



## Strategic Cultural Plan Grand Junction, CO 5 Years: 2022-2027

**Making art and culture part of everyday life in our community!**



Adopted by:  
Grand Junction Commission on Arts and Culture  
December 7, 2021

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## Introduction

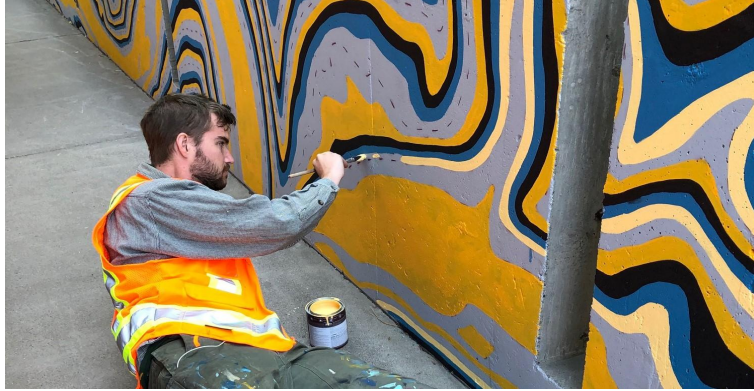
Art & Culture has been the social backbone of the community in Grand Junction from its inception. Just one year after the town had been established in 1881, literary societies, bands, orchestras, musicals and plays were forming. Before 1900, the first opera house, library, historical society and fairs had been established. The settlers of our community knew the importance of hard work and cultural entities. Now, 139 years later, our community continues to embrace and understand the need for cultural experiences in our daily lives.

As we continue charting new paths and align ourselves with the City of Grand Junction's Strategic Plan of connectedness through community building, we see opportunities to strengthen ourselves as a unified, creative, forward thinking city. The Grand Junction Strategic Cultural Plan and the community will move us through the next five years to bring diversification, acknowledgement of our history, and opportunities for economic growth within the creative sector.

Throughout 2021, the Arts & Culture Commission organized meetings, asking the community to come together to envision goals and strategies for the next five years. In these meetings, the conversations evolved from the most grand ideas to workable projects and goals. This shared vision provided in the Grand Junction Strategic Cultural Plan will support partnerships that help drive our goal of a vibrant economy, culture and valuable quality of life.

The Arts & Culture Commission is grateful for the enthusiasm, ideas and focus brought to each of the groups organizing the categories presented. This plan will move forward because of the passion, expert knowledge, understanding of the needs of our cultural community and the vision for continued growth.

Sarah Dishong  
Chair  
Grand Junction Commission on Arts & Culture



## Participants

The completion of the Grand Junction Strategic Cultural Plan is due to the investment of people in the community who were thoughtfully engaged, took time to support the process, and consult on the content of this document. The Grand Junction Commission on Arts & Culture appreciates our strategic partners who participated in the kickoff event in February 2021 and those that carried on the process by collaborating as committee contributors.

### Grand Junction Commission on Arts & Culture

Ron Cloyd  
Lindsay Jaeger  
Kelley Raymond

Sarah Dishong, Chair  
Matt Janson, Vice-Chair  
Diana Rooney

Matt Goss  
Jan Moorman  
Erica Zajackowski

### Grand Junction Commission on Arts & Culture Staff Liaisons

Lorie Gregor

Tricia Rothwell

Marlene Godsey

### Strategic Partners - Committee Contributors

#### Arts Education:

Facilitators: Ron Cloyd & Matt Janson

Naomi Barlow  
Joy Potter

Rachel Egelston  
Lora Quesenberry

Tracy LeFebre

#### Creative Districts & Creative Industries:

Facilitators: Matt Goss & Lindsay Jaeger

Marnie Benson  
Erica Kitzman

Robbie Breaux  
TJ Smith

Nancy Lewis  
Haley Van Camp

#### Economic Impact:

Facilitators: Lorie Gregor & Jan Moorman

Lee Borden  
Merritt Kinsey

Peter Booth  
Chris Muhr

Jacquie Chappell-Reid

**History, Science & Culture:**

Facilitator: Erica Zajackowski

Terri Earl  
Vida Jaber

Libbie Early  
Dave Fishell

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**Public Art:**

Facilitators: Kelley Raymond & Diana Rooney

Michelle Boisvenue-Fox  
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David Goe  
Forrest Hoskins  
Troy Reynolds

Brian Harrison  
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**Urban Planning:**

Facilitator: Sarah Dishong

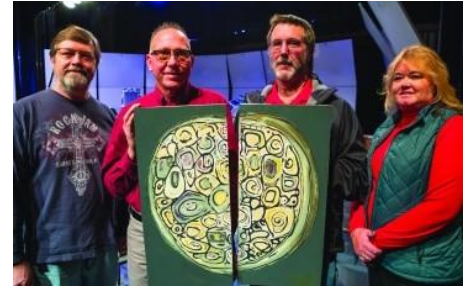
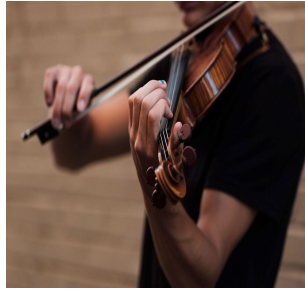
Georgann Jouflas  
Beverly Windscheffel

