, and language arts. Results show reductions in the number of arts elective classes offered to students. In August, 2009, Arne Duncan, U. S. Secretary of Education stated that the arts are core academic subjects:

[https://www.aep-arts.org/files/ArtsEducationLetter\\_SecretaryDuncan.pdf](https://www.aep-arts.org/files/ArtsEducationLetter_SecretaryDuncan.pdf) (Appendix E).

It is vital there is large-scale recognition of the importance of the arts from cultural and education advocates, parents, politicians, businesses, and a critical mass of individuals.

## **Life Skills, Higher Scores**

Children integrated into a curriculum of arts excel in all subject matters, including mathematics, reading, and science. Advanced critical thinking, adaptability and problem solving are clearly linked to arts education and instruction.

In 1995, The United States Department of Education reported in *Schools, Communities, and the Arts: A Research Compendium*, that “using arts processes to teach academic subjects, results not only in improved understanding of content but it greatly improved self-regulatory behavior.” Barry Oreck of Arts Connection and Susan Baum from the College of New Rochelle observed integrated arts lessons in all major subject areas in 14 New York City elementary and secondary public school classrooms. They found that “student behavior improved strikingly



## 4 - ARTS EDUCATION

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in such areas as taking risks, cooperating, solving problems, taking initiative for learning, and being prepared. Content-related achievement also rose.” The study also found that for students who struggle in schools with curriculum and instruction based primarily on verbal proficiency, arts processes are extremely powerful.

The human brain is the most complex system on earth, yet it is too often used in schools primarily as a simple device for storage and retrieval of information. It is now known from the research of such neuroscientists as Marian Diamond at University of California, Berkeley, that the human brain can change structurally and functionally as a result of learning and experience. Well-designed arts programs provide just the kinds of environments that Diamond describes. It has been noted that through experiencing the arts, students are developing the capacity for sound judgment, attention to purpose, the ability to follow through on tasks, and consideration for differing viewpoints.

### **Marketing**

City of Reno art classes and workshops should be included in the Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS) brochure and other marketing programs. Contract classes and outreach program content should include more music, theater, dance, and visual art classes for children, adults, and seniors. Where possible, these classes and programs should be offered in Spanish and marketed to Spanish/bilingual audiences. Local arts organizations should partner with the City of Reno by linking websites for increased program traffic.

### **Advocacy**

In collaboration with local arts organizations, Washoe County School District (WCSD) currently uses an integrated arts curriculum in some schools. However, a fully arts-integrated curriculum should apply to all K-12 schools, as referenced by example of San Francisco Symphony’s ‘Keeping Score’ program, which works in conjunction with an interactive website, radio programs, and acclaimed television series and documentary programs. Efforts should include speakers who would attend school board meetings and actively advocate for enhanced arts curriculum at appropriate times.

### **Youth Arts Center**

Although Holland Project, Sierra Arts Foundation, and Very Special Arts offer programming for youth, the community would benefit from a fully established center located near downtown Reno, with extended hours, open access, affordability and with ample and extensive supplies of equipment that will make the center desirable and useful to young people. The center would be used as a general gathering place and a creative and cultural meeting place used for showcases, conferences, concerts, social forums and other events, all managed by an Arts Education and Outreach Specialist.

Useful equipment would include darkroom materials, art supplies, video editing equipment, digital cameras, graphic design stations, musical recording software, and musical instruments. Rarely used or outdated equipment collected from existing schools, individuals and organizations could contribute towards a central inventory for shared use by schools and



## 4 - ARTS EDUCATION

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cultural organizations. The development of the center would draw upon the experience and success of the Holland Project and should involve Washoe County School District, Truckee Meadows Community College, and the University of Nevada, Reno.

### **Fine Arts Camp**

A Performing and Fine Arts Camps could be developed to include programming and instruction in the visual arts, theater, dance, music, choral, composition, literary arts, and media arts, all in partnership with selected arts organizations in creating camp programs. Camp services should include lodging (dorms), camping, hiking, river rafting, and trips into Reno to partake in arts and culture offerings. The intent would be to market the camps internationally based on Reno's growing cultural profile and its proximity to the region's world-renown natural beauty. The University of Nevada, Reno's Lake Tahoe Music Camp provides a successful model of a camp program which could be emulated and include other fine and performing arts.

*See Appendix F for a comprehensive description of the arts education programs currently offered by local organizations and institutions.*

*All quotes referenced from the Arts Education Partnership, Center for Education and the Economy, and the Huckabee Report.*

## **Recommendations**

**Recommendation 4.1 – Create a City of Reno-sponsored Arts Education Collaborative Committee.** Consisting of representatives from the arts community, the committee would act as a clearinghouse for all arts education activities. The committee would also prevent the overlap of services, allow for stronger collaborative efforts, and act as an advocacy body.

### *Convening Parties:*

- City of Reno
- City of Sparks
- Nevada Alliance for Arts Education
- Washoe County School District
- Washoe County
- Reno Arts Consortium
- Representatives from local arts organizations

### *Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

### *Resources Needed:*

Meeting facility and City staff support (Recommendation 4.2).



