



# Stakeholders' Strategic Plan

Aurora Cultural Arts District

2017-2021  
Aurora, Colorado



Established as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization in 2012, ACAD represents the interests of artists and art organizations in northwest Aurora. The organization is a steward for the arts, providing art space for artists and a place for art exhibits and performances.

# Acknowledgements

**To help advance the arts in northwest Aurora, the Arts District Stakeholders group held monthly meetings throughout 2016 to develop this strategic plan. This plan was developed by the Stakeholders with assistance from city staff.**

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  - Tracy Weil, Managing Director
  - John White, Board Member
- Vintage Theatre
  - Theatre Esprit Asia (TEA)
  - Downtown Aurora Visual Arts (DAVA)
  - The Aurora Fox Arts Center
  - Theatre Esprit Asia (TEA)
  - Kim Robards Dance (KRD)
  - Aurora Cultural Arts District (ACAD)
  - Ignite Theatre

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# Stakeholders' Strategic Plan

## *Aurora Cultural Arts District*



## Executive Summary

The Aurora Cultural Arts District, located in northwest Aurora, is made up of a diverse group of visual artists, artisans and performing arts groups that reside and perform there.

The Arts District Stakeholders, representing the district's arts organizations, initiated an effort in December 2015 to prepare a strategic plan premised on a mission to collaborate and initiate actions that will enhance the long-term financial viability and growth of their organizations and the district.

### **The Stakeholders' Strategy develops its action plan around three primary goals areas:**



#### **Develop ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY, ADVOCACY and FINANCIAL STRENGTH within the Aurora Arts District**

The Stakeholders' group looked at how the participant arts organizations operate individually and collectively, and identified areas in which business could be conducted more efficiently. An essential area of their work is to take a more active role advocating on behalf of the district and communicating with current and potential funding organizations.

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#### **Sustain and expand the market for cultural arts in Northwest Aurora through attention to AUDIENCES and PROGRAMMING**

The arts district is well situated to take advantage of nearby residential growth and higher income households that could impact the market for entertainment and the arts. As a top priority, the Stakeholders intend to pursue a new marketing campaign to capitalize on a growing base of potential patrons.

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#### **Upgrade the Arts FACILITIES and PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT of the District to promote and support growth.**

Critical to attracting people to the arts district is developing a stronger visual impression of a unified "Arts District" and sense of safety, without which threaten the ability to market the area. The Stakeholders identified a series of near-term actions to counter this perception.

# Stakeholders' Strategic Plan

## Original Aurora: History of the Arts District



## Original Aurora

Original Aurora is composed of the most historic and diverse neighborhoods in Aurora and includes the arts district, providing an immediate audience for the ethnic themes and orientation for many of the theatrical performances in the district. The area, which includes a large immigrant population, is the most diverse of any part of Aurora. Increasingly, the area is being referred to as "Urban Aurora," so the usage of the term "Original Aurora" for the area may be evolving.

The district's theater and dance-based organizations have a reputation for high quality performances and attract audiences from both Aurora and the broader metro area. The immediate neighborhood around the arts district has a high renter population and considerably lower average household incomes, which impact the Stakeholders' ability to build and sustain a local customer base. Nevertheless, the district's theater groups have successfully attracted a diverse audience from across the metro area, thereby allowing them to remain committed to increasing local resident participation in the arts.



- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Fletcher Plaza                       | 5. Kim Robards Dance Studio           |
| 2. Peoples Building                     | 6. Martin Luther King Jr. Library     |
| 3. Aurora Cultural Arts District (ACAD) | 7. Downtown Aurora Visual Arts (DAVA) |
| 4. Vintage Theater                      | 8. The Aurora Fox Theater             |

***The arts and their contribution to Original Aurora has always been an essential part of city planning for northwest Aurora.***

As early as 1980, the Original Aurora Master Plan called for redevelopment of the Colfax corridor between Yosemite and Peoria streets, which is the historic spine of the original four-square-mile community and includes the arts district.

