

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2019

## BLOOMINGTON ARTS COMMISSION

**Statement of Purpose:** The City of Bloomington recognizes that the arts are an important part of the culture and economy of the community, and that the City has a responsibility to foster an environment conducive to arts participation. The conservation and development of the city's artistic resources are essential to the social, educational, and economic growth of the City. Artists, works of art, and artistic institutions contribute to the quality of life and the general welfare of the citizens of Bloomington, and are an appropriate matter of concern to the government of the City.

**Vision:** A thriving community where the arts are central to the quality of life.

**Mission:** To stimulate and encourage arts and cultural activities in Bloomington.

**Executive Summary:** Residents, educational institutions, arts organizations, and the City of Bloomington have created a flourishing arts community that is integral to the identity of the city. The Bloomington Arts Commission (BAC) was established by the Common Council in 1983 to enhance this important sector of our community.

The BAC seeks to achieve the following:

- to cultivate a community in which residents appreciate the value of personal and collective artistic activity;
- to encourage collaboration and diversification of artistic activities and include participants from across the community;
- to enhance and support a high level of artistry;
- and to support the economic vitality and interests of local artists and arts organizations.

The BAC is charged with serving as the City's arts liaison between the public and city government. To accomplish these ends, the BAC has undertaken several areas of activity:

**Percentage for the Arts:** An ordinance in which one percent of City capital projects budgets are reserved for a public art fund (est. 1994).

**Arts Project Grants:** An annual opportunity for local arts organizations to apply for grants in support of specific projects.

**Cooperative Assistance Program:** An opportunity for local artists and arts groups to receive *pro bono* short or long-term technical assistance from Commission members.

**Professional Development:** Training opportunities for local artists and arts organizations in management, business, governance, marketing, fundraising, law, and other topics.

**Advocacy:** Catalyze and support public discussions and forums about the development of the arts.

Each Commissioner has a demonstrated commitment to advancing the arts in Bloomington. The Mayor appoints six Commissioners and Common Council appoints five Commissioners. They may serve up to two three-year terms.

To further its goals, the BAC welcomes partnerships with other entities in the Bloomington community, such as Monroe County Community Schools Corporation, Indiana University, Ivy Tech Community College, and Visit Bloomington.

The purpose of this strategic planning process was to assess achievements and past endeavors, revise objectives to reflect changing needs, and design a plan to meet new goals. When the BAC developed its original strategic plan in 2011-2012, the BAC consulted the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to address the concerns of a diverse population. During that period, the BAC developed a [Public Art Master Plan](#) for the City of Bloomington, which has guided its work.

In 2016-17, the BAC updated the original strategic planning document to use as a blueprint to guide and focus the proposed work. This document is also intended to introduce community members to the work of the BAC and encourage their involvement with BAC activities. The strategic plan provides guidance for the BAC's activities and allows for flexibility and creativity.

**This strategic plan has three priority areas:**

1. **Planning**
2. **Programming**
3. **Advocacy**

**PRIORITY NO. 1: PLANNING – *Promote and support community-wide cultural planning efforts.***

The BAC is committed to planning and implementing diverse policies and programs that enhance and promote an equitable, arts-enriched community.

**1.1 – Collaborate with city staff and departments to plan and implement arts plans, including this strategic plan and the Public Art Master Plan.**

- a. Work with City staff to develop an annual Public Art Projects Plan with a 5-year horizon.
- b. Maintain an inventory of art already in the public art collection.
- c. Determine if maintenance or other expenses are necessary for the preservation of the collection.

## **1.2 – Identify opportunities for the arts to enhance the City’s community development objectives**

- a. Collaborate with the Mayor’s Office to ensure the arts are part of overall strategies to improve the lives of underserved Bloomingtonians.
- b. Gauge interest in creative placemaking projects to support community development objectives.
  - i. Explore partnerships with the IU Arts & Humanities Council.
  - ii. Expand and connect arts and workforce development opportunities.

## **PRIORITY NO. 2: PROGRAMMING – *Amplify and support the development of sustainable programs, services, and processes that increase community engagement and promote growth in arts and culture.***

Artistic life is tightly woven into the fabric of the Bloomington community. The BAC actively supports an increase in personal and public creative activity.

### **2.1 – Promote and support the creation of art.**

- a. Expand the Commission’s grants program
  - i. Expand funding for the BAC Grant Program to fill the need and expand economic development through the arts.
  - ii. Collaborate with other City funding programs to support artists and cultural activities, such as the Bloomington Urban Enterprise Association (BUEA).
- b. Develop and advocate for public-private partnerships and funding opportunities for public art.
- c. Explore the feasibility of temporary arts exhibitions in vacant storefronts and other spaces.
- d. Review BAC grants programs as needed to evaluate effectiveness and continually improve upon their value to the community.

### **2.2 – Support the advancement of artists and arts organizations.**

- a. Gauge constituent needs on an ongoing basis through dialogue.
- b. Plan and implement professional development programs.
- c. Partner with existing service organizations to offer professional development opportunities.

### **2.3 – Advance initiatives that promote citizen participation in the arts.**

- a. Promote participatory arts activities throughout the community.

## **PRIORITY NO. 3: ADVOCACY – *Advocate for enhanced access, participation, and investment in the arts.***

The BAC believes that widespread appreciation of the arts enriches all aspects of society, including economic vitality and development, education, community building, cultural communication, and individual expression. As residents become involved in improving the creative capacities of their community, the arts will continue to flourish. The purpose of advocacy is to inspire and support such involvement.

**3.1 – Establish Bloomington as a regional and national leader in public art and community engagement in the arts.**

- a. Realize the goals of this plan.
- b. Benchmark with other communities.

**3.2 – Develop and sustain communication with local organizations in the public and private sectors.**

- a. Create and deliver clear communications on short- and long-term issues related to arts and culture in Bloomington.
- b. Keep City staff and elected officials informed of current affairs and trends in the arts.

**3.3 – Support and advocate for arts in education.**

- a. Determine challenges and issues facing local arts education curriculum and programs by holding discussions with key education leaders in K-12 and life-long learning.
- b. Develop and implement arts education advocacy plans when necessary.