*Initial Steps:*

- Consult Nevada Alliance for Arts Education and establish regular meeting dates.

**Recommendation 4.2 – Seek funding for a full-time Arts Education and Outreach Specialist position within an arts organization to house this position and its functions.**

This position would provide staff support to the Arts Education Collaborative Committee, implement committee recommendations, and coordinate efforts to improve and develop local arts education programs.

*Convening Parties:*

- City of Reno
- City of Sparks
- Nevada Alliance for Arts Education
- Washoe County School District
- Sierra Arts

*Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

*Resources Needed:*

\$30,000 - \$40,000

*Initial Steps:*

- Identify funding for the position.
- Identify an organization to house the position and functions.

**Recommendation 4.3 – Enhance and increase the outreach of current City of Reno community art education programs through marketing and targeted distribution of bilingual media pieces.**

*Convening Parties:*

- City of Reno
- Arts Education Collaborative Committee
- Local arts organizations

*Timeline:*

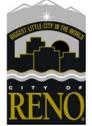
Short-term goal (1-3 years)

*Resources Needed:*

Based on marketing, printing and distribution costs. The City of Reno currently employs five Spanish translators.

## 4 - ARTS EDUCATION

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### *Initial Steps:*

- Development of marketing plan and creation of materials.

### **Recommendation 4.4 – Support integration of the arts as a core-curriculum component of the K-12 program in all Washoe County public schools.**

#### *Convening Parties:*

- Nevada Alliance for Arts Education
- Arts Education Collaborative Committee
- Holland Project
- Sierra Arts
- Washoe County School District
- Reno Philharmonic Association
- Nevada Museum of Art
- Local arts organizations

#### *Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

#### *Resources Needed:*

Feasibility study, marketing funding.

#### *Initial Steps:*

- The Nevada Alliance for Arts Education and the Arts Education Collaborative Committee should begin developing an advocacy plan.
- Development of an arts education awareness and marketing plan.

### **Recommendation 4.5 – Create a central, affordable arts center for young people for all-age activities, and explore methods of increasing arts education opportunities for neighborhoods.**

#### *Convening Parties:*

- Nevada Alliance for Arts Education
- Arts Education Collaborative Committee
- Holland Project
- Sierra Arts
- Artown
- Washoe County School District
- University of Nevada, Reno
- Truckee Meadows Community College
- Local arts organizations
- Terry Lee Wells Discovery Museum

## 4 - ARTS EDUCATION

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*Timeline:*

Mid-term goal (1-7 years), to be operational within 5 years

*Resources Needed:*

Based on hiring the Arts Education Coordinator from Recommendation 4.2.

*Initial Steps:*

- Initiate a discussion with convening parties on center development options and challenges.
- Research potential locations and resources potentially available for center development.

**Recommendation 4.6 – Support the establishment of a summer arts camp by utilizing an existing regional ski area (or other suitable venue) during non-peak summer months.**

Convening Parties:

- City of Reno
- Arts Education Collaborative Committee
- Holland Project
- Sierra Arts
- Artown
- Nevada Alliance for Arts Education
- Washoe County School District
- University of Nevada, Reno
- Reno Philharmonic Association
- Truckee Meadows Community College
- Nevada Museum of Art
- Terry Lee Wells Discovery Museum
- Local arts organizations

*Timeline:*

Mid-term goal (1-7 years)

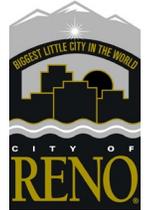
*Resources Needed:*

Unknown

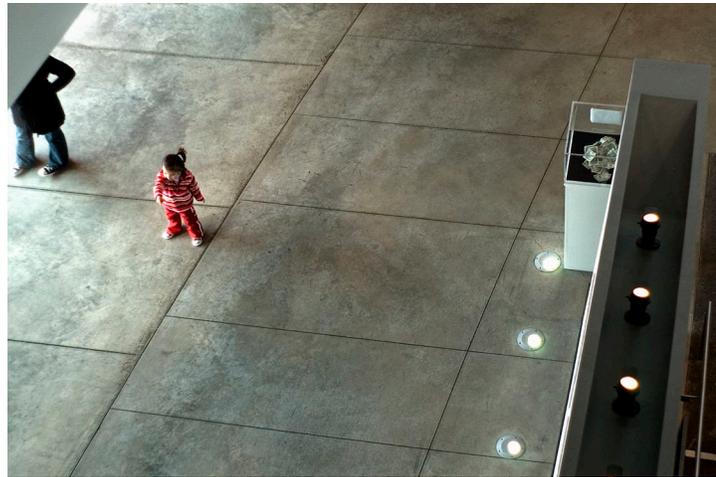
*Initial Steps:*

- Initiate an exploratory meeting with convening parties.
- Research potential locations and resources needed.
- Development of a business and marketing plan.

# 5 - FUNDING



Arts and culture organizations are vital to a healthy local economy. In order to survive and perhaps even thrive during sluggish economic times, arts and culture organizations must respond with more finely tuned management of their institutions, controlling revenues and expenditures.



*“Wonder” - A.Domagala 2005*

The current economic climate is a lens through which short-term funding recommendations must be focused.