# Stakeholders' Strategic Plan

## *Original Aurora: History of the Arts District*



The Original Aurora Master Plan sought to strengthen business development, upgrade the area's image and complete the 1985 renovation of the Fox Theatre into a 245-seat performing arts facility. The Colfax Main Street Master Plan, adopted by the Aurora City Council in 1996 for inclusion in the city's Comprehensive Plan, further enshrined the city's mission to upgrade the image of the district and capitalize on the ongoing redevelopment of the nearby Lowry, Stapleton and Fitzsimons areas.

***While the arts district has been viewed as a catalyst for economic revitalization, the power of the Fletcher Plaza Urban Renewal District is its ability to provide financial capacity to revitalization efforts, including infrastructure improvements to create a stronger sense of place.***

In 2001, the Aurora City Council approved a revitalization strategy leading to the construction of the Martin Luther King Jr. Library/Municipal Services Center and a new mixed-use development project. Additional city investment led to expansion of the existing Aurora Fox Arts Center and Fletcher Plaza to allow for larger and more frequent performances and community events. Building on these assets, the city has continued to

acquire and improve additional buildings in the Fletcher Plaza Urban Renewal Area to be used for arts-related programming. The city is renovating The People's Building, a recent acquisition located on Colfax Avenue at Florence Street that will provide additional space for performances and other arts-related endeavors, particularly for arts programming lacking in the district.



ADOPTED IN

# 2003

the Fletcher Plaza Urban Renewal Plan has a primary goal "to expand the arts and cultural attractions of the area and establish an identity as an arts district."

*The Aurora Cultural Arts District is an integral part of the redevelopment strategy for northwest Aurora.*

# Stakeholders' Strategic Plan

## *The Arts District & Vicinity*



## The Aurora Cultural Arts District

The Aurora Cultural Arts District and nearby neighborhoods are strategically positioned for reinvestment and new development with an expanding employment base in the vicinity, the opening of new light rail system, and new catalyst redevelopment including the Stanley Marketplace, the Anschutz Medical Campus (Fitzsimons), and higher-income housing developments at Lowry and Stapleton. The impending extensions of Dayton Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard will create more direct access between the Stapleton-Denver community and Aurora.

The Anschutz Medical Campus continues to expand its employment base with the new Veterans Administration hospital. With the new Colfax and Fitzsimons light rail stations now open, access to and from the medical campus and the larger metro area will be greatly improved. This new job base, relative real estate values in the area and several projects transforming the neighborhood are driving the growing market demand for housing in northwest Aurora. Two catalytic projects supported by the Aurora Urban Renewal Authority (AURA) are expected to spark increased interest in the area: the Stapleton Aurora residential development under construction and the recently opened Stanley Marketplace. The Stapleton Aurora project includes 322 new single family detached homes and townhomes along with 23 acres of new park and open space. Stanley Marketplace, located one mile north of the arts district, is a commercial project with over 50 locally based retail and restaurant businesses now attracting customers from across the region.

Photo: Jami M. Guler





# Stakeholders' Strategic Plan

## Artists and Arts Organizations



The Aurora Cultural Arts District is home to an assemblage of nonprofit, arts organizations well recognized within the metro area and Colorado arts community. Individual artists and artisans occupy space in the district and engage in an array of art-making, including ceramics, drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, design and music. The district has a reputation for excellence in several of its performing arts and cultural programs. Several organizations are award winning and have earned recognition locally, nationally and internationally.

**1** Three award-winning theatre companies schedule year-round performances in the district: *Aurora Fox Arts Center, Vintage Theatre, and Theatre Esprit Asia.*

**2** *Kim Robards Dance*, an internationally recognized dance company, is also based in the district, performing in various locations throughout the metropolitan area.

**3** *Downtown Aurora Visual Arts* has provided out-of-school art education for children since 1993, and has earned many local and national

awards, including a National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award.

**4** The *Aurora Cultural Arts District* is an independent nonprofit organization whose mission is to enhance the district and market it as a destination through a variety of cultural and educational experiences. ACAD manages visual artist studio space as well as classroom, gallery, and performance space.

