



ARTS VISION 2030

THE CULTURAL PLAN FOR THE PIKES PEAK REGION
OCTOBER 2021



THE TIME IS

NOW

THE TIME IS NOW

Now is the time to be bold!
Surrender fear to the exploration of new creative endeavors.

Now is the time to be courageous!
Advocate for each other loudly and without hesitation.

Now is the time to be collaborative!
We are at our strongest when we connect, share, and champion each other.

Now is the time to be innovative!
Reimagine art with accessibility and equity across the region.

Now is the time to lead with change!
Art is a catalyst for revolution, liberation, and progression.

Now is the time to create art in the image of our region!
Where every person can say, “I am reflected in the art I see in my community.”

This is the future we are working towards.
Art representing your neighborhood, family, identity, heritage, passions, pain, and joys.
Art weaving into the fabric of the region seamlessly.
Art permeating systems, institutions, and structures of power.

From leaders, teachers, artists, and community members, your voice matters.
From BIPOC, Queer, Disabled, Women, and other marginalized groups, your voice matters.
Your voice and the voices of our diverse community are integral to this vision.
The uplifting and collective support of each other is the only way through.
It will take all of us to implement this work.
We cannot do this without you.
We need you to champion art in the ways only you can.

See yourself reflected in these declarations.
Make your home in the words and be held by their support.
Feel the way your body is called to a specific action.
Find the ways you add to the vibrance of art and creativity in this vision and join us.
Fight alongside us to be better tomorrow than we are today.
We see our future for art as life-saving.
We see the future of art in you.

Let art become Aspen grove.
An interconnected network of roots that supply and nourish each other.
Despite size or range, let us come together for the good of the people.
Stand in solidarity and community with those similar and different from yourself.
Bound by creativity and possibilities.
As we grow the legacy of art in the Pikes Peak region.

BY ASHLEY CORNELIUS
PIKES PEAK POET LAUREATE (2021-2023)
AND ARTS VISION 2030 STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER

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AN INVITATION

From the Arts Vision 2030 Leadership Team

In the fall of 2018, we started the process to create a new 10-year cultural plan by discussing who else to invite into this important work. While the Cultural Office and Bee Vradenburg Foundation have been honored to steward the effort, and will continue to support the plan well into the future, we knew that crafting a meaningful, relevant, and successful plan would require many voices and perspectives. And, we knew that the scale of creative transformation in these pages would require the ownership, investment, and inspiration of many partners inside and outside of our creative community. So, we began inviting.

We invited Arts Vision 2030’s Steering Committee with great intention and they continue to guide and shape the plan. We thank each of them for volunteering to help organize, analyze, and imagine together over a longer and more difficult period of time than any of us expected.

We invited key donors to join the Cultural Office and Bee Vradenburg Foundation in investing in this work. We are appreciative of their trust and backing. Thanks to their generous financial support, we have undertaken an ambitious and comprehensive process to explore the creative growth, opportunities, and complexities ahead for the Pikes Peak region.

We invited Kendall Peterson and Jill Stilwell, from ThereSquared LLC, to be our lead consultants, supported by Rachel Cain. Their expertise and camaraderie has far exceeded our hopes, and they have infused professional rigor, insight, and joy into Arts Vision 2030.

Now, we invite you to engage this new cultural plan and complete it with your own ideas, time, and investment, for the incredible benefits it will deliver to our regional life. Together, we are stronger, more creative, and ready for the decade ahead!

Angela Seals

Lead Project Coordinator for Arts Vision 2030 & Deputy Director, Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region

Andy Vick

Co-Chair of Arts Vision 2030 & Executive Director, Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region

David Siegel

Co-Chair of Arts Vision 2030 & CEO, Bee Vradenburg Foundation



Special thanks to in-kind partners Onebody Ent & KLand Community Cares, Manitou Arts Center, Poetry719, Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College, Lulu’s Downstairs, and There Squared LLC.

STEERING COMMITTEE



Chris Alvarez
Alvarez Art School, Painter,
Board of Directors for the
Cultural Office of the
Pikes Peak Region



Ryan Bañagale
Colorado College
Visual & Performing Arts,
Musician



Marc Benning
Lulu’s Downstairs,
Blank Tape Records,
Musician



Jodie Bliss
Bliss Studio & Gallery,
Artist, Town of Monument



Cynthia Chung Aki
Golden Lotus Foundation



Ashley Cornelius
Poetry 719, Arts Therapist, Poet



Lisa Cross
D49 Art Teacher &
Pikes Peak Arts Council



Jasmine Dillavou
Artist, Activist



Ryan Flores
Musician, Photographer



Ralph Holloway
Woodland Park Arts Alliance,
Artist



Sally Hybl
Actor, Arts Advocate



Natalie Johnson
D14 School Board,
Manitou Art Center



Cheerish Martin
Singer, Actor



Matt Mayberry
Colorado Springs
Cultural Services/
Pioneers Museum



Daisy McGowan
UCCS Galleries Contemporary Art,
Artist



Jordan McHenry
Dance Alliance of the
Pikes Peak Region,
Dancer, Instructor



Susan Pattee
Arts Advocate,
Bee Vradenburg Foundation
Trustee



Michelle Rozell
Cripple Creek Heritage
Museum



Sarah Sheppard Shaver
PPCC Drama Department,
Springs Ensemble Theatre, Actor



Becca Sickbert
Manitou Springs Creative District



Abby Simpson
Pikes Peak Library District
Sand Creek Library
Director



Claire Swinford
Downtown Partnership,
Downtown COS
Creative District, Artist



Herman Tiemens
Arts Advocate,
Tiemens Foundation



Sergei Vassiliev
Colorado Springs Philharmonic
principal clarinet, EPIC Concerts
Pikes Peak Region

Special thanks to the following individuals for part-time service: Sky Hall (Tri-Lakes Views, Town of Monument) and Lynne Hastings (Actor, Director).

WE ARE WE ARE

a booming region spanning mountains, cities, towns, and plains.

a collaborative and increasingly diverse community.

Creativity and self-expression are intrinsic to our history and identity.

The Pikes Peak region includes Colorado’s El Paso and Teller counties, surrounding the majestic “fourteener” Pikes Peak. The urban center of Colorado Springs spreads out at the foot of Pikes Peak, radiating out into mountain towns, panoramic natural vistas, and rural communities. As the second largest population center in Colorado, the Pikes Peak region is home to more than 750,000 people and rapidly growing in number and diversity. Along with the population, remarkable growth is anticipated for the local economy, jobs, and tourism.

Our arts, culture and creative community is also growing and flourishing. Creativity and self-expression are intrinsic to the history of this area from the time of its earliest human inhabitants. Indigenous cultures have lived in this region for 5,000 years, leaving behind petroglyphs, Ute prayer trees, and other signs of historic creativity. The first permanent settlement was established in what is now Old Colorado City in 1859. Colorado Springs was established in 1871 to take advantage of the extraordinary scenic beauty of its surroundings to develop a “Little London” in the American West, and the mountain towns of Teller County followed in the 1890s. This remarkable setting continues to attract travelers, artists and entrepreneurs.

For much of the region’s history, artistic practice hummed in pockets of vibrancy, supported by volunteer-led organizations. Now, more than 400 arts and cultural groups and organizations enliven the Pikes Peak region. The 2017 Arts & Economic Prosperity Study with Americans for the Arts defined the annual economic impact of the local nonprofit creative sector at \$153.3 million.