Beginning in 2008 and carrying forward more acutely into the present, government agencies have sustained significant budget cuts in all arenas, including funds available for arts and culture initiatives. While the City of Reno has done an admirable job of maintaining funds that prioritize event programming and support for arts and culture, during the 2009 legislative session, the Nevada Arts Council budget was slashed by 43% and again in 2011 by an additional 10%. Washoe County has experienced significant budgetary constraints, prioritizing services that conform to “clean, safe, and open.” Therefore, parks, recreation and cultural services fall to the lowest tier of priority. Ironically, Washoe County citizen surveys and focus groups rate these services high in satisfaction and demand, but low in funding priority. Corporations and local businesses have also been heavily impacted by economic slowdowns and loss of revenue. Individuals have been compromised in their ability to support arts and culture organizations due to a lack of discretionary income.

In consideration of these economic realities, the Reno Arts & Culture Commission should consider a more consistent method of data gathering that demonstrates the overall value of arts and culture to the community. Tools used by the Nevada Arts Council and Artown are examples of effective community-wide data gathering. The Reno Arts Consortium or the University of Nevada, Reno may have the capacity to serve as repository for this information.

To further increase public education and engagement within the funding community, the Community Foundation of Western Nevada performs a regular update of community priorities through its “Arts and Culture Conversation Progress Report,” last updated in 2008, and presently undergoing revision.

Given the importance of arts and culture to the health of Reno, the City of Reno should maintain its present support levels for the short term (12 to 24 months), but look to increase support as appropriate over the longer term. The City of Reno maintained strong support of arts and culture in 2009, with a budget of \$1.2 million, with direct grant funding to arts organizations comprising \$625,000 (52%). Fiscal year 2010/11 saw a reduction of \$36,000



## 5 - FUNDING

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in arts and culture grant funding which will need to be recaptured when budget permits. As a benchmark, national data suggests that public sector grants and subsidies should encompass 5-15% of an organization's budget; contributed income from individuals, corporations and foundations account for 25-50%, and earned income totals 45-65%. These percentages may fluctuate, but provide a solid guideline for comparison. The City of Reno has already performed a preliminary scan of arts organizations and budgets (Appendix G).

Municipal government and area businesses could also provide an expanded menu of support for arts organizations modeled on a barter system. Examples include the donation of used goods; free use of facilities in exchange for recognition; use of vacant facilities or office space for incubators; and use of media and video facilities for production purposes.

A stronger sense of public ownership is vital to the support and survival of arts and culture organizations and their programming in the community. The "Be Instrumental Fund," established in partnership between the City of Reno and the Community Foundation of Western Nevada, is active and supported by individual contributors.

Funding recommendations are premised on the current economy, suggesting that objectives be reviewed based in accordance with economic change. Once the economy recovers, arts and culture organizations will be leaner, but perhaps stronger and more able to weather any future economic downturns.

### Recommendations

**Recommendation 5.1 – Increase City funding to continue support of the Reno Arts and Culture Commission's granting and service programs to a level equal to 10% of all cultural grantee operational budgets.**

*Convening Parties:*

- Arts & Culture Commission

*Timeline:*

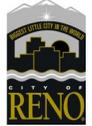
Short-term goal (1-3 years)

*Resources Needed:*

\$40,900/year additional increase to current budgets

*Initial Steps:*

- The Arts and Culture Commission should continue to perform reviews of arts organizations' budgets to assess current organization budget activity overall, including in-kind donations, and to determine how local funding levels compare to national standards for "healthy" organizations.



**Recommendation 5.2 – Local foundations should convene a forum to discuss the creation of an “Institute for New Philanthropy,” an initiative to encourage corporate and individual giving to charitable causes, including cultural programs.**

*Convening Parties:*

- Arts & Culture Commission
- Community Foundation of Western Nevada

*Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

*Resources Needed:*

Commitment of time from convening parties; meeting place for forum of foundation representatives.

*Initial Steps:*

- Research successful models and best practices such as “Be Instrumental” funding opportunity facilitated by the Community Foundation of Western Nevada.
- The City should improve its ability to tell the story about why arts and culture are beneficial for the economy. This can be accomplished through the use of collected and analyzed data on the economic and public impact of arts and culture organizations.

**Recommendation 5.3 – Promote a workplace-giving initiative focused on local corporations as one of the major focus areas for the “Be Instrumental” Fund at the Community Foundation.** This program should be promoted and expanded through established annual goals.

*Convening Parties:*

- Arts & Culture Commission
- United Way

*Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

*Resources Needed:*

Commitment of time from convening parties; meeting place for forum of foundation representatives.

*Initial Steps:*

- Invite representatives from local corporations to establish initial contact with the convening parties.