**5** *Red Delicious Press*, a nonprofit printing collaborative, supports the visual arts segment of the district.



Established as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization in 2012, ACAD represents the interests of artists and art organizations in northwest Aurora. The organization is a steward for the arts, providing art space for artists and a place for art exhibits and performances.

In 2006, artists came together to form the East End Arts District. With support from the city of Aurora in 2013, as the Aurora Cultural Arts District (ACAD), the organization was staffed by a part-time director and is governed by a Board of Directors.



*In 2012, the state designated Aurora Cultural Arts District as a prospective Creative District!*

# Stakeholders' Strategic Plan

## Artists and Arts Organizations

**The Aurora Fox Arts Center entertains, educates and brings community together through live self-expression that provokes the hearts and minds of its patrons.**

The Aurora Fox has received the distinguished Colorado Theatre Guild Henry Awards for several of its performances, including during the 11th Annual Awards season when it received six nominations, including Outstanding Season for a Theatre Company.



## Aurora Fox Theater

Theatrical productions at the Aurora Fox are diverse, attracting people across the demographic spectrum. One of the goals of the theater is to attract people from varied ethnic backgrounds. The theater serves the larger community by offering low ticket prices and a free cultural concert series to neighbors within a one-mile radius.



The Aurora Fox has received the distinguished Colorado Theatre Guild Henry Awards for several of its performances, including during the 11th Annual Awards season when it received six nominations, including Outstanding Season for a Theatre Company.



## Vintage Theatre

Vintage Theatre produced **10 plays in 2015**, winning Henry Awards for Best Ensemble, Best Supporting Actor, Best Supporting Actress, and Best Production of a Play for Rabbit Hole. Vintage Theatre offers classic comedy and dramatic works as well as musicals like Disney's Beauty and the Beast and Billy Elliott the Musical.

The Vintage runs a Youth Theatre Summer Academy to provide young people a place where they can express themselves creatively despite experience and financial limitations. Staffed with Denver's most experienced professional directors, instructors, choreographers and technicians, the Academy offers the students a chance to perform in a full musical production ticketed to the public, complete with sets, lights and costumes.



For older actors ages 12 to 17, classes and workshops focus on specific areas of study such as auditioning techniques, character study, vocal coaching and dance.

# Stakeholders' Strategic Plan

## Artists and Arts Organizations



### Theatre Esprit Asia (TEA)

Theatre Esprit Asia is the Southwest's first and only Asian American theater company. Founded in 2012, it has produced to critical acclaim 10 plays, all of which were world or regional premieres. TEA has received accolades from major publications and critics, and garnered 20 awards from the Colorado theatre community, including Best Production and Peoples' Choice for its original *Coming to America* at the 2016 Colorado American Association of Community Theatre Festival. TEA has been invited to perform at the National AACT Festival in June 2017 and at the International Festival in June of 2018. The company's threefold mission is to give voice to the Asia Western diasporic experience, provide professional creative opportunities to Asian American actors, playwrights and directors, and promote deeper understanding among Asian sectors and the culture at large. TEA is committed to creating social change for a more just and empathetic world through powerful and relevant dramatic exploration of issues of the contemporary human condition.



### Kim Robards Dance

Kim Robards Dance is a professional modern dance international touring company in its 30th season of providing high quality, innovative artistic programming and outstanding, award winning educational programming. KRD's mission is to be a driving force that enriches communities through exceptional modern dance creation, performance and education. KRD has performed the critically acclaimed choreography of Artistic Director Kim Robards nationally at such venues as New York's Joyce SOHO and internationally in Beijing, China, coinciding with The Olympics.

KRD's comprehensive educational programs include The Academy of KRD located in ACAD, as well as workshops and performances statewide in diverse K-12 sites including Title 1 schools, juvenile detention centers, arts academies and others. Robards and her company engage in myriad artistic collaborations and cultural exchanges nationally and internationally. KRD has been honored with Colorado's highest awards including Governor's and Mayor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts, among numerous others, and was included in a proclamation by Aurora Mayor Steve Hogan.

