



MULTITUDE OF RICHES

a blueprint for the creative development
of downtown albuquerque | 2015

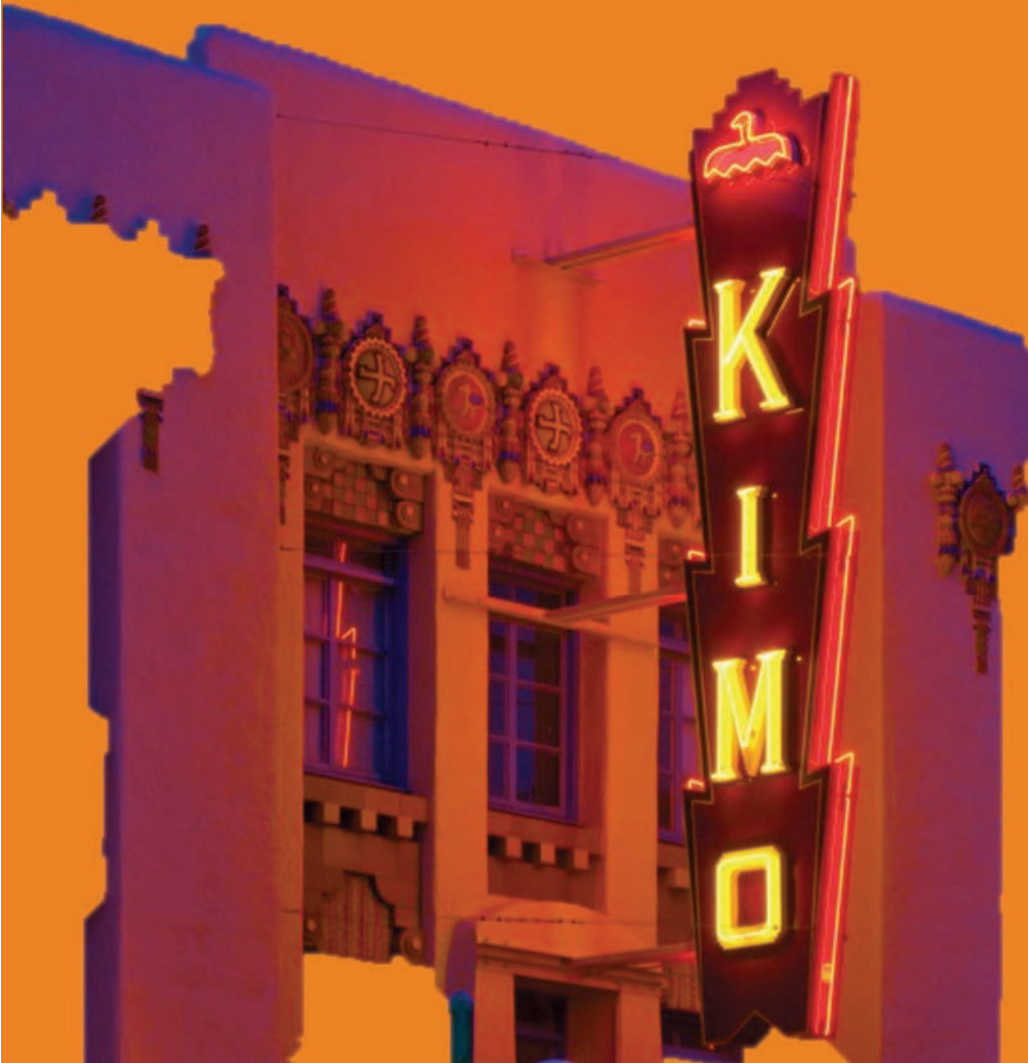



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Executive Summary	3
	Short-, Mid-, and Long-Term Goals	4
	Introduction	5
	A Vision	7
	The Context	8
	Boundary Map	9
	Background	11
	Process	12
	Findings	14
	Community Needs and Desires	15
	Implementation	18
	Recommendations	18
	Goal 1: Leadership Framework	18
	Goal 2: Branding & Marketing	20
	Goal 3: Creative & Economic Activities & Anchors	21
	Goal 4: Physical Planning & Design Projects, Linkages	22
	Proposed Capital List	23
	Appendices	
	A. Notes from Stakeholder Focus Groups	
	Film & Digital Media	
	Visual Arts	
	Branding & Marketing	
	Literary Arts	
	Performing Arts & Entertainment	
	Culinary Arts	
	B. Participants in City of Albuquerque Sessions and Stakeholder Focus Groups	

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In every plan there is a vision and course of action on how to achieve it. **Multitude of Riches: A Blueprint for the Creative Development of Downtown Albuquerque** has been an ongoing discussion with the acknowledgment that Downtown Albuquerque had not yet reached its potential for being the culturally vibrant hub so many desired. This Arts & Cultural District Plan seeks to enrich our understanding of the multitude of riches this district offers. A careful process allowed us to create this plan, which we hope will become the blueprint for a vibrant and sustainable Downtown Arts & Cultural District.