### **Recommendation 5.4 – Explore the creation of a designated tax revenue source for the arts to be applied regionally.**

#### *Convening Parties:*

- Arts & Culture Commission

#### *Timeline:*

Long-term goal (1-10+ years)

#### *Resources Needed:*

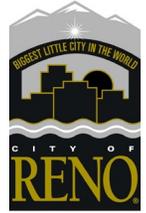
Commitment of time from convening parties

#### *Initial Steps:*

- Investigate successful national models, such as Salt Lake City and Denver, which have created designated tax revenues to fund arts, culture, museums and other tourism-related amenities.
- Other creative sources of public funding for the arts might include a small “entertainment tax” on video and cable service customers.
- In the present economy, new bond and tax initiatives supporting a more stable source of arts and culture funding may not be realistic, though they should not be ruled out as a long-term goal. With a better business case for arts and culture changing public perception about their importance to the economy, appropriate public funding is achievable.

*Related research in Appendix H at back of document.*

# 6 - FACILITIES & PARKING



The importance and value of Reno’s cultural facilities can be linked to the foundation of a strong creative infrastructure, a diversified economy and civic pride. Over the last 20 years, arts organizations have supported existing facilities and worked to strengthen and extend the reach of the arts into new and experimental spaces.

## Performing Arts Venues

The Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts has been the community’s central performing arts facility since it was opened in 1968. Its programming centers on performances by its local resident tenants: the Reno Philharmonic Association, A.V.A. Ballet Theatre, Nevada Opera Association, and the Broadway Comes to Reno series. The theater is in use approximately 190 days each year, supporting more than 100 performances with over 160,000 attendees. The Pioneer Center



*The Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts*

has undergone over \$2.0 million in renovations including the E.L. Cord Plaza, upper lobby improvements, a complete HVAC rebuild, restroom additions, acoustic treatments, seating renovation, insulation and sealing projects, the addition of a 20kw solar array, new digital lighting controls, and asbestos abatement throughout. The Center is currently in good operating condition with ongoing commitments from the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority, the City of Reno and outside donors to maintain its functionality.

Local performance facilities exist in a variety of sizes. With Pioneer Center’s 1,500 seats on the high side, capacity drops significantly to 615 seats at UNR’s Nightingale Hall, followed by yet another sizeable drop to under 300 seats each at UNR’s Redfield Theater, the Crowley Student Union Theater, the Laxalt Theater, TMCC’s Redfield Performing Arts Center, and the Underground at Pioneer Center. Venues operated through UNR and TMCC generally are for proprietary campus-based programming for most of the year. The Reno Little Theater has completed and opened its new facility, a 99-seat black box on Wells Avenue.

In recent years, the Washoe County School District added venues with new high school construction, increasing inventory. North Valleys, Spanish Springs and Damonte Ranch each accommodate 450 seats, while Sparks, Reno, McQueen, Galena and Reed hold between 200-250 seats.

Other less active venues include the Masonic Auditorium with 425 seats (that could be re-raked to 600 seats) and the Lear Theater, at 299 seats, will be an essential addition, though



## 6 - FACILITIES & PARKING

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no completion date has been established. Other new venues include a 99-seat theater in the Downtown Library, the West Street Market with 75-100 seats and the Steinway Piano Gallery with 99 seats. The Nevada Museum of Art hosts the Miriam and Wayne Prim Theater with seating for 180. VSA Arts of Nevada has the Garden Pavilion, used for meetings and small performances which holds a capacity of 60.

The City of Reno owns and operates several facilities with stages including the McKinley Arts and Culture Center auditorium (with stage) that can hold 200; the Southside Cultural Center's second floor auditorium (with stage) and the California Building (without a stage) each hold 300; the Evelyn Mount Northeast Community Center Gym holds 250; the Plumas Gym seats 250; the Sibayan Recreation Center has capacity for 200; and the Neil Road Community Center (with a stage) has arena seating for 175. Southside Cultural Center's second floor auditorium currently accommodates fewer than 100 people, but once fire suppression funding is in place that capacity will jump to 300.

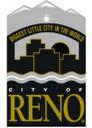
There are larger multi-purpose and convention-style venues available in the area including Lawlor Events Center, the Ballroom, and the Downtown Events Center which generally support only big-name commercial events. Likewise, many casinos support performance venues, although they are generally programmed exclusively by the owner/operators.

In the future, Reno will need a mid-sized (1,200 + seat) facility. Such a facility could provide for measured growth that groups need to achieve success in presenting performances in larger venues. The creation of a mid-sized theater will not take performances away from the other facilities; rather, it will provide a bridge to help emerging groups build audiences and capacity. The Reno Philharmonic and the Reno Chamber Orchestra have held meetings to explore options for the creation of a new 1,200-seat facility intended as an acoustic concert hall primarily designed for music.

Programming in a new, mid-sized environment will provide more options for "prime time" use with an emphasis on booking Thursday through Sunday evening and matinee performances. Programming should be a mix of local and touring productions, while encouraging collaboration, outreach, and master classes. This new facility would provide a next-tier level of engagement hosting greater production capacity and higher gross revenue potential for more pronounced organizational development.

Increased venue programming will result in more vitality downtown and eventually bring more business (e.g., food, drink, galleries, retail shops) to meet the needs of increased visitation by locals and tourists into the area. The current economic recession requires that immediate short-term focus remain on the sustainability of existing facilities. However, the extended plan for a proposed mid-sized (1,200 + seat) venue should commence with attention placed on its possible role as part of a larger performing arts "complex," including interactive rehearsal space, "observation" areas, and open plazas surrounded by cafés, coffee houses, and bars. This sense of creative space would become a natural hub for locals and tourists venturing downtown. The estimated cost for a 1,200 seat venue is over \$50 million at this time.