The creative sector’s regional, collective identity began galvanizing over the past 20 years. In 2001, the Bee Vradenburg Foundation became the first local foundation dedicated to investing in regional arts. The Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak region (Cultural Office) was founded in 2006 as our first professionally-staffed local arts agency. Efforts by these organizations and so many others ushered in a new era of cooperation, collaboration, and vision that resulted in the community’s first Cultural Plan in 2010.

The regional 2010 Cultural Plan sunset in 2020. Now, after years of planning and months of public input, research and reflection, we, the creative community of the Pike Peak region, are proud to announce the publication of our new 2020-2030 cultural plan—Arts Vision 2030.

Cultural planning is a best practice for guiding communities through long term growth and development. Along the way, the process of planning builds unity and perspective by accessing new ideas from varied voices. Planning also aligns stakeholders and creates a shared vision for the future.

THE STORY OF ARTS VISION 2030

Working together, the Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region and the Bee Vradenburg Foundation convened a diverse steering committee of local creative leaders in 2018, and initiated the process to develop Arts Vision 2030 as the next cultural plan for the Pikes Peak region from 2020-2030.

Arts Vision 2030 builds upon the regional 2010 Cultural Plan starting with an evaluation of our progress and cultural growth over the past decade. To create a vision for the next decade of arts and culture development, key stakeholders were engaged and input gathered directly from our broad community. The result is this living document to galvanize, guide and inspire the arts and creative community towards common goals.

Arts Vision 2030 received funding from El Paso County, the Bee Vradenburg Foundation, Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak region, National Endowment for the Arts, Kirkpatrick Family Fund, Tiemens Foundation, and Colorado Educational and Cultural Facilities Authority. The Cultural Office and Bee Vradenburg Foundation guided the process, amplifying the leadership of the 24-member Steering Committee of local creatives.

The Arts Vision 2030 Steering Committee established values for the Arts Vision 2030 process for a plan that would be of, for, and by the community.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Pikes Peak region is situated on the ancestral homeland of the Ute Peoples, who are the Southern Ute, Ute Mountain Ute, and Northern Ute. Other tribes who lived and hunted on this land include the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Comanche, and Apache. Even through forced relocation and land dispossession, we recognize that the land still holds Ute traditions, language, stories, and history. Today, Indigenous people from many Native nations reside here and continue to make significant contributions to our community.

PLANNING VALUES

In 2018, the Arts Vision 2030 Steering Committee set forth the following values to guide the cultural planning process:

- ✦ **Inclusion** of the full creative community, across boundaries of discipline, geography, and demographics
- ✦ **Ambition** to seize the opportunities of a coming decade of population growth
- ✦ Belief in local **artistic quality**, with support for its further enrichment
- ✦ **Professionalism** based on national best practices, with distinctly regional voice and relevance
- ✦ **Boldness** about the creative sector's contribution to our region's vitality across sector

CULTURAL EQUITY STATEMENT

Adapted with permission from Americans for the Arts (AFTA)

"To support a full creative life for all, our arts and creative community commits to championing policies and practices of cultural equity that empower a just, inclusive, equitable nation."

DEFINITION OF CULTURAL EQUITY

Cultural equity embodies the values, policies, and practices that ensure that all people—including but not limited to those who have been historically underrepresented based on race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, or religion—are represented in the development of arts policy; the support of artists; the nurturing of accessible, thriving venues for expression; and the fair distribution of programmatic, financial, and informational resources.

IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC

In March 2020, the world was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Quarantines and social distancing requirements have had an enormous impact on this region, and in particular our creative community. While we still struggle to see the end of the pandemic, the lasting outcomes and consequences for the creative sector are still coming into focus.

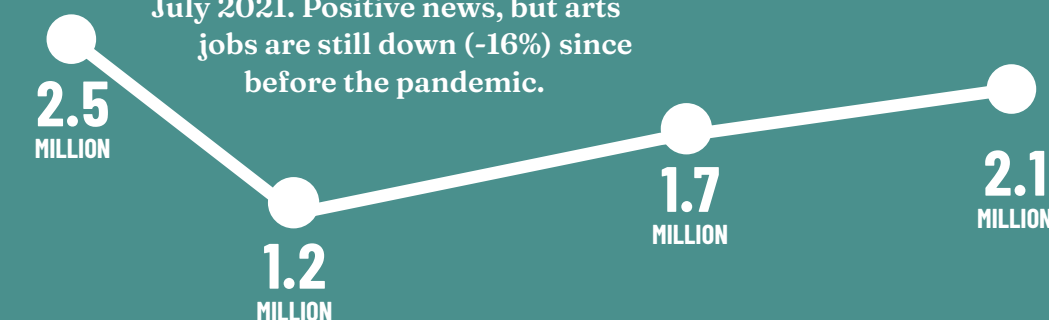
The pandemic shuttered much of the creative sector for varying lengths of time, and portions of the sector may never fully recover. Nationally, we know that creative employment is beginning to pick up, but there is increasing evidence that the creative sector is coming back more slowly than other sectors of the nation's economy.

ARTS JOBS
▼ 16%
SINCE
BEFORE THE
PANDEMIC

Artists/creatives were, and remain, among the most severely affected segment of the nation's workforce. 95% lost creative income during the pandemic. At the height of the pandemic in 2020, 63% experienced unemployment.

95% OF ARTISTS & CREATIVES LOST INCOME DURING THE PANDEMIC

The US Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in August 2021 that "Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation" jobs dropped from 2.5 million to 1.2 million between February and April 2020 (-53%). By January 2021, jobs rebounded to 1.7 million and are up to 2.1 million as of July 2021. Positive news, but arts jobs are still down (-16%) since before the pandemic.



*DATA SOURCE: AmericansForTheArts.org/node/103614

	BIPOC ARTISTS	WHITE ARTISTS
UNEMPLOYMENT	69%	60%
% INCOME LOST	61%	56%

BIPOC artists had even higher rates of unemployment than white artists in 2020 due to the pandemic (69% vs. 60%) and lost a larger percentage of their creative income (61% vs. 56%).



As of July 2021, 39% of organizations with in-person programming remain closed to the public. The vast majority, however, expect to return to in-person activities by the end of 2021.

39% REMAIN CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

The arts have endured and continue to serve community needs. An earlier 2020 survey* stated that 65% of the over 19,000 organizations participating said that they have been "delivering artistic content to raise community spirits and morale."

Anecdotal evidence suggests the Pikes Peak region was impacted less severely than other parts of the country. Tourism has continued to flourish despite the pandemic, as many of our tourist destinations are outdoors. Many arts organizations pivoted to online and outdoor arts delivery. During the summer of 2021, many arts and culture activities and events returned, with the Meadowgrass Music Festival and Colorado Springs Juneteenth Festival kicking off the season.

While more data and time is needed to better understand the permanent and lasting effects of the pandemic, especially on smaller businesses, organizations and individual artists, our regional arts and creative community seem poised to rebound and continue to thrive and grow.