"Aurora" Choreography: Kim Robards  
Photo: Stan Obert

# Stakeholders' Strategic Plan

## Artists and Arts Organizations

### Downtown Aurora Visual Arts



Downtown Aurora Visual Arts combines the best in experiential art



education with a focus on positive youth development. In 2014, DAVA's Job Training in the Arts program received a prestigious National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award (NAHYP). The NAHYP Award is the nation's highest honor for out-of-school arts and humanities programs that celebrate the creativity of America's young people, particularly those from underserved communities

DAVA's year-round model serves children and youth ages 7 to 17, enhancing creativity and academic performance through year-round, high-quality arts education. The organization's approach combines social-emotional learning along with the mastery of traditional and new media. On-site programs include: Family Arts, for preschoolers and their guardians, designed to increase school-readiness, creativity and motor skills; DAVA Open Studio, an

experimental space for elementary students offering daily art projects; and Middle School Job Training in Art and Technology, addressing the key developmental years between the ages of 11 to 14 through more advanced education and community involvement.

**2014** WINNER of the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award. Washington, D.C.

### Red Delicious Press Arts and Education

Red Delicious Press Arts and Education, located in the historic Victor Hornbein building, is a cooperative fine arts printmaking facility specializing in screenprinting, etching, relief printmaking and monotype.

The membership-based organization offers printmakers a community to make their work. Red Delicious focuses on educating the public about printmaking, providing gallery space for artists, and creating a safe and accessible space for artist for all ages to learn more about printmaking.

The organization works hard to spread the love of printmaking throughout the community, participating in events at local universities, providing free outreach to elementary, middle and high school students, and hosting printmaking workshops.



# Stakeholders' Strategic Plan

## *Strategy Development*

### Overview

The city of Aurora continues to plan for and support the development of an arts district in northwest Aurora. In 2015 and 2016, the Aurora City Council prioritized capacity building among arts organizations by providing grant funding and in-kind support to help improve their long-term sustainability.

In 2016, city grant awardees (Vintage Theatre, Kim Robards Dance, ACAD, DAVA, TEA and Ignite Theatre) took advantage of one-on-one business counseling with Aurora-South Metro Small Business Development Center staff, nonprofit capacity building workshops, and individual coaching services for grant writing and organizational leadership.

The Arts District Stakeholders Group, representing the arts organizations in the District, prepared this Strategic Plan over multiple meetings in 2016.



### Mission and Approach

The mission of the group has been to develop an action plan that promotes collaboration and action by stakeholders to improve the financial sustainability of their organizations and the viability of the district.

This strategic planning effort is designed to help the Arts District Stakeholders establish an identity for public forum, determine priorities for which they can become effective advocates for their interests, and identify opportunities for public discourse. In doing so, they intend to reach several audiences: the Aurora City Council as a policy group impacting the direction and funding of cultural arts in northwest Aurora; outside partners and organizations which may be interested in establishing a venue in the district or provide funding; and evolving organization(s) intended to represent the arts district and its interests.



# Stakeholders' Strategic Plan

## Strategy Development

### The District's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

As an initial exercise to help clarify goals and objectives, the group identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the district and the organizations within it. These are summarized below without reference to order of importance.

#### Strengths identified were:

- High-quality, multi-cultural performances
- Ethnic diversity of patrons
- Accessible pricing
- Existing leadership capacity within organizations
- City support of organizations