## 6 - FACILITIES & PARKING



### Visual Arts Facilities

Reno has a number of art exhibition sites, including the Nevada Museum of Art; various City of Reno gallery sites; Sierra Arts; University of Nevada, Reno; Truckee Meadows Community College; community public art installations; and a handful of commercial galleries. Among these sites, many have been recognized for the quality and breadth of their exhibits and offerings. In 1999, the Nevada Museum of Art was recognized on a state level with a Governor's Arts Award for Outstanding Achievement, and nationally with the National Award for Museum Service. The Stremmel Gallery has become a major attraction, hosting the Coeur d'Alene Art Auction, one of the most esteemed and long-standing art auctions in the Western United States.

The Arts & Culture Commission oversees the community's public art program, providing high-profile permanent and temporary exhibition opportunities throughout the community. The City of Reno also owns and maintains an interior and exterior art collection currently valued at approximately \$3 million. Both Renown and Saint Mary's Hospitals boast large collections of permanent art within their facilities as do many major corporations throughout the city.



*The Nevada Museum of Art*

Other local exhibition venues:

- The City of Reno currently schedules regular exhibitions in the Metro Gallery at Reno City Hall, the Southside Cultural Center and the East Gallery and West Gallery of the McKinley Arts and Culture Center.
- Sierra Arts has a regular exhibition schedule in four galleries including its main gallery in the Riverside Artist Lofts, the Northwest Reno Library Gallery, the John Ben Snow Memorial Trust Gallery at the South Valleys Library, and the University of Phoenix Gallery. Sierra Arts also supports numerous satellite locations in the Gallery at Work program.
- VSA Arts of Nevada operates the Art Access Gallery, in two rooms of the Lake Mansion, with a year-round exhibition space for artists with disabilities.
- The University of Nevada, Reno School of the Arts currently houses the Sheppard Gallery, McNamara Gallery, Front Door Gallery and the Exit Gallery in the Church Fine Arts Building. The new Knowledge Center also supports a gallery, and art work from the University's permanent collection is on regular display throughout the campus.
- Truckee Meadows Community College's main campus hosts the Red Mountain and Erik Lauritzen galleries in the Red Mountain Building and the Main Gallery in the James V. Eardley Student Center.



## 6 - FACILITIES & PARKING

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- There are also many retail locations in the region that have contracts with artists to hang and sell their work without calling themselves a formal “art gallery.”

City support has resulted in development of cultural venues and private galleries in downtown and numerous other areas. However, gallery operations by their nature are transient due to fluctuations in the economy. Visual arts initiatives are probably most at-risk of all the art forms, due in part to highly specialized subject matter and limited revenue generation.

### **Transportation and Parking**

Reno is not perceived as a walking town, and transportation issues present a significant challenge for the community. Cultural patrons request parking that is both accessible and safe. Performing arts venues, frequented most often at night, are challenged with offsite parking perceived as unsafe due to inadequate street lighting and limited pedestrian activity. This issue contributes a disincentive to attending evening performances. Progress has been made in the downtown core to improve street lighting and enhance activity with more restaurants and businesses open in the evening. However, even with new residential developments and attractions like the Whitewater Rafting Park, which help increase pedestrian circulation downtown, perceptions about safety persist.

Both Pioneer Center and the Reno Aces Baseball Stadium offer comprehensive downtown parking layouts on their websites. However, with the addition of Reno Aces patron activity, the public has come to expect parking congestion and added parking fees on game days.

The Sierra Spirit bus, operated by the Regional Transportation Commission is a free service maintained along the downtown/University corridor that allows patrons the ability to park and move through main traffic corridors hassle-free. Previous concerns about the limited coverage and reach of Reno’s public transit system have been addressed to some extent by a newly completed transfer station in downtown Reno. The RTC is also examining the feasibility of bringing a fixed rail streetcar to the Virginia street corridor. While one of the goals of a streetcar line would be to support economic development along the corridor, it would also have to the potential to be an attractive transit option for cultural patrons, benefiting arts and culture events and establishments in the downtown area.

While arts organizations expand their services to better engage underserved populations, children, seniors, students, minorities, the physically challenged and low-income residents have significant challenges acquiring transportation to and from arts-related venues. Providing effective means for people to come to performances and exhibits will continue to need attention.

### **Cultural Activities**

The Reno Arts and Culture District was established when the City identified the Riverfront area, with its existing historic structures, geographically central setting, and proximity to downtown, as the natural cultural center of the community. As stated in the City’s 1999 Master Plan, “The Truckee River is a natural catalyst and theme for public and private investment/



## 6 - FACILITIES & PARKING

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reinvestment in parks, cultural facilities, and downtown.” Cultural progress has been made downtown and venue renovations have occurred, including the McKinley Arts and Culture Center, Nevada Museum of Art, VSA Arts at the Lake Mansion and the Riverside Artist Lofts. The rehabilitation of the Lear Theater is still in process and has been awarded the ability to use tax credits for further renovation. In addition, public art has been erected, and Artown and other festivals have been established. The District supports signage, enhanced lighting, and continues to attract an inventory of shops and restaurants to make it truly pedestrian and visitor friendly. The Riverwalk Merchants Association has instituted monthly Wine Walks and Art Walks to draw the general public into the area. A second arts district has been established at the University of Nevada, Reno.