The Downtown Albuquerque Arts & Cultural District Steering Committee identified **six disciplines** to focus on as the means for stimulating the District:

- film & digital media,
- visual arts,
- branding & marketing,
- literary arts,
- performing arts & entertainment, and
- culinary arts.

The Committee identified core placemaking experts in each of these disciplines to contribute best practices from their perspectives, and to participate in the process with key stakeholders and the public. *Creative Albuquerque* facilitated and recorded the process, analyzed the findings, formulated strategies, and compiled a meaningful document.

This plan speaks to the **primary desires** raised in focus groups and in “expert conversations”:

- 1) engaging committed leadership to champion Downtown revitalization,
- 2) changing a citywide perception about Downtown,
- 3) creating an attractive and active 24-hour environment,
- 4) providing a diverse range of arts and cultural amenities for a wide range of individuals, and
- 5) stimulating entrepreneurship for the creative sector.

It is the aim of this plan to ensure attendance to all of these motives such that they are compatible with each other. We believe that all are achievable.

What you will find within these pages is a blueprint for change in Albuquerque. This Downtown Arts & Cultural District Plan is comprised of this Executive Summary; an **Introduction**, which includes information about the vision, context and background for the plan; a description of the **Process**; an overview of the **Findings** of the public process; and an **Implementation** Action Plan.

No plan is successful without implementation, regular monitoring, evaluation and revisions to ensure momentum continues and progress is made. Success must be based on a cohesive vision empowered by commitment and strong leadership to drive the critical mass and energy necessary for revitalization. There must also be an overall endorsement by the greater community that a thriving downtown in any community benefits everyone. We believe that this plan is a solid blueprint for achieving success, and believe that Albuquerque is ready to reach its full potential through robust partnerships between the City and its citizens.

SHORT- MID- AND LONG-TERM GOALS

The following matrix summarizes the goals & objectives of the Cultural Plan. In-depth descriptions follow under Implementation starting on page 18.

	Proposed Start-Up Schedule			Proposed Funding Levels		
	Short-Term 1-2 years	Mid-Term 2-4 years	Long-Term 4-6 years	\$0- 100K	\$100- 500K	\$500k- 1M+
Goal 1: Leadership Framework						
Identify, appoint and empower ACD SC	✓			✓		
Determine the fiscal agent that will retain ACD staffing	✓			✓		
Develop a Communication strategy, Timeline & Work Plan, and Financial Plan	✓			✓		
Monitor and evaluate progress of implementation	✓			✓		
Goal 2: Branding and Marketing						
Develop a Branding/Marketing strategy that coincides with state branding	✓				✓	
Implement an education and awareness campaign	✓			✓		
Goal 3: Creative and Economic Activities and Anchors						
Develop interdisciplinary incubator spaces		✓				✓
Create a Downtown Center for the Arts		✓				✓
Promote and maximize use of existing, unused/ underused spaces for new activities	✓	✓	✓			✓
Stimulate investment and other sources of funding	✓	✓	✓			✓
Grow a yearly signature event	✓			✓		
Solicit mix of small businesses, theatres, shopping	✓	✓	✓			✓
Encourage positive, healthy food & drink activities		✓				✓
Goal 4: Physical Improvements and Linkages						
Create vibrant streetscapes			✓			✓
Connect East Downtown to Downtown & Old Town			✓			✓
Create policies for long-term cultural development			✓	✓		
Create cultural corridors to provide meaningful linkages between anchors		✓		✓		

INTRODUCTION

This Arts and Cultural District Plan provides a vision for cultivating the growth of arts, cultural and creative development in downtown Albuquerque. This plan reflects the city's needs and a desire for year-round, 24/7, sustainable activity in downtown.

What is a Cultural Plan?

A Cultural Plan is the result of an extensive process that helps to articulate a shared vision for a community. Importantly, cultural planning is motivated by a desire to **integrate arts and culture into the everyday lives of its citizens**. The cultural planning process considers the *what* and *how* of the benefits of arts and cultural assets to a community's future. These assets are not just products or commodities but are important **building blocks of a healthy and sustainable city**. This plan looks beyond what is deemed "high culture," to supporting and increasing assets as a means of addressing the civic goals of the city.

