

Terre Haute Arts + Cultural District

Strategic Plan

(September 2018; updated December 2019)

Long-term Goals for the Impact of an Arts & Cultural District

- Attract regional audiences of residents, visitors and business and encourage a vibrant mix of uses, spaces, and activities.
- Protect and grow the arts and culture of the city.
- Celebrate and enhance the unique identity of the city.
- Promote creative endeavors as an economic engine for a thriving creative economy and its ability to attract and retain young professionals.
- Ensure that the district is an inclusive place for everyone.
- Nurture future cultural leaders, artists, volunteers and audiences.
- Create a physical and digital wayfinding system that helps residents and visitors identify and interact the district.

Strategies for Activating the District

1. Build on existing downtown momentum and leverage the network of attractions and venues
 - a. Building capacity through creative collaboration and thriving and emerging venues will diversify and increase audiences in the arts. Integrated marketing, broad funding, public/private partnerships and shared service opportunities are just a few economic reasons for forming alliances across organizations and events.
 - b. Approaching federal, regional and state funding opportunities will provide additional opportunities to strengthen the district and entities and individuals working in the arts within it.
2. Optimize use of existing cultural arts facilities
 - a. Encourage reuse of upper floor and empty spaces for arts & culture amenities.
 - b. Promote the creation of innovative maker space and black box performance space.
 - c. Establish outreach, partnerships and collaborations to preserve and improve existing arts facilities.
 - d. Establish partnerships with community organizations, local businesses and corporations to offer reduced rate, sliding scale or brokered use of space.
3. Continue to activate the district with events, activities and public art to draw a diverse audience, and increase connectivity with all four of the university populations.
4. Empower arts and cultural organizations through training and technical assistance.
5. Add and protect affordable options for creative people to work and live.
6. Create toolkits for key activities: zoning, management, funding, and placemaking.
7. Market the Arts and Cultural District within the city, region and statewide including collaboration with other local efforts to promote university recruitment and retention of graduates; business incentives; and tourism.

How will we pay for it?

Funding for the Terre Haute Arts and Cultural District will come from a broad array of sources in the short and long-term. In the short-term, for modest projects and events the entities involved will collaborate and pool funds to activate spaces and new events. Beginning in 2019 (and continuing in 2020) the Mayor has allocated both personnel and budget line item for the Arts and Cultural District. In the longer term a 1% for the arts is viewed by the Advisory Group as the most ideal long term option; but study of this option will be needed and will be pursued during the first two years in part through current data supplied through Americans for the Arts. Finally, the Advisory Group will actively search for creative collaborative grant opportunities that advance the goals the arts and cultural district.

Advocating for funding sources:

1. Designate a percent for arts for municipal public art on city funded construction projects
2. Develop and incorporate arts in the city development process (planning) to include
3. Include arts in TIF zones to support the development of arts facilities
4. Advocate for a portion of Innkeepers, CIB, or other development-based tax funding sources for the arts
5. Allow city residents to “round up for arts” on utility bills or other philanthropic initiatives
6. Collaborate with the community foundation to maximize dollars available for capital projects.
7. Work with the City, the County, the Capital Improvement Board, and the Convention and Visitors Bureau to advocate for funding for the proposed wayfinding system.

Leadership to Develop the Cultural Sector

Terre Haute has seen strong, active interest in the development of the Arts and Cultural District in the past several years. This strategic plan acknowledges the work that has been accomplished to date, as well as the successful efforts by many organizations combined with their passionate commitment to arts and culture as central, defining and lasting strengths of the city.

The leadership will manifest by coordinating and leading the cultural arts efforts through a local Advisory Group. This will group will be representative of the district and offer a strategic guide for attracting potential partners towards collaborative efforts.

1. Incorporate/maintain responsibility for cultural arts within the Advisory Group to coordinate and lead cultural arts activities in Terre Haute and partner with community organizations on appropriate collaborative efforts. The Advisory Group should be acknowledged by the City, and include representation, as having authority to conduct business on behalf of the district.
2. Ensure the Advisory Group:
 - a. Is representative of leadership within the district.
 - b. Possesses skills and qualifications useful to cultural arts/nonprofit administration and leadership.
 - c. Includes the various sectors in the community (arts and culture, education, business, philanthropy, etc.).
 - d. Represents the city's demographics.
3. Establish bylaws or a formal program to ensure criteria are clearly outlined.
4. Consider contracting with an existing community organization to partner together on the leadership and oversight of collaborative efforts; if pursued, establish a clearly outlined scope of work and list of outcome expectations.
 - a. Contracted work that could be of some immediacy includes a partner to serve as the district's fiscal agent.
5. Cultivate and promote the Arts and Cultural District. Incentivize the location of artists and arts entities in the cultural district through:
 - a. Permitting, zoning, noise ordinance, and other policies.
 - b. Tax incentives encouraging arts entities to locate in the designated area(s).

6. Advocate for and continue to build arts education and arts camp programming, and arts activities within existing educational organizations.

7. Initiative and expectations may include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. In possible partnership with a community organization, apply for “cultural district” designation to help raise the profile of the Arts and Cultural District when promoted in tourism and city branding efforts.
- b. Through a granting program overseen by the City, continue to award funding to arts organizations and projects. Utilize a variety of funding mechanisms
- c. In possible partnership with a community organization, spearhead cross-collaborative and cross-sector cultural initiatives, promote the cultural sector, coordinate communication efforts for the cultural sector, and seek to enable creation of affordable, accessible, relevant, diverse arts programming as well as strengthen the arts base.
- d. Study the potential for streamlining operations through collaboration or consolidation of departments and function where possible and appropriate. Potential areas include: back-office operations, donation processing, grant writing, marketing and publicity.
- e. In possible partnership with a civic or community organization, develop activity in neighborhoods through “Creative Neighborhoods” – areas that are attractive to artists for a number of reasons: inexpensive housing, access to employment and self-employment opportunities, access to resources (such as studio space, galleries, rehearsal and performance space, artist-run centers and associations), social networks with other artists and creative professionals, appealing physical environment, and family friendly
- f. Promote the Arts and Cultural District through City and County tourism programs, City communications department, Chamber of Commerce and other regional outlets (including broadcast, print, electronic and social media).
- g. Continue to cluster events and arts offerings – and maximize their impact by coordinating them with signature and new non-arts events, to broaden audience, attract more people to participate in the Arts and Cultural District, and offer residents and visitors more options and additional learning opportunities.
- h. Explore the possibility of mutual discount programs with arts and cultural entities in other regions of the state, to encourage visitors with more affordable options among those venues that charge admission.
- i. Offer training for local hotel concierges so that they may become ambassadors of the Terre Haute Arts and Cultural District.