IMPACT OF RACIAL RECKONING

Following the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN on May 25, 2020, protests against police brutality erupted nationwide, and the Pikes Peak region was no exception. Starting May 30, Black Lives Matter protesters demonstrated in downtown Colorado Springs every day for more than two weeks. Music, theater, poetry and visual arts were incorporated, and a “Black Lives Create Fest” was held to support local BIPOC artists. Equity, inclusion and racial justice grounded the first conversations of the Arts Vision 2030 Steering Committee and the plan’s strategic design throughout. George Floyd’s murder elevated critical conversations about race in the Pikes Peak region, and Arts Vision 2030 is a stronger and more equitable plan as a result of this historic context.

PLANNING IN CONTEXT

In early 2020, ThereSquared LLC, a consulting team from Denver, was selected to facilitate the Art Vision 2030 process and began working with the Steering Committee and planning for public engagement. When the pandemic began, all project activity was put on hold.

The leadership team decided to relaunch cultural planning one year into the pandemic with the belief that the project would support the creative sector's recovery and resilience and lay groundwork for post-pandemic success.

Arts Vision 2030 restarted in early 2021 with a redesign of community engagement to be completely virtual. Stakeholder interviews and focus groups were conducted over Zoom. An interactive website with engagement tools like surveys, mapping, forums, and idea boards was launched at ArtsVision2030.com, and social media accounts engaged the public on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

The plan proceeded through five phases:



Insight and ideas from the community were critical to the planning process. This work uncovered the community's needs, interests, and opportunities and guided Arts Vision 2030's vision, declarations and commitments, and implementation ideas. Most importantly, Art Vision 2030 is the community's plan. It was developed through an open, inclusive process and will be implemented in the same spirit.

Our pent-up creative community responded with thousands of people engaging over five months. In fact, 4,500 people were touched by the process and 664 made direct contributions to the plan.

The redesigned virtual process reached more residents throughout the region than the original in-person process would have.

The planning process engaged hundreds of people throughout the community. Many were asked to share three words they felt represented their vision of the future.

Here's what they said:



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2010 CULTURAL PLAN

The original 2010 Cultural Plan sunset in 2020 and much has changed in the region since its inception. The original plan and other planning efforts brought a shared vision to our region and resulted in many successes for our arts and creative community.



Founding two state-certified creative districts in Downtown Colorado Springs and Manitou Springs, alongside growing arts districts and art walks in Old Colorado City, Monument, Ivywild and the Knob Hill Urban Arts District.



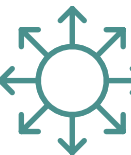
Passage of the Manitou Arts, Culture, and Heritage tax (MACH) and increased support for the arts through the Lodging and Auto Rental Tax (LART) in Colorado Springs.



Expansion of arts marketing programs to a much wider scale, including Peak Radar, Arts Month, and efforts of Visit Colorado Springs.



A formal partnership between the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center and Colorado College.



Expanding events and programs such as First Friday, What If? Festival, Patty Jewett Porchfest, Juneteenth, Green Box Arts Festival, Pridefest, and a variety of concerts, festivals, and celebrations.



Increasing access to the arts was achieved through programs like Military Arts Connection, free admission programs and youth passports at cultural venues, free concerts, Free-For-All Shakespeare, City as a Venue series, and Curbside Culture.



Regular participation in Arts and Economic Prosperity Studies to quantify the economic impact of the nonprofit arts sector.



Establishing a spectrum of new arts venues, including the Ent Center for the Arts.



Greater presence of public art through a variety of programs like the Art on the Streets in Downtown Colorado Springs, Southeast Street Art Project, University Village Colorado shopping center and Tri-Lakes Views in Monument, and the adoption of a Public Art Master Plan for the City of Colorado Springs.

See the appendix for a full summary and assessment of the 2010 Cultural Plan.

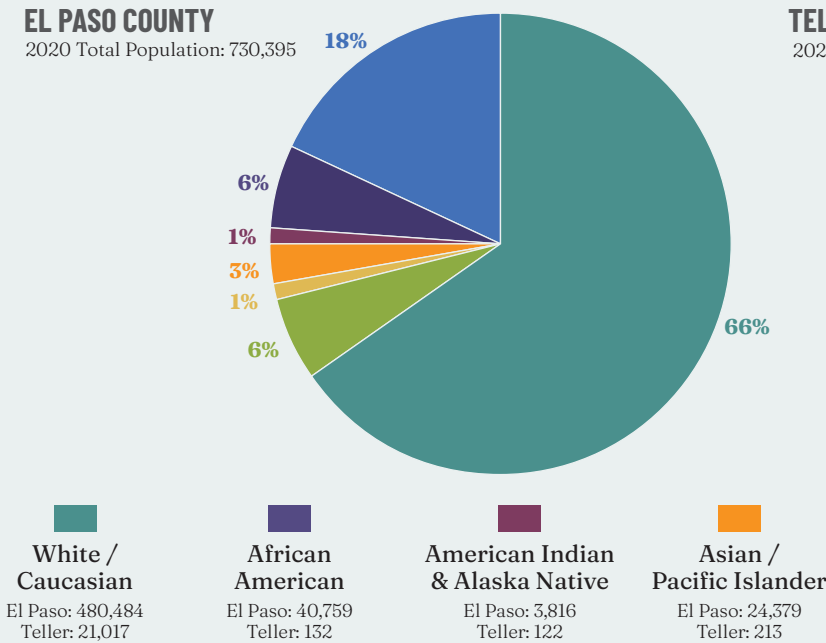
BY THE NUMBERS

Since the 2010 cultural plan, the population of both Teller and El Paso counties has grown and continued the trend of becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. By 2030, projections show the region topping 800,000 and reaching more than a million residents by 2045. Teller county could reach 125,000 by 2050.

POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY: 2020

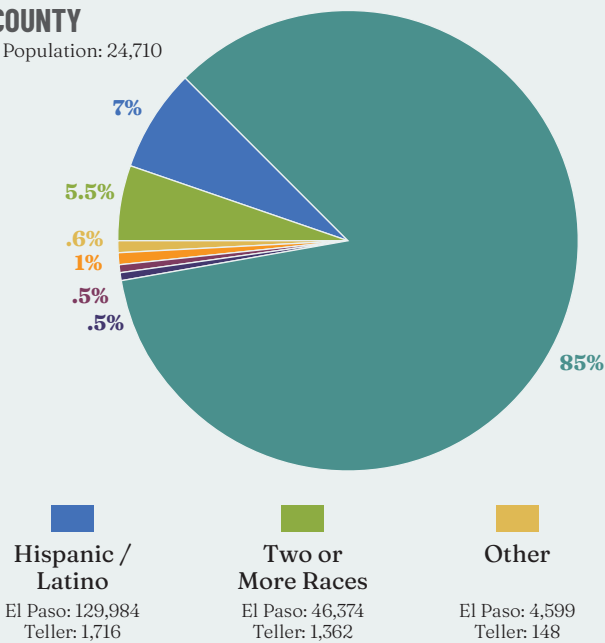
EL PASO COUNTY

2020 Total Population: 730,395



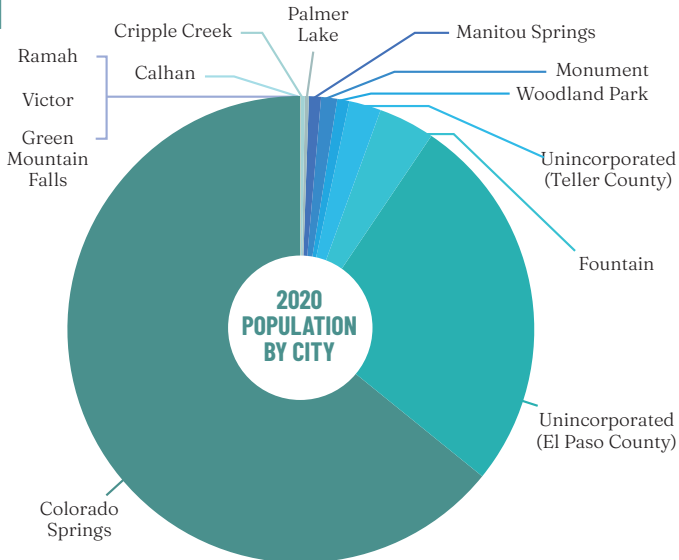
TELLER COUNTY

2020 Total Population: 24,710



POPULATION BY CITY: 2020

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2020 Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File Compiled by the Colorado State Demography Office. Date Produced: 08/15/2021



City	Total Population
Ramah	146
Victor	426
Green Mountain Falls	563
Calhan	704
Cripple Creek	1,258
Palmer Lake	2,887
Manitou Springs	5,283
Monument	7,398
Woodland Park	7,885
Unincorporated (Teller County)	15,819
Fountain	29,784
Unincorporated (El Paso County)	195,423
Colorado Springs	478,215

MILITARY POPULATION

40,364
active duty

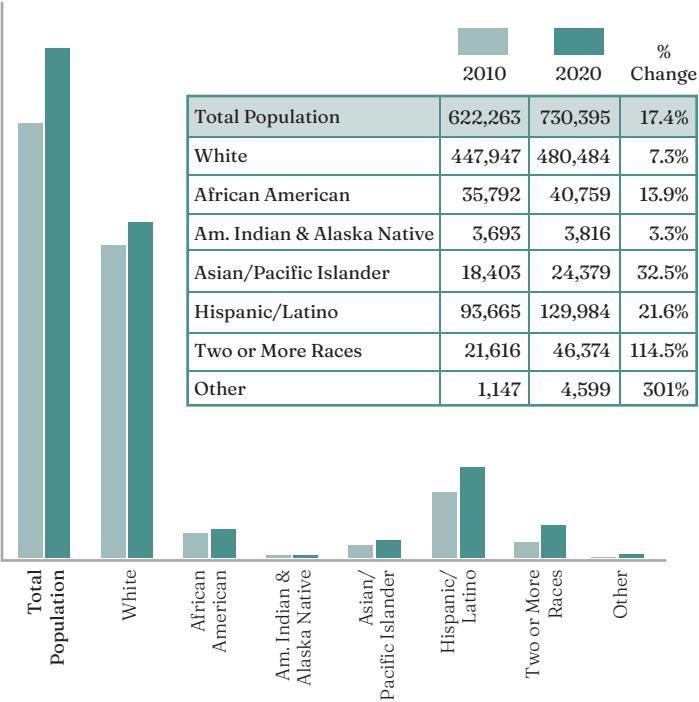
132,994
civilian employees,
retirees, and family
members

1,993
reservists

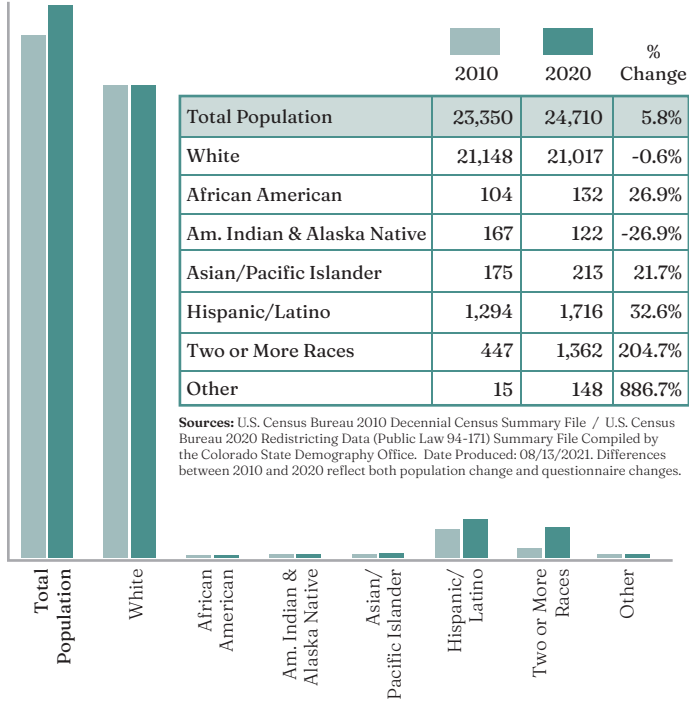
176,331
total residents with
close military affiliation
in the region

POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY: 2010 vs. 2020

EL PASO COUNTY



TELLER COUNTY



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Decennial Census Summary File / U.S. Census Bureau 2020 Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File Compiled by the Colorado State Demography Office. Date Produced: 08/13/2021. Differences between 2010 and 2020 reflect both population change and questionnaire changes.

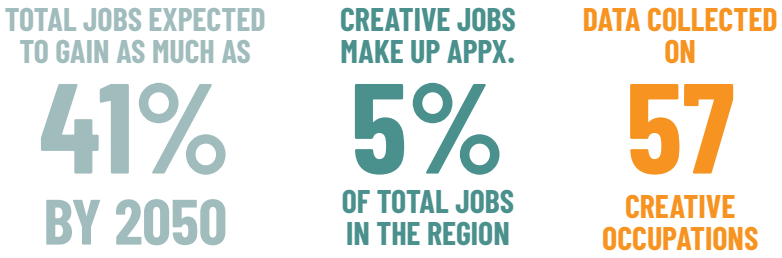
AGE DISTRIBUTION



Over the last decade, the population’s age distribution has shifted from younger to older, with the under-20 age group declining and the 65 and older group growing. Projections expect the senior group to continue to grow annually as more older residents move to the region along with aging of existing residents. Although the 20-34 age group representative of young professionals also grew, this group is expected to experience the smallest growth moving forward.