#### Weaknesses include:

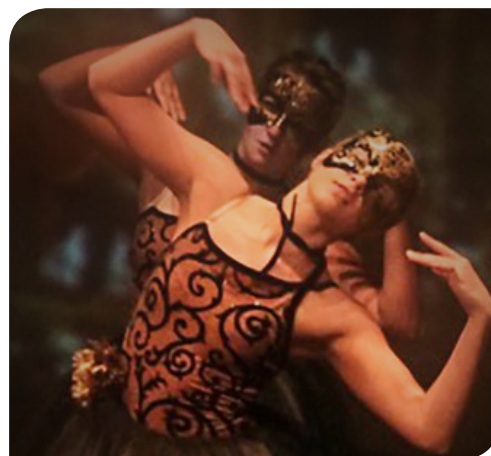
- Financial sustainability of organizations
- Inadequate marketing
- Negative public perception of the area as unsafe
- Lack of rehearsal and performance space
- Lack of arts and venues for music, comedy or other programming
- Poor visual recognition of the district

#### Opportunities identified were:

- Growing market for arts entertainment
- Potential for shared marketing approach among organizations
- Lower rents for potentially new arts organizations
- Affordability for new customers
- City's newly acquired People's Building as a new venue for performance and art space
- City support for building a better business model
- Organizational support for growing a new body of cultural leaders

#### Threats include:

- Unpredictable funding
- Lack of organizational capacity or failing to develop it
- Real and perceived public safety challenges for patrons
- Aesthetics and visual impression of the district
- Socioeconomics of the area and potential economic downturn
- Lack of marketing and retention of patrons
- Competing services and offerings in Lowry, Stanley Marketplace and Stapleton



# Stakeholders' Strategic Plan

## *Strategy Development*

### Summary and Key Actions:

Several discussions about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the arts district led to the emergence of goals, objectives and action items. Three primary areas of concerns were discussed in developing goals: organizational capacity building; the changing market for cultural arts in northwest Aurora; and facilities and the physical environment.

Action items were prioritized to reflect those which are most important: short-term (1 year), mid-term (2-3 years) and long-term (4-5 years). The primary actions are summarized below (see Strategic Action Plan for details below).

## ***1. Building Organizational Capacity***

**The Stakeholders' group is looking at how the arts organizations operate individually and collectively to redefine how they do business.**

**Some of the action items to help build organizational capacity are:**

- Evaluating the current business model used by organizations
- Finding potential areas where resources could be shared
- Developing a survey system to provide performance feedback
- Taking a more active role in communicating with funding organizations and advocating on behalf of the district

The Aurora-South Metro Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides a training series for nonprofits designed to address several relevant areas including building a board of directors, grant writing, fund development planning, and working with corporate donors. All of the arts organizations are attending these seminars in order to improve their operations.



# Stakeholders' Strategic Plan

## *Strategy Development*

## **2. The Changing Market for Cultural Arts in Northwest Aurora**

Being in close proximity to major development projects in Stapleton, Lowry and the Anschutz Medical Campus, the arts district and the Stakeholders are poised to benefit from the potential market for entertainment and the arts.

The arts district has strong theatrical and performance offerings, and is positioned to attract new opportunities involving music, comedy and the fine arts as the area develops both economically and physically.

### **Actions items identified in the plan to address the changing market for arts entertainment include:**

- Conducting a market analysis to identify potential new audiences
- Capturing new customers at Stanley Marketplace
- Developing a joint marketing approach amongst the existing arts organizations and creating a stronger digital presence through social media
- Testing new programming with unique events designed to provide a social setting where people can interact and be introduced to the arts



"Ghost Trolley" by artist Lawrence Argent



# Stakeholders' Strategic Plan

## *Strategy Development*

### **3. Vision for the Arts District Facilities and the Physical Environment**

Critical to attracting people to the arts district is developing a stronger visual identity and sense of place. The district has a number of art installations including wall murals, "artistic" lighting, and the Aurora Fox Arts Center marquee that contribute to the positive appeal of the area. However, visual cues in the area do not work strongly enough to readily create the impression of a designated "Arts District." This is a challenge to marketing the district.

The district has several city-owned buildings that are made available to the arts organization as venues. All of the venues are in close proximity to one another and the main Colfax corridor. The ACAD Building (aka 1400 Dallas), a community arts center, and the Vintage Theatre are located off the main Colfax corridor. The Aurora Fox Arts Center, Kim Robards Dance and the People's Building, are all located directly on Colfax Avenue. Fletcher Plaza, an outdoor plaza sited directly on Colfax adjacent to the Martin Luther King Jr. Library, is designed to accommodate events and performances, but is currently not programmed and underutilized.