Cultural plans function as a way to assess and value the arts and cultural assets within a certain area of a city. Identifying these assets and finding ways to boost, retain and invite creative economic capital are the goals of a cultural plan. Globally, large and small communities understand that a solid review and critical look at their assets will help to **retain creatives, boost the local economy and invite tourists and permanent residents** to their cities. By focusing on what their communities excel in and what they lack, cities have been able to begin revitalization processes that will provide an economic, cultural and lifestyle rebirth.

Cultural planning is a powerful planning practice in cities across the county because it empowers communities, raises awareness about the breadth of arts and cultural offerings in a community, improves and develops public-private partnerships, improves communication and cooperation between arts organizations and other groups, and integrates arts and cultural planning into larger community and city planning initiatives.

Examples

In downtown Brooklyn, NY, home to the Brooklyn Academy of Music (one of Brooklyn's largest assets), the decision to focus on this stable institution and the ability to add more artists to the area was a key issue in their plan. By renovating and repurposing old buildings in the area into affordable, spacious living areas for artist and gallery spaces, they used their existing infrastructure to draw more creatives into the area. Due to this revitalization, shops, restaurants and cultural activities abound. The intermingling of creatives into urban areas caused an economic boost and allowed for further development of other key steps in their plan.

In Pima County, AZ, they decided to focus on the natural environment, and their wealth of history and their artists. They have since implemented steps to further their artist population and to retain the ones they have by forming entities like the Tucson Artist Musicians Healthcare Alliance. This program offers healthcare information and resources to the artists and musicians of Tucson and Pima County, further showing their recognition of and commitment to their creative individuals as cultural assets.

Introduction

(CONTINUED)

New Mexico is home to such cultural plans as Los Alamos, Silver City and, of course, Albuquerque (along with others). All have taken a look at: what makes their city unique, what they have that other cities lack, and what they lack that other cities have. By determining and evaluating their resources, they have established **cultural plans unique to their assets**. In Los Alamos, a focus on their world-changing scientific and technological creativity is the driving force. Los Alamos' emphasis on their cultural district—which is branded as a “Science and Innovation Destination” and anchored by their Historical Museum and Science Museum—is vital to their plan. Silver City, which has been home to creatives for years, is discovering ways to retain and strengthen their already vibrant artist community, while inviting others to join by supporting local artistic and cultural activities.

The reasons for developing a Cultural Plan in Downtown Albuquerque:

- Draws attention to the cultural resources of the community, and through this builds community identity and pride.
- Identifies resources and assets that may have previously gone unnoticed or under-appreciated.
- Brings in new, fresh perspectives from all sectors of the population.
- Acknowledges the importance of individual communities' cultural assets as part of a healthy and vital city.
- Enhances participatory democracy and citizenship through an inclusive and participatory process.
- Identifies strengths and weakness, gaps, and community needs.
- Evaluates existing assets and resources, and identifies problems and solutions.
- Considers the past and present in order to better plan for future urban change.



A Timely Plan.

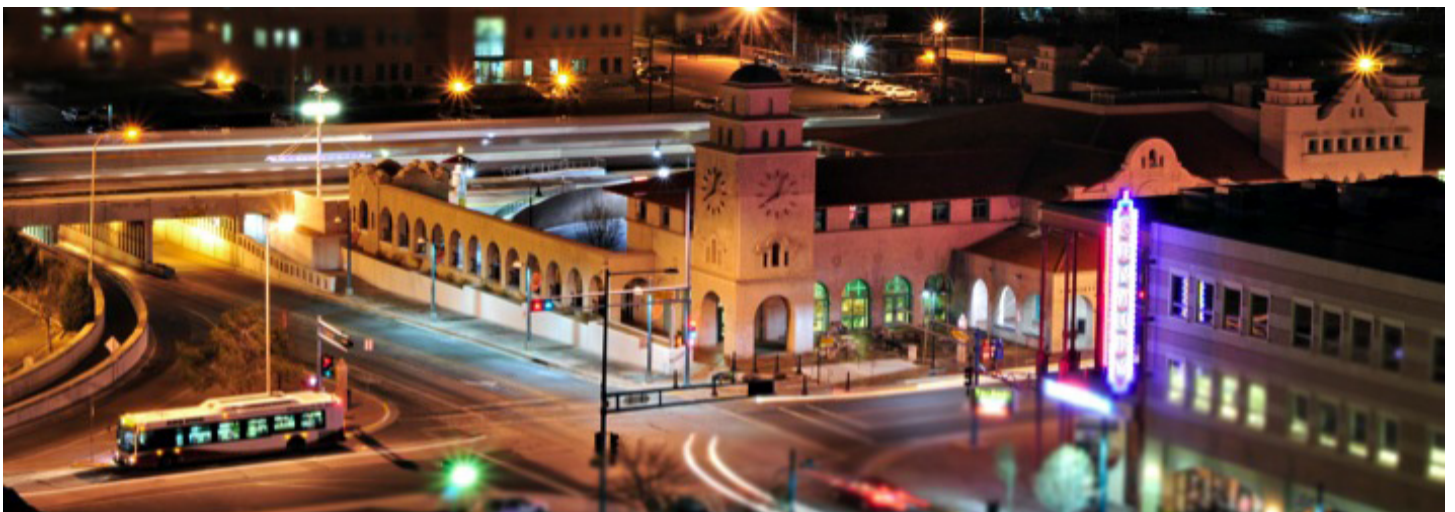
What sets Albuquerque's plan apart is that it is not intended to be implemented some time in the future; rather, it is designed to begin now! In fact, some of the ideas and strategies for improving downtown as an arts and cultural district have already been started. Albuquerque's plan is a strategic roadmap in which specific ideas and strategies have been identified and prioritized, and an implementation plan outlined in order for work to begin. There is much work ahead of us, but with so much in Albuquerque's repertoire and such a *multitude of riches* in our community what we now need to do is start implementing the recommendations herein.