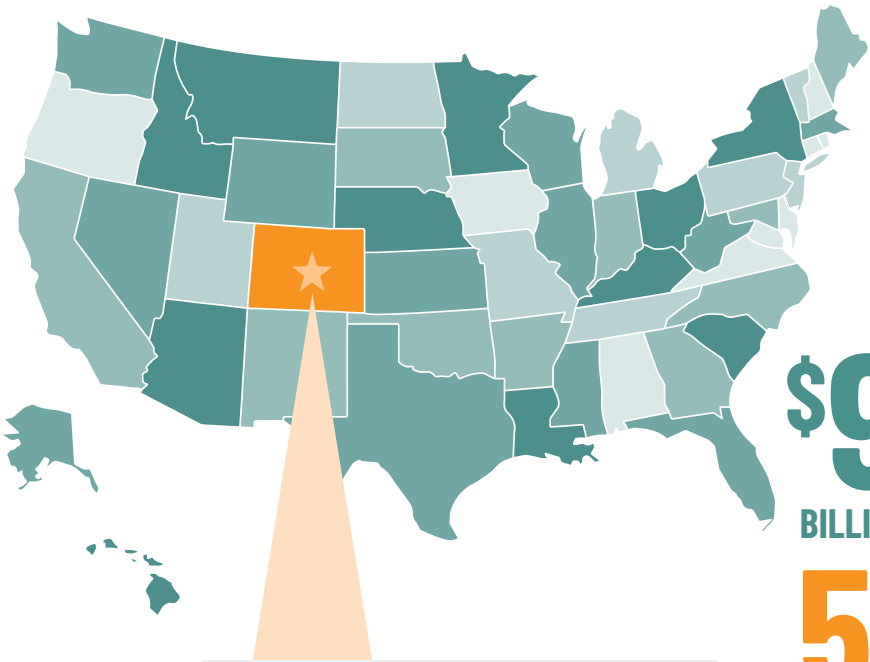
CREATIVE JOBS

The region is expected to gain jobs, by as much as 41% by 2050. This includes creative jobs which make up approximately 5% of total employment in the region. The Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF) Creative Vitality Index (CVI) collects data on 57 different creative occupations by county; the Pikes Peak region saw creative job growth from 2010 to 2019.

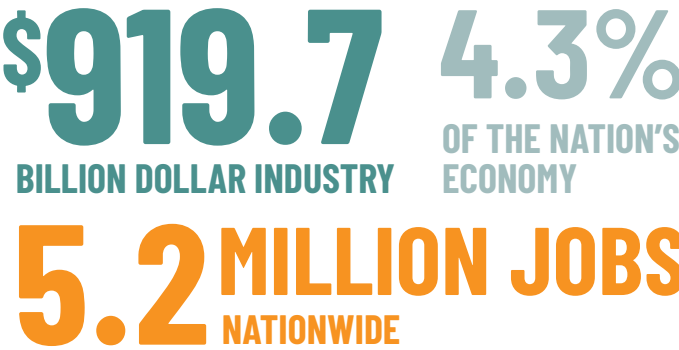


	2010 Creative Jobs	2019 Creative Jobs	% change
El Paso County	11,011	11,671	▲ 6%
Teller County	246	249	▲ >1%
TOTAL	11,257	11,920	▲ 663 or 6%

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS



The nation’s arts and culture sector—nonprofit, commercial, education—is a \$919.7 billion industry that supports 5.2 million jobs. That is 4.3% of the nation’s economy—a larger share of GDP than sectors like agriculture, transportation, and construction.



In the Pikes Peak region, the economic impact of the arts not only enhances quality of life, but also supports economic well-being.

ALL FIGURES FROM THE ARTS & ECONOMIC PROSPERITY STUDY 5 (2017) FOR THE PIKES PEAK REGION

5,070

the number of jobs nonprofit arts and culture orgs supports in the region

\$153.3 MILLION

the annual economic activity generated by the nonprofit arts and culture sector in the Pikes Peak region

\$51.2 MILLION

the amount nonprofit arts and culture organizations spend in the community on goods and services

\$102.1 MILLION

the amount of event-related spending by audiences beyond their ticket for admission to arts and cultural events

\$100.8 MILLION

annual household income to local residents

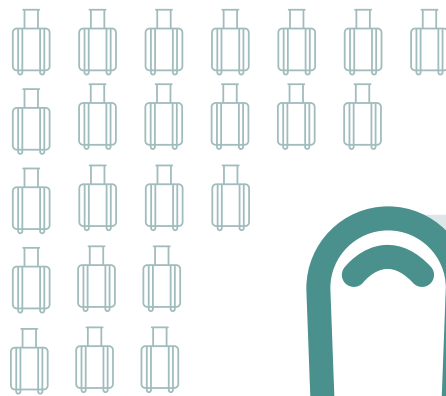
TOURISM



Tourism is on the rise. Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region attracts 23 million visitors per year (2017), and tourism is expected to increase by 25% by 2028 (Colorado Springs and Pikes Peak region Destination Master Plan). Teller County’s largest industry is and will continue to be tourism.



THE PIKES PEAK REGION ATTRACTS
23 MILLION VISITORS PER YEAR (2017)



TOURISM EXPECTED TO INCREASE

25%
BY 2028

ALL FIGURES FROM THE
ARTS & ECONOMIC PROSPERITY STUDY 5 (2017)
FOR THE PIKES PEAK REGION

ALIGNMENT WITH REGIONAL PLANS

Arts Vision 2030 is aligned with other regional planning efforts. These include El Paso County Master Plan, Teller County Strategic Plan update, Plan Colorado Springs (PlanCOS), Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Regional Destination Master Plan, Plan Manitou, Woodland Park Market Analysis and Opportunity Assessment, Colorado Springs Public Art Master Plan, and several others.

These regional planning efforts each identified bolstering the arts and creative sector as a key component of the plan’s goals. For example, an entire section in PlanCOS is titled “Renowned Culture” with a focus on “promot[ing] and embrac[ing] arts, culture, and education as essential parts of our lives and our identity.” In the Destination Master Plan, one of the “5 Big Ideas” is to “make the region the place for four-season arts, culture and festivals in Colorado.”

The El Paso County Master Plan also addressed the importance of the arts and creative sector to the County. With County support, regional arts can “draw residents and visitors to new places across the County with mural or sculpture walks, festivals, and other programming.” (See appendix for a table that shows plan alignment.)

As these regional plans are implemented, Arts Vision 2030 should be considered a resource to support their arts and creative sector goals.

FINDINGS

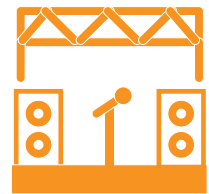
Throughout the Arts Vision 2030 planning process, hundreds of people shared their experiences, thoughts, concerns, ideas, and dreams for arts and creativity in the region. *Here's what we found:*



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.



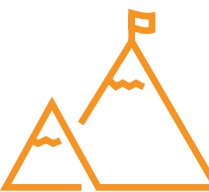
Sustainability: Artists, creatives, and arts organizations in the region continue to battle for subsistence, let alone vitality. They often struggle to earn a living wage, find affordable work spaces, housing, and secure high-quality venues. Arts organizations continue to seek sustainable funding from 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.



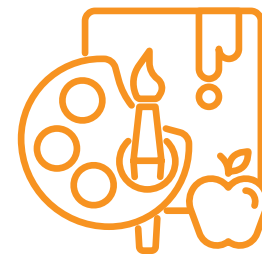
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: The Pikes Peaks region is becoming more diverse in so many ways, however, programming and support has historically favored the traditional and Eurocentric. There is a strong desire to celebrate, promote, share and grow the arts throughout the region, while honoring each 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.

DECLARATIONS



Art Vision 2030 is the regional community's cultural plan.

It was developed by, of, and for the community. The following Declarations and Opportunities present a living framework to guide collaboration, strategy, investment, vision, and more. No one organization or person alone can fulfill this plan. Instead, it will take the entire regional arts and cultural community, along with cross-sector partners and local leaders, to make it happen.

OPPORTUNITIES

Equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice is at the heart of each and every one of our Declarations and the cornerstone of Arts Vision 2030.

In the past, we have not collectively made these values a priority.

As the foundation of this new plan, we DECLARE that:

We must empower a **JUST, INCLUSIVE, AND EQUITABLE** Pikes Peak region.