### **Outdoor Performance Venues**

Reno has a long history of attracting special events programming. Initially established in association with gaming along Virginia Street, street closures became the most common venue for festivals and outdoor activities supporting performance and audience interaction. Many special events have been presented in the downtown area, including Artown, Hot August Nights, Blues and Brews, Street Vibrations, among others. These events, while popular and successful, present problems with street closures, traffic diversion, and business access, though residents have grown used to the scheduling of these events and the media is good about reporting when street closures and diversions take place.

Over time, Wingfield Park and its amphitheater have also become essential venues in support of special events and have become the traditional setting for large outdoor performances and festivals. However, many professional performing arts groups will not perform in the venue because of production limitations, no backstage support or other needed amenities, such as proper wing space, bathrooms with running water, etc. In recent years, Reno established City Plaza, at First & Virginia streets, providing an overflow venue for more event programming, which transforms into the “Rink on the River” from November through February. Although planned, City Plaza currently has no covering for shade, no bathrooms on premise, no permanent sound system or stage, and planned improvements have thus far been tabled due to financial limitations.

Just as Washoe County has the Hawkins Amphitheater at Bartley Ranch with formal and casual seating for 1,000, Reno is also an ideal spot for a new major outdoor venue due to its extraordinary climate. With its temperate weather, low humidity, long daylight hours, and spectacular views, Reno can offer ongoing cultural events in an outdoor facility throughout summer, and for most of the spring and fall. Such a venue could ultimately attract a national audience, similar to facilities in Ashland, OR, and Santa Fe, NM.



### Recommendations

**Recommendation 6.1 – Cross reference and expand the cultural facility assessment survey (Appendix I) with other surveys that may exist, to include categories such as technical capabilities and accessibility.**

*Convening Parties:*

- Arts & Culture Commission

*Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

*Resources Needed:*

Dedicated staff resources.

*Initial Steps:*

- Identify source for staff resources; compile facility assessment surveys.

**Recommendation 6.2 – Determine the need to complete the rehabilitation of the Southside Cultural Center Auditorium to include fire suppression system, HVAC, and theatrical furnishings.**

*Convening Parties:*

- City of Reno
- Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts
- Terry Lee Wells Discovery Museum

*Timeline:*

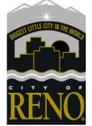
Short-term goal (1-3 years)

*Resources Needed:*

Contingent upon the determination of the need and usefulness of the Southside Cultural Center; \$750,000 for improvements; \$500,000 for window retrofit and seismic retrofit.

*Initial Steps:*

- Convene potential users to discuss future needs and programming expansion.
- Review information regarding estimates for renovation and upgrades.
- Gather information on possible funding sources to complete renovation and upgrades.



### **Recommendation 6.3 – Discuss options for re-raking the auditorium at the Masonic Building and enhancing the HVAC, sound systems and lobby space.**

#### *Convening Parties:*

- Resident Masonic Groups
- Arts & Culture Commission
- Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts

#### *Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

#### *Resources Needed:*

\$750,000 for improvements

#### *Initial Steps:*

- Meet with Masonic management on feasibility of using the facility on an ongoing basis or possible purchase and relocation of Masonic facilities out of downtown.
- Convene potential users to discuss future needs and programming expansion.
- Gather information regarding estimates for renovation and upgrades.
- Gather information on possible funding sources to complete renovation and upgrades.

### **Recommendation 6.4 – Complete plans to enhance City Plaza to accommodate outdoor special events, art installations and allow for expansion of cultural festivals.**

#### *Convening Parties:*

- City of Reno
- Downtown developers
- Reno's Regional Alliance for Downtown
- Technical theater and event programming specialists

#### *Timeline:*

Mid-term goal (1-7 years)

#### *Resources Needed:*

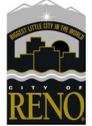
\$600,000 - \$3,000,000 depending upon improvements.

#### *Initial Steps:*

- Convene potential users to discuss future needs and programming expansion.
- Conduct research on outdoor venues in other communities, including Ashland, OR, and Santa Fe, NM, plus similar venues found in Milwaukee, WI, and Dallas, TX.
- Gather information regarding estimates to complete current planned upgrades.

## 6 - FACILITIES & PARKING

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**Recommendation 6.5 – Explore collaborative cultural uses for unused commercial spaces and shopping areas downtown, working in partnership with landlords and others to minimize the negative effects impacting nearby active and future properties.**

*Convening Parties:*

- City of Reno Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department
- Arts & Culture Commission
- Sierra Arts
- Downtown Improvement Association
- Commercial real estate developers and real estate companies
- University of Nevada, Reno Art Department
- Truckee Meadows Community College
- Private gallery owners

*Timeline:*

Mid-term goal (1-7 years)

*Resources Needed:*

Management fees from building owners and developers based on a square foot equation and number of artist rotations.