**In addition to the district's lack of visual identity, one of the most challenging obstacles for attracting patrons is the perception of the area as being unsafe. The Stakeholders listed several near-term interventions designed to counter the safety concern:**

- Improving lighting along pedestrian corridors
- Providing way-finding and adequate security during performances
- Populating the area by providing more pre- and post-performance commercial activity and events



"Colors" by Artist Susan Cooper

# Arts District Stakeholder's Strategic Action Plan

Objectives	Actions	Time Frame		
		1 yr 2017	2-3 yrs 2018-19	4-5 yrs 2020-21
<b>Goal 1: Develop ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY, ADVOCACY and FINANCIAL STRENGTH within the Arts District</b>				
1.1 Develop improved business models for stakeholders	1.1.1 Identify areas of shared resources that will improve the financial stability of arts organizations	■		
1.2 Consolidate operational and administrative tasks to attain cost efficiencies across organizations	1.2.1 Develop a standardized survey to provide performance feedback to organizations and simplify data collection/reporting for grants	■		
	1.2.2 Define and build consensus about combined processes for stakeholders such as Ticketing or Accounting		■	
1.3 Define the mission of an "umbrella" organization representing the Arts District	1.3.1 Define and build consensus as to the roles and responsibilities of an organization representing ACAD and Stakeholders		■	
1.4 Strengthen leadership and business expertise among arts organizations staff and board members	1.4.1 Participate in capacity building efforts, (Aurora-South Metro Small Business Development Center) including workshops that provide outside expertise in building organizational capacity	■	■	
1.5 Create leadership opportunities in the Arts to grow a new body of cultural leaders	1.5.1 Provide entry points and leadership experiences for persons of all ages to engage in the arts with the goal of creating a new crop of future leaders		■	
1.6 Develop a set of performance measures to assess progress among Arts District Organizations and the advancement of the City's vision for the Arts in the community	1.6.1 Work with the Cultural Affairs Commission and Aurora-South Metro Small Business Development Center to develop performance measures to assess organization capacity and the success of arts organizations; tie these back to the NAAG grant	■	■	
1.7 Incorporate 'fair pay for artists' as a performance measure to attract talent and build an area-wide reputation	1.7.1 Develop and conduct a survey of artist compensation to determine goals and expectations for artists' pay; determine the feasibility of implementing changes in compensation		■	
1.8 Establish stronger working relationships with current and potential funding organizations	1.8.1 Host meetings with Colorado funders; offer tours of ACAD and opport-ve partner to achieve this goal			■
	1.8.2 Ensure that those on Aurora City Council and City Management are invited to attend performances and fundraisers in the District so they have first-hand experience of the programming offered	■	■	■

# Arts District Stakeholder's Strategic Action Plan

Objectives	Actions	Time Frame		
		1 yr 2017	2-3 yrs 2018-19	4-5 yrs 2020-21
<b>Goal 1: Develop ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY, ADVOCACY and FINANCIAL STRENGTH within the Arts District</b>				
	1.8.3 Identify and strengthen relationships with private groups and organizations and collectively promote the diverse programming in the District		■	
1.9 Create a collaborative approach to fundraising as a means of achieving larger district goals	1.9.1 Create fundraising events (such as a "corporate night") to build relationships in the business community that support district-wide needs		■	
	1.9.2 Create a festival for stakeholders to showcase their work that is promoted by all and has 100% participation from Stakeholders	■		
1.10 Improve the success rate in obtaining grants for Arts District Stakeholders including ACAD	1.10.1 Participate in grant training opportunities provided by the city (Aurora-South Metro Small Business Development Center) and cooperate to develop joint grant proposals where appropriate	■		■
	1.10.2 Continue to utilize Purpose Aligned to create grant strategies, common grants, and research mission aligned grants for funding possibilities	■		
	1.10.3 Evaluate appropriate software to assist all stakeholders to increase grants and other funding resources such as Foundation Search	■		
1.11 Collaborate with the City Council and Cultural Arts Commission to advance support of the City's vision for the arts	1.11.1 Enter into a direct dialogue with the City Council and Cultural Arts Commission to build support for the District; identify timing and prepare presentations as appropriate	■		
1.12 Develop and promote high quality, diverse (multi-culturally and artistically) arts programming	1.12.1 Collectively promote and educate the stakeholders, the City, and City Council on the diverse programming in the District		■	
	1.12.2 Extend awareness of the diverse programming that currently being offered		■	
1.13 Increase attendance at venues and the retention of patrons	1.13.1 Develop incentives for potential patrons to return to the district after initial contact/viewing/attendance and improve outreach to families and patrons under 18; provide opportunities for free access		■	