We commit to holding doors open for one another, including all voices, and advancing historically underrepresented artists, creatives, and audiences in our communities.

We open the Declarations of Arts Vision 2030 by also affirming our Cultural Equity Statement adapted from Americans for the Arts:

To support a full creative life for all, our arts and creative community commits to championing policies and practices of cultural equity that empower a just, inclusive, equitable nation.

We will honor these commitments as we begin our work to realize Arts Vision 2030.

OPENING DECLARATION

We, the arts and creative community of the Pikes Peak region, DECLARE that...

We must empower a **JUST, INCLUSIVE, AND EQUITABLE** Pikes Peak region. We commit to holding doors open for one another, including all voices, and advancing historically underrepresented artists, creatives, and audiences in our communities.

We are strongest when we **COLLABORATE**. We commit to connecting across our communities, sharing resources, and amplifying one another's creativity.

Artists, creatives, and arts entities deserve the opportunity to thrive and prosper here. We commit to developing diversified **FUNDING AND RESOURCE** strategies to fortify and embolden our creative lives.

The arts are critical to our region's identity and authenticity. We commit to promoting our region as an **ARTS DESTINATION** for both experiencing art and making art.

We are powerful together and our voices matter. We commit to speaking up and wielding our influence to **CHAMPION CREATIVE INTERESTS** in local and regional decisions.

Leadership within our creative community is vital to our survival and growth. We commit to developing and advancing **DIVERSE AND EMERGING ARTS LEADERS**.

SPACES AND VENUES are critical for sharing our creative gifts. We commit to building, expanding, and maintaining accessible, thriving spaces for artistic expression.

The arts foster creativity, innovation, and life skills and are essential to being human. We commit to supporting **HIGH-QUALITY ARTS EDUCATION** and access to arts experiences for every student across the region.

We, the arts and creative community of the Pikes Peak region, DECLARE that...



We are strongest when we **COLLABORATE**.
We commit to connecting across our communities, sharing resources, and amplifying one another’s creativity.

OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN REACH:




KEY:

 IMPLEMENTATION TACTIC

 EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION FOCUS

- 1. Use Arts Vision 2030 as a living framework to guide collaboration, strategy, investment, vision and more.
- 2. Create and regularly convene creative groups to foster collaboration, encourage networking, share resources, and accelerate change.
 -   a. Groups could be formed around geography, discipline, military partners, cultural or ethnic backgrounds, arts educators, etc.
- 3. Develop a creative industry-specific online “bulletin board,” clearing house or centralized mechanism for artists to find regional venues, events, jobs, opportunities and resources. Make it easier to seek out gigs and find venues, similar to a Craigslist for creatives.
- 4. Create more and diverse programs for local creatives, to provide new opportunities for unexpected collisions, cross-pollination, and stronger relationships.

OPPORTUNITIES TO REACH FOR:

- 1. Establish an annual summit for cross-regional collaboration and partnering. This is an opportunity for the creative groups to share accomplishments and discuss where there are still gaps. Focus on sharing and advancing Arts Vision 2030 as a community.
- 2. Forge greater cross-sector relationships between the arts and other regional sectors, like healthcare, business, development, government and military, to ensure that the creative sector is relevant, and leveraged as an asset to advance regional goals.
 -  a. Healthcare and mental health services offer enormous potential for partnering with the arts for healing, aging, suicide prevention, and emotional wellbeing.
 -  b. Businesses, government entities, and developers building campuses and complexes should consider artists as partners for creative placemaking.
 -  c. Use the arts to promote environmental stewardship, as the region shifts toward renewable energy sources, responsible tourism, and more.

Americans for the Arts “Arts + Social Impact Explorer”
to generate ideas on cross-sector partnerships:
AmericansForTheArts.org/SocialImpact

COLLABORATE











We, the arts and creative community of the Pikes Peak region, DECLARE that...

Artists, creatives, and arts entities deserve the opportunity to thrive and prosper here. We commit to developing diversified **FUNDING AND RESOURCE** strategies to fortify and embolden our creative lives.

OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN REACH:

KEY:  IMPLEMENTATION TACTIC  EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION FOCUS

1. Expand and centralize services and resources to help artists and creatives grow in their professions. The solution should be comprehensive, regional and sustainable. The need is urgent and greatly exceeds the current offerings.


-  a. Consolidate and expand professional development workshops and classes for artists and creatives. Some suggested class topics include: budgeting and financial management, pricing, seeking grant/sponsorships/fellowships, contracting, how to become a public artist, finding buyers, promoting your work, scoring gigs, public speaking, branding, selling yourself, photographing/filming your work, social media marketing, how and where to exhibit your work, business planning, etc.
-  b. Offer training in technical theatre to support the performing arts.
-  c. Connect performers and artists to professional level classes to stay on top of their game and expand their skills.
-  d. Offer informal opportunities for artists and creatives to network, share knowledge and learn from one another.
-  e. Increase opportunities for art exhibition and sales. Consider expanding existing festivals or developing a new juried festival that connects artists and buyers.
-  f. Produce regional “hiring showcases” for performing artists of all kinds and invite producers, directors, and agents to connect with talent.
-  g. Help create interdisciplinary cross-pollination opportunities, such as poets performing at visual arts exhibit openings, or art displayed during opening night of a theatre production.
-  h. Strengthen existing small business programs for creative businesses and artist entrepreneurs.
-  i. Explore business and legal services through existing state and national program networks (similar to Colorado Attorneys for the Arts).
-  j. Continue to assess the specific needs of local artists to determine which programs are most needed and effective.

2. Track and share quantitative data on the breadth and depth of funding for the creative community. Use this data to identify opportunities for growth.

3. Invest in a multi-year advocacy and public relations campaign to build the case for public funding for the arts.


OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN REACH, CONTINUED:

4. Advocate for Lodging and Automobile Rental Tax (LART) increase with a dedicated percentage for the creative sector in Colorado Springs.

-  a. Create a framework for a publicly funded granting program to distribute this LART percentage strategically and equitably to artists and arts organizations.

 5. Convene (annually) regional arts funders to foster greater philanthropic giving and support of the arts and creative community. Focus on advancing equity goals in the sector.

6. Leverage shared giving models to create more meaningful investment in local arts.

-  a. Strengthen existing programs like “Fund for the Arts” at the Pikes Peak Community Foundation and emphasize equity in its design.

7. Advocate for the funding of the top priorities of the Colorado Springs Public Art Master Plan. This will unlock more opportunities for local artists, more support for businesses that want to do public art projects, more equity in where public art is located, and the creative potential of art in public spaces overall.


8. Better integrate arts and cultural information into orientation and recreational programming for military audiences.


OPPORTUNITIES TO REACH FOR:

1. Research and identify opportunities for other regional taxation models, similar to the Manitou Arts, Culture, and Heritage tax (MACH) passed in 2019, that take advantage of existing political boundaries, like school districts or fire protection districts, for areas that aren’t incorporated as a city.

-  a. Advocate for the passage of a lodging/tourism tax with a designated percentage supporting the arts in local municipalities beyond Colorado Springs, and unincorporated El Paso County, and Teller County.