*Initial Steps:*

- Convene parties to discuss who, how, when and how much.
- Choose local artists' work that will be hung and possibly rotated.
- Create a publicity plan to “get the word out.”

**Recommendation 6.6 – Continue plans for a mid-sized theatre complex hosting 1,200 + seats.**

*Convening Parties:*

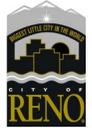
- City of Reno
- Reno Philharmonic
- Reno Chamber Orchestra
- Nevada Opera
- Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts
- Artown
- Downtown Improvement Association
- University of Nevada, Reno
- Potential user groups

*Timeline:*

Mid-term goal(1-7 years)

## 6 - FACILITIES & PARKING

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### *Resources Needed:*

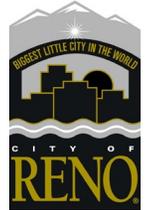
\$250,000 for initial design concepts and cost estimates; \$50 million for construction.

### *Initial Steps:*

- Convene potential user groups, the downtown business community and the City Council to evaluate current and projected needs and desires for the ideal performing space.
- Engage a theater design firm to develop concept plans, including initial cost estimates for construction.
- Conduct feasibility study.
- Explore option for alternative financing methods, including voter-approved bond funding or redevelopment financing.

# 7 - IMAGE & MARKETING

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The City of Reno markets the City's rich cultural community with dual goals of increasing awareness and participation among local residents, and supporting and promoting a cultural community that serves to attract tourists to the region. The City focuses on cultural programs within the downtown arts and culture district with a secondary focus on neighborhoods.



*Laura Jackson conducts the Reno Philharmonic Orchestra*

Reno has long realized it needs to expand attractions to tourists beyond gaming, and while the Reno Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority, EDAWN, the Chamber of Commerce and other agencies have addressed this by introducing outdoor and recreation activities into their campaigns, the arts haven't been consistently integrated into any tourist marketing plans. The arts, when adequately funded and well promoted, can be a powerful draw to attract tourists and an important partner in economic development.

Using the arts to increase tourism and promote economic development is most effective when the City's cultural groups' ability to deliver stellar products has been bolstered by adequate funding support and excellent venues. Any effort, then, to use the arts to attract visitors and new businesses must center on the support and promotion of the artists and organizations themselves. The City must continue to enhance the image of our region by investing in the quality and promotion of Reno's cultural programs.

## **Residents' Awareness of the Arts**

Cultural organizations should be marketed to locals first. Local attendance of cultural offerings in the City of Reno, specifically downtown and in the Reno Arts and Culture District, has been growing over the last nine years, as indicated in audience surveys and reports. This shows a marked change from when many in the broader community did not seem to be aware of, or actively attend, local performances and exhibitions.

The capacity of local cultural organizations to present a strong artistic product has grown; however, much of the population still does not recognize this. People who grew up in Reno tend to undervalue local group professionalism, and those who have moved to Reno (many from the San Francisco Bay area), tend to feel the local product cannot compete with the quality of the arts with which they are familiar. This is increasingly not the case, but continues to be a negative perception.

When residents support local culture, then visitors are more likely attend cultural events as well. Marketing to locals has reaped greater audience numbers and increased awareness of Reno's cultural landscape, as the experience of Artown and the Nevada Museum of Art has demonstrated.



*India Arie and Idan Raichel performed as part of Artown 2011.*

Another strategy for introducing the arts to residents is to work with Reno's Neighborhood Advisory Boards (NABs) to fund arts and culture activities relevant to their neighborhood. These activities could be supported in part with funds managed by the NABs. The Northwest NAB in Ward 5 has successfully funded an annual Art Kites for Kids event during Artown, as well as contributing to a public art installation by local artist David Boyer. Other NABs have contributed to funding public art in various neighborhood locations.

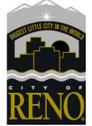
### **Local Marketing**

Local news coverage and awareness of the arts through traditional media has long proven to have a positive impact on cultural attendance. The cultural community is also now taking advantage of alternative modes of publicity and marketing including social media, on-line calendars and creative ticket packaging programs. A one-stop interactive arts calendar, which is the goal of Arts4Nevada.com, should be marketed to residents and visitors, as well as serve as a planning tool for event scheduling by arts organizations. There is an opportunity to provide educational seminars that focus on social media and online ticketing options for arts organizations.

### **External Factors**

A vocal core of individuals within government, business development circles, the cultural community and gaming have acknowledged that an increase in cultural events can attract new visitors, and stimulate economic development. In addition to supporting local and regional artists, many commercial and nonprofit promoters bring nationally and internationally recognized exhibitions, performers, and special events into the area. Past cultural plans have recommended the cultural community endeavor to make the arts a component of media campaigns attracting tourists to Reno. However, there has not yet been a successful "three-pronged" approach that addresses gaming, outdoor recreation and culture. Arts organizations are very interested in utilizing a single on-line ticketing system intended to serve all of the arts, facilitating seamless ticket handling for increased event attendance and easy access for locals and visitors alike.