# Arts District Stakeholder's Strategic Action Plan

Objectives	Actions	Time Frame		
		1 yr 2017	2-3 yrs 2018-19	4-5 yrs 2020-21
<b>Goal 1: Develop ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY, ADVOCACY and FINANCIAL STRENGTH within the Arts District</b>				
	1.13.2 Identify approach and actions to capture new customers at Stanley Marketplace	■		
1.14 Increase the programming of diverse works and help define a niche that coincides with what all culturals are doing successfully in Aurora	1.14 1 Create a Brand ACAD as culturally diverse programming	■		
	1.14.2 Stage unique social events where people can socialize, attend mini-performances and sample the Districts' offerings	■	■	
1.15 Increase retention of patrons at all stakeholders events	1.15.1 Develop a marketing/public relations plan to expand offerings to a wider audience and address public perception challenges in the District		■	
	1.15.2 Create arts pass for stakeholders to cross pollinate attendance at events, and actively try to get patrons to support multiple venues and events			■
1.16 Engage the local community (especially youth in arts education, programs, performances, and entertainment	1.16.1 Develop stronger daytime programming and education programming to have school time and Aurora-based, school- focused programs		■	
	1.16.2 Invite residents to attend performances that are culturally diverse (zip code = free pass )	■		
<b>Goal 2: Sustain and expand the market for cultural arts in Northwest Aurora through attention through attention to audiences and programming</b>				
2.1 Identify how to spend marketing dollars to support all stakeholders and establish a district brand; include key messaging such as safety and proximity as key brand elements	2.1.1 Utilize patron reviews on Yelp and Trip Advisor as the impetus for how to change the East Colfax perception and boost sales and experience from real reviews		■	
2.2 Expand marketing efforts to penetrate local neighborhoods like Lowry, Stapleton, and beyond to larger metro area.	2.2.1 Conduct a market analysis to define the characteristics of existing and potentially new audiences			■

# Arts District Stakeholder's Strategic Action Plan

Objectives	Actions	Time Frame		
		1 yr 2017	2-3 yrs 2018-19	4-5 yrs 2020-21
<b>Goal 2: Sustain and expand the market for cultural arts in Northwest Aurora through attention through attention to audiences and programming</b>				
	2.2.2 Develop a joint marketing approach to reach new audiences; combine resources for a larger district spend	■		
	2.2.3 Establish a digital presence online including a centralized events calendar, shared ticketing and marketing materials; utilize social media and video as a channel for audience development		■	
	2.2.4 Create and maintain public kiosks which provide information about all arts groups and upcoming events/programming		■	
2.3 Evaluate competition to help support all organizations with an all-ships-rise-together approach vs. market saturation	2.3.1 Clearly identify each stakeholder's niche and seek out cross themed ways to provide programming to the community		■	
2.4 Evaluate programming of existing arts organizations to determine potential inefficiencies and ways to improve sales	2.4.1 Develop standardized survey questions to assess performance quality, audience preferences and other aspects of arts programming for use by organizations; devise methods to improve response rate	■		
2.5 Evaluate and expand the types of arts groups and offerings in the District; consider music, comedy, visual arts, coffee shop(s), nightlife, etc. as a means of reaching new target audiences and retain existing patrons	2.5.1 Initiate ideas for performances with new and different programming such as the Aurora Symphony, other music, and/or comedy		■	
	2.5.2 Evaluate and implement where feasible, daytime arts programming that can occur during the week as well as weekends		■	
2.6 Evaluate potential for new, large-scale events in the District	2.6.1 Look at options to reprogram Fletcher Plaza, the outdoor public space adjacent to the Martin Luther King Jr. Library/Municipal Services Center, to become a more dynamic performance space		■	
<b>Goal 3: Upgrade the Arts FACILITIES and PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT of the District to promote and support growth in the Arts District</b>				
3.1 Improve the physical identity of the Arts District	3.1.1 Identify simple, inexpensive, physical interventions on public and private property that can improve the visual character and perception of the Arts District		■	

