CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

COPPR

CULTURAL OFFICE
OF THE PIKES PEAK REGION

2026 – 2031

Strategic Plan

VISION

A thriving community united by creativity.

MISSION

The Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region advances the arts as a driving force in our region's identity and economy. We connect, cultivate, and champion our creative community as our region's local arts agency.

INTRODUCTION

The Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region is pleased to share the strategy that will guide our work through 2031. Our organization believes strategy is a living process, so we regularly engage in reflection and imagination as a Board and Staff about this work. This plan captures our five-year approach amid a much larger story, begun in 2006. Now beginning our third decade as the region's local arts agency, we are committed to being radically optimistic, responsive, and relevant as we continue our nonprofit's important mission.

The Cultural Office will pursue this plan through four goals, three connected directly from our refreshed Mission Statement: **"Connect," "Cultivate," "Champion,"** plus a final goal to **"Grow."** Together, they describe how COPPR will strengthen relationships, build capacity, advocate for the creative sector, and ensure the organization has the resources and responsiveness needed to lead real momentum.

The arts are critical to the Pikes Peak region's story and its future. The arts also face real challenges to thriving. We believe long-term advancement depends on the hope at the heart of the Cultural Office's founding: centralized strength, collective learning and action, and intersections where we become stronger together as a creative community.



Angela Seals
Cultural Office Executive Director



Scott R.C. Levy
Cultural Office Board Chair

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CULTURAL OFFICE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Chair	**Scott R.C. Levy** · *Executive Director, Green Box Arts*	**Matthew Hanson** · *Market President, Alpine Bank*
Vice Chair / Treasurer	**Erica Oakley-Courage** · *VP of Grants, El Pomar Foundation*	**Lynne Hastings** · *Theatre Actor, Director, Administrator*
Secretary	**Shannon Dunn** · *Painter*	**Kathleen Murphy** · *Community Arts Advocate, Gallerist*
Past Chair	**Krithika Prashant** · *Communications, Marketing and PR Consultant*	**Michelle Rozell** · *Director of Heritage Tourism, Cripple Creek*

our

UNITED BY CREATIVITY

statement

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 or mental abilities, geography, or sexual orientation.

This statement will inform all of the work outlined in the 2027-2031 Strategic Plan, and be a regular point of reflection and accountability for our Board and Staff.

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.

ARTS VISION 2030

Arts Vision 2030 is the regional community's cultural plan. Developed by, of, and for the community under the stewardship of the Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region and the Bee Vradenburg Foundation, it was released in 2021 and continues to inform the strategic plan of the Cultural Office. **LEARN MORE AT CULTURALOFFICE.ORG/ARTSVISION2030.**

Max Shulman · *UCCS Theatre Professor & Artistic Director, Theatreworks*

Tara Thomas · *Director, Bemis School of Arts at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College*

Laurie Wilson · *Administrative Director, Pikes Peak Military Affairs Council*

Fran Zankowski · *Publisher, SoCo Insider*

CULTURAL OFFICE STAFF:

Angela Seals
Executive Director

Jonathan Toman
Program Manager, Cultural Promotion & Tourism

Luke Harper Prince
Program Manager, Creative Economy

Becca Day
Communications & Operations Coordinator

GOAL 1

CONNECT

BRINGING TOGETHER THE ARTS, CULTURAL, AND CREATIVE COMMUNITY TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS, FOSTER COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT COLLECTIVE ACTION.

STRATEGIES

Support a wide variety of programs for arts, cultural, and creative leaders at all levels and disciplines to encourage stronger networks, resource-sharing, collaboration, and learning.

- Increase the Cultural Office's in-person program engagements, valuing the uniquely rich results of live gathering, and maintain a monthly rhythm of offerings at a variety of sizes, depths, and price points.
- Convene strategic groups on a regular schedule during the year to increase coordination, including executives of the largest arts organizations, professional arts marketers, arts education organizations, and others as needed to achieve shared goals.
- Host an annual Creative Sector Summit to rally the industries of the sector for collective understanding and learning at a "state of the arts"-style forum.

Expand the Cultural Office's relationship with artists and individual creatives, better leveraging their numbers and talent that are currently regionally dispersed.

- Tailor trainings specifically for the development of independent & individual creatives.
- Offer informal opportunities for lively networking, sharing, and culture-building
- Increase sustained communications with and between regional guilds, clubs and membership organizations.
- Expand the Cultural Office's presence in rural communities, where creative communities also thrive with distinct needs and opportunities.

Convene conversations and resource-sharing on cross-sector regional issues, demonstrating that creatives play a role in common solutions for the future.

Nurture cross-sector relationships and formal partnerships between the arts, culture, and creative sector and other sectors.

Serve as a hub for introductions, connecting ideas and people across the region for maximum impact.

Centralize resources and coordination of arts education across the region through PeakArtsEd, convenings of educators, and increased communication with schools and families.

BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF THE CREATIVE SECTOR TO THRIVE BY SUPPORTING GROWTH FOR CREATIVE WORKERS, BUSINESSES, AND NONPROFITS.

CULTIVATE

GOAL 2

STRATEGIES

Serve as the lead collaborator linking local arts and business by managing long-term partnerships, committee service, relationships and collaborations with chambers of commerce and economic development leaders.

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

- Develop a slate of professional development opportunities tailored to serve artists, creatives, and organizations by leveraging partnerships, data, and direct input from the field.
- Centralize and promote jobs, auditions, calls for artists, volunteer needs and more across the creative sector through the Peak Radar Opportunities Board.
- Sustain professional development series when they strike an ongoing need, like the Addressing Trauma through the Arts curriculum co-developed by the Cultural Office and El Paso County Public Health.

