



**COPPR** | CULTURAL OFFICE  
OF THE PIKES PEAK REGION

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025

A THRIVING COMMUNITY UNITED BY CREATIVITY

# INTRODUCTION

The Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region is pleased to share this latest update to our Strategic Plan, which will guide our organizational ethos and work through the year 2025. Developed in cooperation with Stilwell Cultural Consulting LLC, and formulated with valuable input from our Board of Directors and staff, this plan clearly articulates the Cultural Office's vision, goals, and strategies for building **“a thriving community united by creativity.”** By design, this update to our internal Strategic Plan takes direction from, and aligns closely with, Arts Vision 2030, the recently updated 10-year cultural plan for the Pikes Peak region.

We continue to be proud of the important work done by our organization, and the positive impact that the Cultural Office is having in our creative sector, and across our wider community. Thank you for your continued support and enthusiasm for arts and culture in Colorado Springs and across the Pikes Peak region, and please know that we always welcome your questions, comments, and suggestions.



**Andy Vick**  
Executive Director



**Holly Flores**  
2022 Board President

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### CULTURAL OFFICE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Holly Flores, *President*
- Krithika Prashant, *Vice President*
- Erin Hannan, *Secretary*
- Peter Maiurro, *Treasurer*
- Scott RC Levy
- Jeff Mohrmann
- John Romero
- Kathy Stults
- Danielle Summerville
- Beth Ann Taylor
- Tara Sevanne Thomas
- Sara Vaas
- Laurie Wilson

### CULTURAL OFFICE STAFF

- Andy Vick, *Executive Director*
- Jonathan Toman, *Communications Director*
- Rebekah Hire-Santoro, *Program Coordinator*

### SPECIAL THANKS TO

- Jill Stillwell
- Stillwell Cultural Consulting, LLC*



CULTURAL OFFICE  
OF THE PIKES PEAK REGION

## STATEMENT OF INCLUSION

The Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region is a champion of activities, programs, and philosophies that break down barriers to the arts, respect risk-taking and artistic freedom, enhance our community's unique identity, commit to excellence and education, and are genuinely inclusive of all people regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, gender, age, physical/mental abilities, geography, or sexual orientation.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Pikes Peak region, our service area, 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.



Arts Vision 2030 is the regional community's cultural plan. It was developed by, of, and for the community, under the stewardship of the Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region, the Bee Vradenburg Foundation, and a diverse steering committee of 24 local creative leaders, with expert guidance from ThereSquared, LLC and Stilwell Cultural Consulting, LLC. The process touched 4,500 people and 664 made direct contributions to the plan. Now, no one organization or person alone can fulfill it. Instead, it will take the entire regional arts and cultural community, along with cross-sector partners and local leaders, to make it happen. Learn more at [www.CulturalOffice.org/ArtsVision2030](http://www.CulturalOffice.org/ArtsVision2030)

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025

## VISION

*A thriving community united by creativity.*

## MISSION

*The Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region champions our diverse creative community as a vital part of the region's identity and economy through service, connection, and advocacy.*

# 1. ADVOCATE

...serving as a respected and recognized leader in advocacy for our creative sector.

# 2. PROMOTE

...presenting our region as a vibrant cultural destination, and a hub for artists and creatives to live, work, and thrive.

# 3. CONVENE

...bringing together the arts, cultural, and creative community to foster collaboration, networking, and innovation.

# 4. LEAD

...growing our capacity as the local arts agency for the City of Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region.

This update to our strategic plan has been informed and guided by Arts Vision 2030, the 10-year cultural plan for our region. Our new strategic plan focuses on four goals and their associated strategies. While numerous strategies have been proposed to achieve each of the overarching goals, it is understood that organizational priorities, the availability of funding, and staff capacity will all help to determine the sequence and timeframe that these strategies will be implemented. It is possible that some strategies may not be acted upon during this current strategic planning period, and/or that other strategies, not specifically identified in this plan, may also be pursued. This flexibility will allow the Cultural Office to remain nimble and opportunistic, and responsive to the needs of a growing and evolving creative community.