# Arts District Stakeholder's Strategic Action Plan

Objectives	Actions	Time Frame		
		1 yr 2017	2-3 yrs 2018-19	4-5 yrs 2020-21
<b>Goal 3: Upgrade the Arts FACILITIES and PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT of the District to promote and support growth in the Arts District</b>				
	3.1.2 Establish a visual presence when you enter ACAD so that you are "entering an arts district"			■
	3.1.3 Coordinate with ACAD and the City to develop signage and wayfinding in the District		■	
3.2 Participate in discussions with Mayor, City Manager, and City Council to determine the next steps in the Mayor's plan to have a larger performance space in Aurora	3.2.1 Have a series of meetings to help determine if programming for a new facility is feasible from stakeholders input and expertise	■		
	3.2.2 Evaluate the use of a Business Improvement District (BID) to support funding of the needs of the District		■	
	3.2.3 Evaluate the storage needs of the Stakeholders		■	
3.3 Develop recognizable ACAD branding aligned with city branding standards that can be incorporated into the District's physical design elements	3.3.1 Improve communications and coordinate with the Aurora Police Department to address actual and perceived safety issues	■	■	
3.4 Improve the public perception of the Arts District as to its safety and attractiveness	3.4.1 Incorporate the "safety message" into marketing materials and outlets	■	■	■
	3.4.2 Conduct an audit of existing venue space to assess efficiency in use and scheduling, and current and projected needs; identify physical improvements that improve efficiencies		■	
3.5 Evaluate existing venue space as to functionality, aesthetics, and utilization; identify short-term and long-term improvements to accommodate projected needs	3.5.1 Identify shared funding options for performance and private facility improvements			■
3.6 Develop more options for food and drink before and after performances	3.6.1 Continue to work with the city's Planning and Development Services to be a partner in addressing restaurant and parking improvements that support patrons		■	

# Arts District Stakeholder's Strategic Action Plan

Objectives	Actions	Time Frame		
		1 yr 2017	2-3 yrs 2018-19	4-5 yrs 2020-21
<b>Goal 3: Upgrade the Arts FACILITIES and PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT of the District to promote and support growth in the Arts District</b>				
	3.6.2 Implement parking, lighting, wayfinding, and safety messaging to improve the District; analyze and verify specific conditions and provide a process or solutions to address them	■	■	
3.7 Evaluate potential parking, lighting, wayfinding and safety measures in the District; suggest improvement where appropriate	3.7.1 Document lighting conditions along critical pedestrian corridors and around venues	■	■	
3.8 Evaluate the potential for live/work spaces and commercial "flex space" for joint restaurant/café and performance/gallery use	3.8.1 Participate in the Arts Space Assessment Project to determine the demand and feasibility of providing live/work space in the District	■		
3.9 Improve/fill empty storefronts to support the District	3.9.1 Reach out to property owners to provide temporary art displays and promotional opportunities for performances in the District	■		



# Stakeholders' Strategic Plan

## Aurora Cultural Arts District

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2017-2021  
Aurora, Colorado