



VISIONEERING
WICHITA

**Visioneering Wichita
Arts Strategic Alliance
September 24, 2007
Meeting Notes**

Attendees: LaWanda Smith, Charlotte Janzen, Mickey McElroy, Jim Phillips, Dan Welty, Collin Allen, Ed Langston, Kevin Barker, Garrett Jeter, Eric Bell, Kali Day, Kinta Mader, John D'Angelo, Amber Malott, Yolanda Orozco, Claudette Pehde, Debbi Turner, Jenny Wood, Connie Volkman, Adam Haitke, Doug Billings, Carol Hill, Judy Dover, Carole Branda, Norm Terry, Jaki McElroy, Derek Miller, Jill Rumoshosky Werner, Dena Baber, Tina Murano, David Fonseca, Elizabeth Stevenson, Lela Meadow, Dalyn Ross, Marcelle Fox, Alan Burke, Susan Ellis, Tanya Merritt, Martha Housholder, Lauren Fitz, Dora Timmerman, Nile Dilmore, Kate Clause, Jodi Drinkwater, Lavonta Williams, Trish Van Usdel, Bruce Van Usdel, Jim Ellis, Monica Ellis, Phillip Rob, Julia Abbott, Brad Ruder, Dallas Jordan, Michael Brinkman, Patrick Jennings, Michael Criss, Bob Sauers, Jim McCann, Irene Hart, Mary Ellen Willford, Henry Willford, Lisa Fowler, Bonnie Smith, Gay Quisenberry, Pam Bugler, Ron Holt, Walter Girton, Charles Steiner

The Arts Alliance held its second meeting on Sept. 24 at the Museum of World Treasures, Wichita.

Leadership team member and local artist Jaki McElroy welcomed participants and reviewed the purposes of the meeting:

- Begin capturing a vision for the arts in our region
- Identify potential actions an Alliance could take
- Assess the feasibility of moving forward with an Arts Alliance
- Next steps (if appropriate)

Suzie Ahlstrand provided an overview of the Visioneering Wichita process and the connection of the Arts Alliance to economic development and quality of life goals.

Facilitators acknowledged those who had attended the previous meeting and the leadership team meetings, as well as those who were new.

Visioning

In small groups, participants were asked to answer the question, "If this region of Kansas were truly 'arts-friendly,' what would it look, sound and feel like?" Responses were captured in small groups, then the most common items were called out to the large group. (All small group work is appended to these notes.)

If we got it right, our region would have these qualities:

- investment in local artists
- funding / \$ resources
- arts district
- publication – one source
- website
- more public art and opportunity
- diversity

- "comfort zone" for artists and performers
- arts education at many levels
- inclusiveness
- tax breaks for art spaces
- connect regionally
- visible to the general public
- district for the arts
- Fall Arts Fair
- free festival
- be nice to visitors
- music coalition
- place and money
 - o multi use space

Theming / Request for Help

McElroy demonstrated work she has done taking the web brainstorming list of visual arts in the region from the first meeting and creating themes. She shared some possibilities of work that could be accomplished through cooperation of the arts community and specifically the visual arts community. Others who would like to do similar work with other arts areas are invited to the 10/3 Leadership Team meeting.

Adding to Our Options

Participants were asked to review the list of possible actions and projects than an Arts Alliance could take, which was generated at the first meeting. Two items were added to the list:

- Advocacy:
 - Artists, city, county, state, federal
- Investigate other models

It was also noted that all the qualities generated in the visioning exercise should be considered options for an Alliance to work on.

Setting Priorities

Small groups were asked to identify one item that could have high impact with relatively low effort required:

- Database that lists artists, disciplines, contact info
- A publication with a website
 - o Give it to a high school or college student as a project
- Events: Experiment at Tallgrass Film Festival, Oct. 20, Old Town
 - o Street musicians needed!
- Expansion & greater promotion of Final Friday
 - o Expand it to include all disciplines
 - o Allow artists to easily set up booths on the street or perform on the street
- Increase communication
 - o Website
 - Artist registry
 - Source of information

- Events
 - Education and awareness of current events
- Publication / marketing and communication (all inclusive art)
 - Accessible to all artists

Affirming the Alliance

Charles Steiner, member of the Leadership Team, asked participants two questions:

- Could an Alliance help make some of these things happen?
- How many of you would be willing to come back together, either to an alliance meeting or to form workgroups around some of these ideas to move them forward?

There was general affirmation that an Alliance could have value and that participants are willing to return.

Everyone was invited to the Leadership Team meeting, 4 p.m. Oct. 3, at the Wichita State University Center for Community Support and Research (Self-Help Network). The Leadership Team will determine how to approach the priority items and set the agenda for the next Alliance meeting.

Small group responses:

- Old town for art
- Commercial art spaces – lots of
- Curb appeal – clean environment
- Nature – trees – well kept
- Emerald city
- Not-for-profit spaces
- More cosmopolitan
- Coalition of musicians – all night jam sessions
- Galleries + restaurants open later
- In-depth arts publication
- Arts criticism in the newspaper
- Tax abatements for Arts District and Artists
 - Support of government – financial support
 - Low-interest loans for small businesses
- Feels, looks, sounds like Disney World
- Vibrant-colorful-social
- Lots of people
- Vernacular – organic growth
- Inclusive
- Arts 360
- A place that wouldn't need to ask these questions
- More events downtown
- Arts education – connections with working artists
- Common resource area – tools, studio
- More pedestrian traffic
- Exterior eating spaces
- Smell like Indian food
- Networking between artists

- Website
- Visible to general public
- Accessible studios for dancers / musicians
- A “district” for the arts
- Develop Commerce Street area (building, remodeling)
- Public school funding
- Continuing education for adult artists
- Bring back Fall Art Fair
- More gallery spaces / retail spaces for artists of all types
- More public art, *i.e.* sculpture, murals
- Citywide art fair – a River Festival for artists
- Better communication among all disciplines
- Central location for arts information
- Effective communication
- Central location for information for artists and purchasers of art
- More public art → opportunity not only for artists but to further involve the community
- One building (various floors)
- Arts district (build it + they will come)
- More visibility throughout the region
- Duplicate other cities’ good ideas
 - Vermont
 - Maine
 - Santa Fe
- 2% of city budget taxes support arts
- Arts publication + website
- Mentoring
- Arts area – unified
- Outdoor displays
- Arts newspaper
- Street entertainers
- Murals
- Diversity
 - comfort zone
 - safety
 - lighting
 - parking
 - seating
 - openness
- Invest in local art / artists
 - business
 - corporation
 - tourism – benefit regionally
 - build market (arts investors)
- Have place to focus
 - outlets for artists for commercial purposes
 - build groups / alliances to promote
 - big art museums need to pay attention to / include local artists – WAM, Ulrich, etc.
 - WSU showcase new work
- Big art festival that includes everyone