### CULTURAL OFFICE OF THE PIKES PEAK REGION

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# ADVOCATE

...serving as a respected and recognized leader in advocacy for our creative sector.

## Proposed Strategies

- 1. Identify relevant and significant issues for our arts, culture, and creative community and develop corresponding strategies of influence to address these needs.**
  - Examples of issues include: funding for the arts sector, growing cultural tourism, affordable live/work spaces for artists, expanding opportunities for public art, designating additional creative districts, access to quality arts education, supporting equity and inclusion in the arts, etc.
  - Invest in a multiyear campaign plan with an outside expert to explore how best to advocate for local arts and culture.
- 2. Endeavor to be an exemplary leader, ally, and advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout our creative sector and community.**
- 3. Continue to cultivate and grow cross-sector relationships to increase awareness and foster partnerships between the arts and cultural community and other sectors.**
  - Regularly connect with key sector leaders to build deeper connections with local and state government, economic development, business, and tourism.
  - Encourage arts, culture, and creative people to participate in established leadership trainings, such as Leadership Pikes Peak, Colorado Springs Leadership Institute, etc. to grow leadership skills within our sector and also to build cross-sector relationships.
- 4. Advocate for increased investment in arts and culture in the region.**
  - Advocate for increased LART funding for the Cultural Office, and for other cultural organizations and event producers.
  - Increase philanthropic awareness about opportunities to invest in the arts.
  - Develop a case for the value of investing in the arts and what the future impact would be if greater investment was made. Benchmark case studies from other communities as examples of impact.
- 5. Build awareness of the economic and societal value of arts and culture and the creative sector.**
  - Gather and disseminate data on the arts, culture, and creative sector to demonstrate impact.
    - Identify what data is already being tracked for the sector (e.g., Americans for the Arts, Western States Arts Federation, Colorado Creative Industries, local counties and municipalities, VisitCOS, local Chambers of Commerce, etc.), and select specific data sets that will be gathered by the Cultural Office on a regular basis and compared over time.
  - Continue to lead and disseminate the Arts and Economic Prosperity study.
  - Develop and report periodically on the “state of arts and culture” in the region.
  - Engage in storytelling as a key way to build more awareness for local arts and culture.
  - Participate in statewide and national arts advocacy efforts.

# PROMOTE

...presenting our region as a vibrant arts and cultural destination, and a hub for artists and creatives to live, work, and thrive.

## Proposed Strategies

### 1. Promote our region as an arts and cultural destination.

- Deepen relationships and collaborate with tourism partners, such as VisitCOS, Pikes Peak Region Attractions, Pikes Peak Lodging Association, and the Colorado Tourism Office.
  - Provide content and data highlighting what's happening in our creative community for inclusion in larger promotional efforts.
  - Develop "art trails" or day trip itineraries that lead visitors to arts and culture destinations to be promoted by tourism partners.
  - Represent and give voice to the value of arts and culture in tourism.
- Support the development of a regional arts and culture tourism/branding campaign.
- Champion the welcoming of individuals of all backgrounds and abilities in our approach to cultural tourism.
- Leverage Peak Radar, Arts Month, and other existing Cultural Office programs to bring more visitors to the community and build greater awareness for the arts.

### 2. Build awareness of arts and cultural in our region.

- Grow the number of Cultural Office and Peak Radar eblast subscribers and social media followers.
- Strive to engage more local media outlets in our messaging.
- Improve teacher/parent/student awareness of community arts opportunities.
- Create more partnerships and collaborations to help spread arts and culture messaging and opportunities.

### 3. Cultivate robust participation in arts, culture, and creative experiences throughout the region.

- Continue to expand the reach of the Peak Radar brand, and increase user engagement throughout our community and into other regional tourist markets.
- Grow our staffing capacity to allow for a more proactive approach to encouraging event listings on PeakRadar.com.
- Grow the number of PeakRadar.com event feed partners (both in-kind trades and fee for service).