2. Cultivate an engaged business and corporate community in support of arts and culture.

-  a. Increase corporate financial support for the arts.
-  b. Explore effective national models of business engagement in the arts to build on existing local programs.
-  c. Continue partnerships with leadership programs like Leadership Pikes Peak and Colorado Springs Leadership Institute.
-  d. Encourage business volunteerism and Board service within the creative sector.

 3. Invest in artists and emerging creative entrepreneurs, especially underrepresented community members, through micro loans and other tools.

4. Cultivate broader development of cultural districts, particularly ones that qualify for the State Certified Creative District program, to tap into state monies and marketing support.

5. Explore options for group health care for the arts and creative community.

We, the arts and creative community of the Pikes Peak region, DECLARE that...






The arts are critical to our region’s identity and authenticity. We commit to promoting our region as an **ARTS DESTINATION** for both experiencing art and making art.

OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN REACH:

KEY:

 IMPLEMENTATION TACTIC

 EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION FOCUS

1. Expand collaborative efforts with tourism partners, like Visit Colorado Springs, Pikes Peak Region Attractions, Pikes Peak Lodging Association, and others, to elevate the promotion of cultural tourism.
 -  a. Support increased membership by creative organizations in Visit Colorado Springs.
 -  b. Attract more regional/national arts conferences and symposiums.
 -  c. Expand and attract large scale cultural tourism events, and leverage existing successful local events and festivals to be a bigger regional draw.
2. Learn from the success of Arts Month to develop a broader year-round tourism and branding campaign for arts and culture in the region.
3. Develop an annual arts event to attract and cater to a military audience, helping to consistently connect the military and arts communities through an annual tradition.
4. Develop and market locally-curated “art trails” or day trip itineraries that lead visitors to arts and culture destinations. These itineraries can be prepackaged and distributed to local and state tourism agencies and posted on social and digital media.
 -  a. Create specialized itineraries to include creative businesses that are led by, or primarily serve, BIPOC or LGBTQ communities.
 -  b. Broaden scope to cross-promote culinary, brewery, distillery destinations and non-traditional creative experiences, especially outside of Colorado Springs.
5. Produce collaborative or combined promotional materials, promoting genres like galleries or existing local events or festivals together to showcase the critical mass of the arts as a tourism draw.
6. Elevate new and existing opportunities for national or international artists to travel to the Pikes Peak region to develop new work and interact with the regional arts community.
7. Explore ongoing enhancements to Peak Radar’s tourist and local resident engagement efforts.
8. Promote and build the region’s public art collection as part of creative placemaking and regional draw.

OPPORTUNITIES TO REACH FOR:

1. Strengthen and expand partnerships with local media for consistent arts coverage, and explore the possibility of recurring editorial or critical review.
2. Develop an arts brand that is more inclusive and regional, beyond specific city brands like City Above the Clouds, Olympic City USA, etc.
3. Collect more inclusive, annual data on cultural tourism to better understand and articulate the economic impact of the creative sector and provide more effective and persuasive tools for arts advocacy.

We, the arts and creative community of the Pikes Peak region, DECLARE that...

We are powerful together and our voices matter.
We commit to speaking up and wielding our influence to **CHAMPION CREATIVE INTERESTS** in local and regional decisions.

OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN REACH:

KEY:  IMPLEMENTATION TACTIC  EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION FOCUS

- 1. Develop a multi-year advocacy and public relations plan to incrementally build the case for public funding for the arts.
- 2. Support statewide and national arts advocacy efforts.
- 3. Develop specialized rosters of qualified artists to encourage contractors, developers, business/building owners and event planners to hire more local artists and creatives.
 -  a. Conduct a biennial “request for qualifications” to verify quality and accuracy of information in the listings.
 -  b. Promote the roster to potential consumers of artistic works and programs.
- 4. Position artists and arts leaders to be informed and sought-after contributors in development decisions about the region’s growth and future.
 -   a. Promote and support diverse arts leaders as policy makers, political leaders and board members.
 -  b. Formalize creative sector representation on boards and committees across the region so the arts don’t miss out on opportunities, funding, and decision making.

OPPORTUNITIES TO REACH FOR:

- 1. Hire an arts and development advocate to engage with the development community to encourage and facilitate art in public places, creative placemaking, and employment of local artists, designers, and vendors.
-  2. Hire a dedicated arts political advocate for the region to support a robust advocacy program.
 -   a. Designate and facilitate inclusive coalitions of arts advocates to address the many issues that affect artists, creatives, and arts entities, with emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Important issues include equitable distribution of public art throughout the region, affordable/attainable housing, living wage, transportation access, workforce development, displacement, etc.
 -  b. Develop white papers and political platforms to distribute to city and town councils and political leadership about the importance of the arts in the area.
 -  c. Develop “talking points” during election time and make these available to all politicians, board members and general public regardless of affiliation.
 -  d. Collect data that captures the economic activity of creative industries and distribute the information regularly.
 -  e. Centralize access to current research and reports on creative sector topics.

We, the arts and creative community of the Pikes Peak region, DECLARE that...












Leadership within our creative community is vital to our survival and growth. We commit to developing and advancing **DIVERSE AND EMERGING ARTS LEADERS.**

OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN REACH:

KEY:

 IMPLEMENTATION TACTIC

 EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION FOCUS

-  1. Create an Emerging Arts Leaders (EAL) Council that participates in Americans for the Arts EAL network and has a defined advisory role for local leadership with the Cultural Office, Bee Vradenburg Foundation, arts funder consortium, etc.
-  2. Prioritize hiring diverse and emerging candidates for positions in arts administration.
-  3. Support and empower diverse and emerging arts leaders to take their place in leadership on the Boards of Directors of local arts organizations.
 -   a. Explore setting a percentage goal for racial and ethnic diversity for individual arts and culture boards.
 -   b. In selection, cultivate board members based on their expertise, experience, and diverse perspectives, not only their access to financial resources.
 -   c. Grow diversity training to boards to ensure new voices are validated and supported equitably.
-  4. Actively and intentionally create a leadership program to reach and train diverse and emerging creatives as leaders.
- 5. Fund scholarships to increase access for creative leaders to become members in regional leadership and professional networking programs, like Leadership Pikes Peak, Colorado Springs Leadership Institute, Rotary, chambers of commerce, etc.
-  6. Nominate diverse creative leaders for awards, scholarships, and recognition throughout the region.
- 7. Ensure that established leadership programs in the region include arts and culture as a featured sector in their curriculum and program conversations.
- 8. Hire a Public Art Expert in accordance with the Colorado Springs Public Art Master plan. This position would serve as a leader and a resource to build and guide public art for the region.

OPPORTUNITIES TO REACH FOR:

- 1. Partner with higher education to offer arts administration and nonprofit training - including Masters of Arts Administration, internship and career pipeline programs - to serve the region’s arts organizations.
- 2. Offer more mentorship and/or apprenticeship programs to connect student-artists and emerging artists to creatives with more established careers.

We, the arts and creative community of the Pikes Peak region, DECLARE that...

SPACES AND VENUES are critical for sharing our creative gifts. We commit to building, expanding, and maintaining accessible, thriving spaces for artistic expression.



OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN REACH:

KEY:



 IMPLEMENTATION TACTIC

 EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION FOCUS

- 1. Expand access for the local arts community to existing small and mid-size performance venues by better defining facilities’ uses, access policies, and pricing structures.
- 2. Conduct an inventory and assessment of all existing venues and spaces in the region; survey local groups about these spaces and assess the gaps. (Include parks, mobile stages, and other flexible/temporary space options.)
- 3. Support the creation and presentation of art in informal, outdoor, or mobile settings.
- 4. Advocate for investment in low-cost, DIY, and nontraditional cooperative spaces to support creation, production and performances by creatives and arts organizations.
- 5. Work with developers, governmental agencies, and community advocates to create more affordable housing for artists.

 a. Support the existing ArtSpace project and see it through to fruition.
- 6. Work with planning and zoning administration to create more flexible zoning for live/work spaces and amend sign code to open more possibilities for murals.
- 7. Support and guide the development of an outdoor amphitheater that suits the needs of a variety of artistic genres and will serve a wide range of audiences.
- 8. Expand the presence of public art and creative infrastructure within future development and parks projects, both private and public.

OPPORTUNITIES TO REACH FOR:

- 1. Develop a strategic plan, based on the venue assessment above, that prioritizes a way forward for the region’s development of new spaces as well as supporting or growing the capacities of existing spaces.
-  2. Promote ownership of artist-owned venues and spaces through small business loans and other assistance programs to protect artists from being priced out of their spaces as the region grows.
-  3. Support dedicated spaces for expression by and for underrepresented communities, particularly BIPOC, LGBTQ+ populations.
- 4. Create spaces for shared administration/business resources for arts organizations strategically placed throughout the region.
- 5. Study the need for a creative incubator space in the region and determine what services are needed. Consider whether a physical or virtual incubator is a more effective solution.

SPACES & VENUES

We, the arts and creative community of the Pikes Peak region, DECLARE that...




The arts foster creativity, innovation, and life skills and are essential to being human. We commit to supporting **HIGH-QUALITY ARTS EDUCATION** and access to arts experiences for every student across the region.

OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN REACH:








KEY:

 IMPLEMENTATION TACTIC

 EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION FOCUS

- 1. Support programs to increase access to the arts for local educators and students, like arts passports, family engagement initiatives, and more.
- 2. Improve student and teacher awareness of traditional and nontraditional arts opportunities available in the community.
 -  a. Develop and distribute information through school networks about arts learning opportunities for K-12 students offered outside of school by the arts community. Include information that reduces barriers, such as transportation, fees and scholarships, translation, etc.
- 3. Create a pre-approved roster of teaching artists that work in schools to augment arts education inside the classroom.
 -  a. Explore collaboration with Think360 Arts for statewide connections and training.
- 4. Convene arts representatives from each of the 17 school districts with artists and creatives who work in arts education to share successes and challenges and to continue to work towards greater access to arts education for all K-12 students in the region.
- 5. Expand scholarships, sliding fee scales, and free offerings for students to participate in arts educational programs.
 -  a. Establish a regional arts scholarship fund.

OPPORTUNITIES TO REACH FOR:

-  1. Hire an arts education expert to oversee regional research, coordination, information-sharing and program development.
-  2. Research the access, variety, and quality of arts education offerings across school districts. Use this information to direct advocacy, funding, partnerships and programmatic opportunities to those students with the least access to arts education.
- 3. Building on the success of the existing regional student art exhibition for Congressional District 5, create additional opportunities for students across the region to showcase their creativity.
 -  a. Create an awards program that recognizes students working in nontraditional art forms (like digital media, spoken word, music production, video, etc.)
- 4. Benchmark and share how schools can use the arts in service of teaching non-art subjects (like math and science), and how the arts can advance DEI work with students.
- 5. Encourage young creatives to stay in the region after graduation (both high school and college) by introducing them to available networks of support and career opportunities.
 -  a. Expose K-12 students to arts and creative career opportunities, and ensure arts are included in career education and represented at career fairs.
 -  b. Expand opportunities for students interested in the arts to connect with creative careers and working artists in the region.
 -  c. Develop more mentorship or apprenticeship programs connecting secondary students to working artists and creatives.
 -  d. Expand artists in residence programs and ensure the visiting artists connect with students across the region.
- 6. Support the creation of BFA or MFA degree programs and continued improvement and expansion of higher education arts facilities.

IMPLEMENTATION

Arts Vision 2030: A Living Framework

The creation of Arts Vision 2030 is just the beginning. The opportunities laid out above are a living framework to guide collaboration, strategy, investment, and vision, all in service of advancing the arts, culture and creative communities. Arts Vision 2030 is a catalyst for more detailed action steps to determine how, when, and who will collaborate to achieve these opportunities.

TIMING

The opportunities under each declaration fall into one of two categories: “Within Reach” or “To Reach For.”

“Within Reach” are those opportunities that could be accomplished earlier in the plan. These opportunities tend to require lower levels of resources (time and money), may have already been started but require additional support, or may be a high priority within an organization’s existing strategic plan. For these reasons, these opportunities are considered more achievable.

Opportunities under the “To Reach For” heading are longer-term. These opportunities may require more resources (time and money), take longer to plan and develop, or require significant changes in perceptions or infrastructure.

Regardless of labels, flexibility is key to this plan. The community will prioritize and take advantage of opportunities as they arise. As we have all experienced during the pandemic, adaptability is essential to progress.

LOOKING FORWARD

Sharing Arts Vision 2030 with the communities that helped develop it is the first step to implementation. A public discussion guide and series of discussion sessions will follow this plan’s release to help groups across the region explore their roles and potential connections.

The Cultural Office and the Bee Vradenburg Foundation will periodically convene local arts leaders to champion Arts Vision 2030. Together they will set forth simple and specific measures for tracking the success of the plan and report back to the community. These measures should be within the following declaration areas:

- ✦ **Convenings of the arts and creative community**
- ✦ **DEI initiatives/impacts**
- ✦ **Funding and resource initiatives**
- ✦ **Arts advocacy participation/efforts**
- ✦ **Arts interactions with tourism**
- ✦ **Diverse and emerging leadership**
- ✦ **New or improved arts venues**
- ✦ **Arts education opportunities/participation**

Collection of data could be done through an online crowdsourcing evaluation tool in which the community helps provide the data, or through in-person sharing, perhaps at an annual summit.

Through the Arts Vision 2030 process, despite the pandemic, we witnessed unprecedented engagement from the arts and creative community and beyond. The process brought together stakeholders, community partners, grassroots innovators, activists, military, developers, business, and regional leaders, together with the arts and creative community.

To implement Arts Vision 2030, the collaborative spirit and strong initiative of the region’s people demonstrated during the planning process must continue. Through these boldly stated declarations, our arts and creative community affirms its commitment to the collective force of our combined voices. We believe all these declarations and opportunities are possible - by working together.



APPENDIX (ONLINE)

- Special Thanks
- Online Engagement Report
- Creative Vitality Index Dashboard
- Examples of Programs for Inspiration
- Assessment of 2010 Cultural Plan
- Table of Regional Plan Comparison
- Colorado Demographers 2021 Report for Teller and El Paso Counties
- Arts Organization Inventory

Find Arts Vision 2030 online, as well as the Appendix and the most up to date information over time, at CulturalOffice.org/Resources



Design by Neon Pig Creative 

Find Arts Vision 2030, and the most up to date information about it over time, at

CulturalOffice.org/Resources