Invest in the long-term vitality of the creative sector through the Creative Sector Partnership, in collaboration with Pikes Peak Workforce Center, Bee Vradenburg Foundation, and economic development partners. Pillars of this work over time will include:

- Strengthening the creative sector's economic vitality and sustainability.
- Building visible, accessible, sustainable career pathways.
- Leading and sharing research for a data-informed understanding of the sector.
- Increasing the sector's ability to respond collectively to challenges.
- Amplifying the sector's role in regional decision-making and quality of place.

Deepen our region's reputation as an arts destination, increasing COPPR's investments of time and resources into strategic cultural centerpieces that resonate at the state and national level. Success will draw new audiences, capital, and regional influence.

- Serve as the lead collaborator linking local arts and tourism by managing long-term partnership, committee-service, relationships and collaboration with government and tourism entities.
- Provide content and data to ensure the arts are well-represented in regional campaigns and branding initiatives.
- Leverage the long-term strength of Peak Radar, Arts Month, and other existing Cultural Office programs to cultivate robust participation in arts and culture experiences throughout the region. Invest in continued innovation to expand the reach of these efforts and their relevance to diverse members of the community.
- Support development of a new destination arts festival in the Downtown Colorado Springs Creative District, in alignment and collaboration with partners essential for its long-term success.
- Expand storytelling about local arts by building content packages, itineraries, art trails, cultural guides, and pitching of earned media coverage in statewide and national publications.
- Equip creatives with resources to assist independent marketing of themselves.

STRATEGIES

GOAL 3

CHAMPION

SERVING AS THE DYNAMIC, LEADING VOICE FOR THE CREATIVE SECTOR IN REGIONAL LIFE AND VISION.

STRATEGIES

- Identify relevant and significant issues for our arts, cultural, and creative community and develop corresponding strategies of influence to address these needs.
- Regularly connect with key sector leaders to build deeper relationships with local and state government, economic development, business, tourism, and philanthropy partners.
- Represent our creative community on committees and initiatives around the region, using exemplary discernment, data-driven insight, and advocacy for their interests.
- Start conversations at the regional level that advance the interests of the sector, instead of just reacting/responding.
- Actively fold the arts into regional conversations that may not center them as part of the solution, like education, mental health, affordability, safety, smart growth, etc.
- Form a Board committee to guide advocacy practice and strategy.
- Encourage creatives to participate in leadership training programs to deepen skills within our sector and increase cross-sector relationships with peers.
- Serve as an ally for local cultural heritage groups and help cultivate a regional identity that reflects the diversity of the Pikes Peak region.
- Advocate for increased investment in arts and cultural heritage in the region through all viable mechanisms, including public support, corporate giving, philanthropy, etc.
- Partner with philanthropic leaders to increase their investment in local arts and strategically align it with the sector's needs and the Arts Vision 2030 cultural plan.
- Lead strategic investment into the sector by the City of Colorado Springs LART tax program by managing project grants and the City's contract with the Cultural Office.
- Speak publicly at professional events, meetings, and panels to represent the creative sector and encourage audience participation and support.
- Participate in statewide and national arts advocacy efforts.
- Increase connections outside of our region with state and national arts associations and funders.

SUSTAINING AND EXPANDING RELEVANT SERVICES AS THE NONPROFIT LOCAL ARTS AGENCY FOR THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS AND THE PIKES PEAK REGION.

GROW

GOAL 4

STRATEGIES

- Seek out innovative, new opportunities for the organization and the creative sector.
- Maintain and increase the visibility of the Cultural Office as the region's local arts agency and a thought leader in the sector, from the urban core to rural areas and small towns of El Paso & Teller counties, in local media, and with diverse stakeholders.
- Invest in ongoing staff training and retention to maintain an ensemble team with the expertise to daily meet the needs of the people we serve, secure regional trust and legitimacy, and make lasting impact in advancing our mission.
- Protect the 20-year legacy of the Cultural Office by implementing best practices in nonprofit management, leveraging outside expertise when guidance is needed.
- Listen to the needs and issues facing the community we serve, continuing to build feedback channels into our workflows, relationships, and culture.
- Attend arts and culture events across the region to ensure real, on-the-ground relationships and accurate firsthand knowledge of the scene over time.
- Diversify income to support long-term stability and growth, with spirited commitment to increasing individual giving, grant funding, public funding and contracts, and especially earned revenue, so we can continue serving our growing arts community.
- Deepen the strength of our Board of Directors by recruiting members with relevant expertise, diverse perspectives, and valuable resources to help us succeed.
- Increase the breadth and visibility of the many committees, boards, initiatives and projects our Board and staff serve on throughout the year.

THROUGHOUT THE LIFE OF THIS PLAN, COPPR WILL REVISIT THESE GOALS REGULARLY WITH THE BOARD, STAFF, PARTNERS, AND COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS TO EVALUATE PROGRESS, ADAPT TO CHANGING CONDITIONS, AND KEEP THE STRATEGY RESPONSIVE TO THE REGION WE SERVE.

JOIN THE MOMENTUM!

The Cultural Office is a nonprofit 501c3 that pursues a vision of "a thriving community united by creativity," with all of the lively economic power, tourism, and quality of life that the arts provide. Support today online at **CulturalOffice.org/Donate.** Plus, explore exciting new sponsorships and advertising options to help both COPPR and your business, too!

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