### 4. Do more storytelling.

- Shift promotional efforts to not only connect attendees to events, but also toward promoting the value of arts and culture by highlighting and sharing profiles and stories about artists, creatives, and the creative sector.

### 5. Support other community initiatives that support artists and creatives living, working, and thriving in the region

- Examples include; Artspace, City Auditorium, etc.

# CONVENE

...bringing together the arts, cultural, and creative community to foster collaboration, networking, and innovation.

## Proposed Strategies

### 1. Support a wide variety of programs and convenings for arts, cultural, and creative community leaders at all levels that reflect the full breadth of our region to encourage advocacy, diversity, collaboration, and leadership for the future.

- Eliminate barriers for arts, culture, and creative people to participate in established leadership trainings, by connecting individuals to funding and advocating for inclusion.
- Offer informal opportunities for artists and creatives to come together for networking, collaborating, learning, and/or sharing with each other.
- Establish more formal convenings around specific topics, artist genres, demographics, regions, arts education, etc. to build advocacy, cross-regional collaboration, and cross-sector interactions.

### 2. Connect artists, creatives, organizations, and creative businesses to professional development opportunities to help grow their professions.

- Survey the arts, cultural, and creative community to determine what services and professional development opportunities are needed most.
- Leverage partnerships and existing resources to develop a slate of professional development opportunities tailored to serve artists, creatives, and cultural organizations (e.g., Small Business Development Center, Colorado Business Committee for the Arts, Pikes Peak Arts Council, etc.).
- Promote and disseminate opportunities of interest to the creative sector, making them widely accessible across the region.
- Develop and support programming that provides local creatives with opportunities to generate additional earned income (e.g., Military Arts Connection, Curbside Culture, etc.).

### 3. Explore new ways to support, connect, and advocate for arts education in the community.

- Cultivate new relationships with partners at the K-12 level.
- Expand collaboration with higher education partners at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs, Colorado College, Pikes Peak State College, and the Air Force Academy.

### 4. Ensure all convenings are inclusive, open, and accessible, honoring our Statement of Inclusion and reducing barriers to participation.

# LEAD ...growing our capacity as the local arts agency for the City of Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region.

## Proposed Strategies

### 1. Heighten the visibility of the Cultural Office as the region's local arts agency and a thought leader in the sector.

- Expand the Cultural Office's presence throughout the region:
  - Continue to build visibility in the local media and at branded convenings.
  - Increase Board and staff attendance at local arts and culture events.
  - Expand Board and staff service on other community boards and committees.
  - Approach Board membership as an opportunity to reflect the full breadth of the region, with a focus on diversity and inclusion.
- Represent our community and creative sector at state and national convenings.

### 2. Strive to be an exemplary local arts agency in diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- Honor the Cultural Office's Statement of Inclusion in our everyday work.
- Build Board and staff cultural awareness through ongoing diversity, equity, and inclusion training.
- Acknowledge and address any inequities in the Cultural Office's policies, procedures, or governance.
  - Review internal policies, and make updates as necessary related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (e.g., Employee Handbook, hiring policies, etc.).
- Continue to use, and encourage other arts organizations to use, our Land Acknowledgement at local performances, gatherings, and creative events.

### 3. Continue to evaluate Cultural Office programs and activities to determine if they are still relevant. If not, refresh, refocus, or discontinue.

### 4. Ensure the Cultural Office is financially sustainable and builds the capacity necessary to achieve its mission and goals into the future.

- Financial Sustainability:
    - Advocate for ongoing/increasing LART funding to support the Cultural Office and its programming.
    - Continue to cultivate and steward *COPPeR Guild* supporters.
    - Identify new grant opportunities to support our work.
    - Continue to grow earned revenue opportunities through Peak Radar.
    - Research other funding mechanisms to potentially support our work.
  - Staffing Capacity:
    - Build and align Cultural Office staff and roles/responsibilities to meet the organization's highest priority needs.
    - Continue to provide professional development opportunities for all staff.
    - Cultivate a positive work environment, where staff members feel welcome and are appreciated for their efforts.
    - Identify and secure new funding to support an additional staff member.
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