

FINDINGS

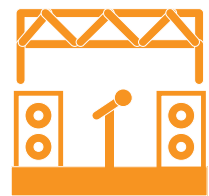
Throughout the Arts Vision 2030 planning process, hundreds of people shared their experiences, thoughts, concerns, ideas, and dreams for arts and creativity in the region. ***Here's what we found:***



Connect and Nurture Creative Talent: Regional artists and creatives share a collaborative spirit. However, they can also feel disconnected and somewhat isolated from one another in this dispersed region. There is a lack of awareness of resources and opportunities to come together as a sector. Creatives often feel that they need to leave the region to gain experience or make a living as artists or entrepreneurs. The region's collaborative spirit can be harnessed and amplified to establish an even stronger arts and creative community, increase local opportunities, and build the network for bringing these voices together more frequently.



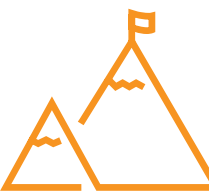
Sustainability: Artists, creatives, and arts organizations in the region continue to battle for subsistence, let alone vitality. They often struggle to earn a living wage, find affordable work spaces, housing, and secure high-quality venues. Arts organizations continue to seek sustainable funding from a limited group of supporters. Without consistent and diversified funding and access to resources, artists and arts organizations cannot plan for the future, or grow and take risks with their programming and work.



Spaces, Places, and Venues: There are many facilities that support the arts in the region, but there are still gaps in the arts infrastructure. More spaces are needed to support small to midsize organizations, grassroots groups, and emerging artists in different pockets of the region. These facilities can serve as stepping-stones for smaller groups to build capacity. There is a clear desire for a large outdoor performance space to accommodate growth in the region and showcase the area's natural beauty.



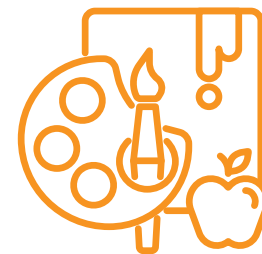
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: The Pikes Peaks region is becoming more diverse in so many ways, however, programming and support has historically favored the traditional and Eurocentric. There is a strong desire to celebrate, promote, share and grow the arts throughout the region, while honoring each area's unique identity. Strategies should support and amplify the needs of our diverse audiences, artists, and creatives.



Arts Leadership: There are a growing number of diverse and emerging leaders who are passionate about the arts throughout the region. They care deeply about elevating the community's culture and increasing inclusion in the arts. They are seeking support and are ready to contribute. Quite a few local arts organizations are facing leadership transitions in the coming decade, as their founders prepare to retire.



Creativity in the Military: The region has a large military population, with five installations. It is a diverse and transient population that is often difficult to engage in the arts. Some personnel feel disconnected from pursuing creative outlets, and many military families want rich educational opportunities for their children. The arts are proving to be an antidote to mental health issues, but can also be a resource and outlet for the broader military community.



Arts Education for All: Arts education is inconsistent across the 17 different K-12 school districts in the region. Some districts are emphasizing and funding the arts, while others are reducing offerings, sharing art teachers across schools or cutting programs altogether. The decentralized structure makes it challenging for the arts and creative community to interact with K-12 schools effectively or efficiently. Other barriers that hinder access to arts education include lack of awareness of available opportunities, funding and costs, transportation and language. There are strong arts leaders within the school system who could be leading a larger movement or having greater impact with more support. Higher education institutions do not currently offer a Bachelor's of Fine Arts or a Master's of Fine Arts degree. While some of their cultural facilities are state-of-the art, others are in need of improvements.



Visibility and Economic Vitality: Performance venues and art galleries are fairly well known locally, but not fully promoted as part of the region's draw. Local talent and the creative industry suffer economically from this lack of visibility. The arts and cultural sector contributes to the local economy. Growing and leveraging this impact should be a focus for advocacy and economic development work. Marketing the arts should be emphasized as a driver for the region's tourism.



Advocacy: A common theme in the region is the need for greater advocacy to ensure that artists and creatives are influencing decisions that affect the creative industry and the region. In the past decade, the arts community has taken a large step in getting "into the room" with local leadership; the next stage is to embolden a unified voice and wield its influence to advance change. From local governments to developers to tourism and business, the arts need to be integrated and valued, and take on a more influential role in the region.