Jeffery Fleming

Terry Shepherd

**Strategic Partners****Organizations, Affiliations & Designations Represented**

All Metals Welding	Art on the Corner
City of Grand Junction	Colorado Land Advisor
Downtown Grand Junction	Former Arts & Culture Commissioners
Grand Junction Historical Preservation	Grand Valley Creative Alliance
Historical Board	Legends of the Grand Valley
Mesa County Public Library	Moonscapes 3D
Museums of Western Colorado	Palisade Art Vision
Postvention Alliance	School District 51
Super Rad Art Jam	The Theatre Project
The Art Center of Western Colorado	Western Colorado Writers Forum



## Planning for Culture

### WHY IS IT NECESSARY?

PLANNING FOR CULTURE is fundamental to envisioning and realizing the character and spirit of a place. It is a community effort which requires participation, collaboration, and coordination in order to identify, organize, and implement a holistic model of cultural objectives.

Effective cultural planning recognizes that the evolution of a place is both intentional and organic. Some objectives require significant and focused effort while others germinate and grow almost spontaneously. Taken as a whole, they have the potential to create a vibrant and desirable environment where culture generates success.

Inclusivity, equity and engagement foster cohesion and ownership within the community. Cultural planning provides a way to re-affirm the importance of culture in everyday life by gathering a diverse range of stakeholders under a common purpose. The process reinforces networks with the energy and resources to implement the plan.

Cultural planning also recognizes that culture is not a standalone component within the broader scope of the city. A city is an indivisible entity where every layer of life is pervaded by culture. As such, culture should be integrated into achieving broader civic goals and benefits at multiple levels.

Across a wider context of communities who are leveraging culture to stimulate economic growth, culture is competitive. Culture is acknowledged and embraced as critical to the strength of a city's business strategy. Cultural planning is an essential tool for making informed decisions about how to invest in culture as a competitive endeavor:

PLANNING FOR CULTURE is not optional. To sustain a positive, vibrant, and relevant place - communities must understand, enhance, and project a captivating and durable cultural identity.

# Strategic Cultural Plan: Goals, Strategies, Actions

## ARTS EDUCATION

### Goal:

Build and enhance the value of arts education through increased community exposure and communication.

### STRATEGY 1:

Encourage an increase in artistic and cultural interactive events.

#### ACTION 1:

Increase frequency of public and free events such as “Take Part in Art.”

#### ACTION 2:

Create diverse opportunities to meet the needs of a wider demographic. Events could be themed to increase exposure to new arts and culture opportunities and to maintain freshness within the community.

### STRATEGY 2:

Increase cooperation and communication between arts and cultural organizations to increase visibility of events and artists.

#### ACTION 1:

Establish an information campaign to promote GJArts.org and Visitgrandjunction.com.

#### ACTION 2:

Utilize an existing community space that can provide in-person assistance to navigate the databases of GJArts.org and Visitgrandjunction.com.

# Strategic Cultural Plan: Goals, Strategies, Actions

## CREATIVE DISTRICTS & CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

### Goal:

Maintain an effective, positive image of the role of the arts.

### STRATEGY 1:

Attract, retain, and support local creatives.

#### ACTION 1:

Foster professionalism, cooperation, diversity, and recognition of the arts as an economic driver and a valuable community development tool.

#### ACTION 2:

Participate in and support Culture Week, organized by Grand Valley Creative Alliance, uniting and celebrating creative organizations throughout Grand Junction.

### STRATEGY 2:

Foster diversity, equity, and inclusion within the creative industry.

#### ACTION 1:

Provide diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training for Community leaders.

#### ACTION 2:

Outreach to engage diverse artists and organizations within the Grand Valley.

#### ACTION 3:

Promote inclusivity by printing bilingual promotional materials in and integrating into community cultural events.

# Strategic Cultural Plan: Goals, Strategies, Actions

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

### Goal:

Empower and pave the way for Arts and Culture initiatives within the community to secure funding.

### STRATEGY 1:

Complete an Arts and Culture economic impact study in a manner that includes both for-profit and nonprofit entities and supports growth comparisons to prior studies.

#### ACTION 1:

Contract with Americans for the Arts to create an economic impact study in 2022 and request local support to achieve survey completion.

#### ACTION 2:

Perform a quality of life impact study. Identify economic measures to serve as proxies for the quality of life measures.

### STRATEGY 2:

Create an Economic Development Toolkit.

#### ACTION 1:

Determine what tools arts and culture initiatives need to achieve success.

#### ACTION 2:

Initiate projects to define and build the tools identified in Action 1.

### STRATEGY 3:

Raise awareness of arts and culture initiatives.

#### ACTION 1:

Utilize the economic impact study to define target audience groups. Interview representatives to identify goals, strategies, and action items.

#### ACTION 2:

Create an awareness campaign, including an Economic Development Toolkit.

#### STRATEGY 4:

Review case studies in growing art-friendly communities comparable to Grand Junction.

##### ACTION 1:

Interview arts and culture leaders in successful art communities.