According to Americans for the Arts, cultural and heritage tourists are particularly valuable visitors to attract to a community. Evidence indicates that cultural tourists stay on average 1.5 days longer than general tourists, and spend up to 20% more on restaurants, hotels, entertainment and shopping.



From a broad perspective, the City should strive to develop an image of being artist friendly so as to foster an environment which is supportive and attractive to established, under-represented and emerging artists.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Recommendation 7.1 – Market programs to increase awareness and attendance of cultural programs and events.**

*Convening Parties:*

- Arts4Nevada.org
- Cultural institutions
- Government entities
- Chamber of Commerce
- EDAWN
- Reno Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority
- Tourism organizations
- Print and broadcast media

*Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

*Resources Needed:*

Funding to maintain, manage and promote Arts4Nevada.org as a unified, interactive website and mobile application.

*Initial Steps:*

- Include reciprocal links to all broadcast and print media, gaming properties, redevelopment groups, chamber groups and tourism agencies.
- Develop an online component for ticket sales.

#### **Recommendation 7.2 – Develop a coordinated effort to encourage Reno Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority, EDAWN, the Chamber of Commerce and other tourism and economic development agencies to recognize the contribution of the arts in boosting tourism efforts and promoting the region’s quality of life by including the arts in their marketing efforts.**

*Convening Parties:*

- Arts & Culture Commission
- Marketing Committee
- Arts4Nevada.org
- Reno Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority



## 7 - IMAGE & MARKETING

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- EDAWN
- Sierra Arts
- Artown

### *Timeline:*

Short-term goal (1-3 years)

### *Resources Needed:*

Commitment of time to advocate.

### *Initial Steps:*

- Distribute and promote research on the impact of arts to the local economy and on best demonstrated practices regarding cultural tourism in other localities.
- Solicit marketing support of local elected and government officials, RSCVA, EDAWN, and the Chamber of Commerce.
- Invite elected officials to gallery openings, public art dedications, and performances to raise their awareness and understanding.
- Review tourism, government and redevelopment agency websites to make sure they accurately represent the City's cultural community. Confirm that websites include a link to the Arts4Nevada.org on-line calendar.

### **Recommendation 7.3 – Continue to produce and distribute print and electronic publications to tourism and redevelopment agencies, as well as the general public, such as the City of Reno Public Art Guide and the City of Reno City Hall Art Collection Guide.**

Distribute adequate supplies to hotel properties, Chamber of Commerce, the Visitors Center, tourism practitioners, government and redevelopment agencies, and work with these groups to link to on-line versions of the publications.

### *Convening Parties:*

- Arts & Culture Commission

### *Timeline:*

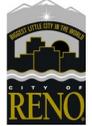
Mid-term goal (1-7 years)

### *Resources Needed:*

Based upon distribution and usage.

### *Initial Steps:*

- Inventory current publications, determine usefulness and access distribution.
- Seek bids for updating, reprinting and distributing publications.



**Recommendation 7.4 – Present periodic cultural tourism forums and seminars for organizations, artists, city leaders, redevelopment agencies, historical groups, and tourism agencies to reinforce the critical role culture can play in attracting visitors to the region, boosting economic development.**

*Convening Parties:*

- Arts & Culture Commission
- Historical Resources Commission
- Sierra Arts
- Artown

*Timeline:*

Mid-term goal (1-7 years)

*Resources Needed:*

\$2,500 to \$5,000 per program from Arts & Culture Commission technical assistance funds.

*Initial Steps:*

- Identify successful cultural tourism efforts elsewhere in the country.
- Develop workshops around these successful efforts.

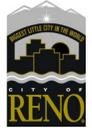
**Recommendation 7.5 – Convene a summit to discuss on-line ticketing options for non-profit organizations as well as commercial promoters, including subscription modules, assigned and general seating for the coordination and commitment of one ticketing system for northern Nevada.**

*Convening Parties:*

- Arts & Culture Commission
- Arts4Nevada.org
- On-line ticketing experts
- Local non-profits
- Gaming properties
- Sports organizations
- Pioneer Center for Performing Arts
- Livestock Events Center
- University of Nevada, Reno
- Truckee Meadows Community College

*Timeline:*

Mid-term goal (1-7 years)



## 7 - IMAGE & MARKETING

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### *Resources Needed:*

Commitment of time from convening parties.

### *Initial Steps:*

- Organize committee and schedule Summit.

**Recommendation 7.6 – Provide marketing, education, and professional development seminars for local arts, culture and historical groups focusing on social media, on-line calendar resources, on-line ticketing options and working with regional and national media.** Priority would be given to City of Reno grantees.

### *Convening Parties:*

- Arts & Culture Commission
- Small Business Development Center
- Sierra Arts
- Arts4Nevada.org
- Truckee Meadows Community College
- Social media experts
- On-line ticketing experts

### *Timeline:*

Long-term goal (1-10+ years)

### *Resources Needed:*

Fund and identify a coordinator; provide stipends for instructors.

### *Initial Steps:*

- Create class outline, determine venue and coordinator.
- Seek funding.