##### ACTION 2:

Utilize Colorado Creative Industries data to create a baseline for our community.

##### ACTION 3:

Include data in the Economic Development Toolkit.

#### STRATEGY 5:

Research potential revenue streams which would most significantly benefit the arts and culture of the community.

##### ACTION 1:

Create an inclusive and diverse task force.

##### ACTION 2:

Research where these revenue streams will be allocated.

##### ACTION 3:

Utilize existing models of tax initiatives as reference.

##### ACTION 4:

Educate the public to the negative effects of gentrification and the "SoHo Effect."

#### STRATEGY 6:

Create business programs for professional working artists.

##### ACTION 1:

Develop an educational or practical program designed to assist artists with running a business, including keeping track of finances and doing taxes.

##### ACTION 2:

Educate artists and event coordinators on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines for public art pieces and events.

##### ACTION 3:

Contact the Colorado Business Committee for the Arts (CBCA) for conference/training for artists.

# Strategic Cultural Plan: Goals, Strategies, Actions

## HISTORY, SCIENCE, AND CULTURE

### Goal:

Promote an appreciation for the unique diversity and variety of Mesa County's rich history and heritage, scientific endeavors, and enriching cultural experiences to engage residents and attract visitors.

### STRATEGY 1:

Focus on the repatriation of indigenous remains at the Museum of the West as well as reparations for past transgressions.

#### ACTION 1:

Incorporate the book, "We Are Still Here!" into D51 Curriculum, supporting Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).

#### ACTION 2:

Reinterpret native pottery with contemporary native art traditions. Work with Native American artists regionally with a curated exhibition juxtaposing contemporary and archaic works from across the Colorado Plateau.

#### ACTION 3:

Explore an updated definition of the word, "culture" as it relates to our community.

#### ACTION 4:

Work with the Museum of the West to incorporate exhibits with a broader cultural reach than currently on display.

### STRATEGY 2:

Provide transparency with the local chapter of the Old Spanish Trail Association.

#### ACTION 1:

Work with the Utes of the West and BLM to create signage that leads to trail access points.

**ACTION 2:**

Work with the Library and 970 West to create videos about the Old Spanish Trail within Grand Junction.

**STRATEGY 3:**

Recreate the Infamous Hose Cart Races.

**ACTION 1:**

Hold the race in conjunction with a prominent summer event.

**STRATEGY 4:**

Incorporate more educational materials about local history into the public library and District 51 curriculum.

**ACTION 1:**

Elevate the contributions of the Hispanic and Native American cultures into elementary social studies programs.

**ACTION 2:**

Offer new cultural education kits to be checked out from the library. Three new kits will focus on money, early agriculture, and recent Native American traditions.

**ACTION 3:**

Create a Grand Junction-centric book to be given to elementary students. Discuss with Palisade and use their book as an example.

**STRATEGY 5:**

Update current signage at Riggs Hill and revitalize the area as culturally significant.

**ACTION 1:**

Include more information about the species of dinosaurs found, the dig site, and general paleontology in the area.

**ACTION 2:**

Utilize benches and outdoor presentation area. Refurbish as needed.

**ACTION 3:**

Create an educational kit about the area that can be incorporated into District 51 curriculum and used during field trips.

# Strategic Cultural Plan: Goals, Strategies, Actions

## PUBLIC ART

### Goal:

Build the image of the Grand Valley as an arts destination through public art.

### STRATEGY 1:

Identify significant and strategic locations within the Grand Valley to develop an “Arts Corridor.”

#### ACTION 1:

Open lines of communication with other city-led arts organizations in the Grand Valley.

### STRATEGY 2:

Expand public awareness of existing artistic assets within the community.

#### ACTION 1:

Expand arts events in public spaces by increasing collaboration with organizations such as Colorado Mesa University, Western Colorado Center for the Arts, Visit Grand Junction, Downtown Development Authority, and Horizon Drive Business Improvement District.

#### ACTION 2:

Expand inclusivity by reflecting the cultural diversity within the community.

#### ACTION 3:

Create a map to specifically highlight art throughout the community. The map could exist in both digital (mobile friendly) and print forms.

# Strategic Cultural Plan: Goals, Strategies, Actions

## URBAN PLANNING

### Goal:

Identify cultural facilities necessary and feasible to provide maximum benefit to the community.

#### STRATEGY 1:

Explore the commonality of various current facility needs and find ways to encourage proponents to better communicate and work together.

##### ACTION 1:

Create a comprehensive plan for expected usage, design, and needs. This includes bringing ideas together, establishing project goals, and defining neighborhoods.

##### ACTION 2:

Consider the inclusion of a performing arts space in the new community center.

#### STRATEGY: 2

Activate the 7th Street corridor from Downtown to the Riverfront Trail through redevelopment and infill.

##### ACTION 1:

Support the development of a Space to Create as a placemaking building for artisans.

##### ACTION 2:

Utilize the existing street to develop an enticing and safe corridor for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.

#### STRATEGY 3:

Establish a designated outdoor plaza space for public community use.

##### ACTION 1:

Identify desired capabilities of the venue, select appropriate location, and determine potential funding sources.