A Vision

The City of Albuquerque recognizes that long-term economic, social, cultural and community benefits accumulate when an arts and cultural district is demarcated and supported by city government. Our vision is to enable this accumulation of benefits so that arts and culture can thrive in downtown, and nurture city-wide growth and pride in the unique riches of the city.

The New Mexico MainStreet Program developed an Arts and Cultural District initiative in 2005. Albuquerque began its arts and cultural district project in January 2008. Albuquerque is a unique city specimen along Route 66 because it is the only place in the United States where the old and new alignments of Route 66 intersect. Rt. 66 is the spine that connects the various districts of the city (from Old Town to Uptown), and around which this district plan is being developed.

Our vision addresses the numerous concerns raised by the various participants in this planning process, which can thus be summarized: Downtown Albuquerque needs a complete downtown experience, one that celebrates the mixture of vintage and midcentury modern buildings, local favorites and new businesses, and popular cultural amenities, and is safe, easily accessible, active 24/7, and pedestrian oriented. Such an experience will attract residents and visitors, daytime and nighttime people, students and workers, and all generations who find themselves in Albuquerque.



The Context

History

Albuquerque is one of the Southwest's oldest cities, embodying and reflecting a strong multicultural arts scene that makes it a unique city in the Southwest and Rocky Mountain West. What Albuquerque is today is the result of hundreds of years of Native American, Hispanic and Mexican-American indigenous peoples, Spanish, and Anglo/cowboy cultural, political and economic activities. As well, the city has been shaped by the late 19th and early 20th century artist movements, the powerful growth boom post World War II, combined with rapid national investment growth in the 1960s, and demographic and cultural expansion (from a wide variety of immigrants, international and domestic) in the 1980s and 1990s.



Today

Albuquerque is thus known locally and regionally for its arts and culture scene. The number of arts and cultural spaces and facilities has made Albuquerque a medium-size city that attracts artists, innovators, and creative people of all stripes. Public and private efforts throughout the city are fostering creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Yet downtown is struggling to concretize an identifiable and positive image that appeals to a wide range of people interested in arts and culture. According to the New Mexico Arts & Cultural Districts Resource Team Assessment Report, "Albuquerque's assets are not well sited and connected in a dense urban matrix to create a catalytic synergy to attract new residents and investments ... Downtown Albuquerque could benefit from the creation of new and enhanced cultural and economic anchors within a 'focus' area of twenty or more blocks defined by Central and Gold Avenues, from First Street to Eight Street, a 'walkable' and pedestrian friendly Arts and Cultural District." The Downtown Albuquerque Arts & Cultural District will, therefore, function as a network of individuals, businesses, institutions and government stakeholders that act as quickly and nimbly as possible to take advantage of opportunities to improve the creative economy for all of Albuquerque by encouraging new activities, authentic placemaking, and stimulating underutilized physical and intellectual assets.

Downtown Albuquerque does, indeed, have a great deal to offer its citizens. The map on the following page delineates the Arts & Cultural District boundaries and points out several important **anchors** of arts and culture.

Downtown Albuquerque Arts & Cultural District Boundaries

Anchors

1. Downtown Growers Market
2. Levitated Toy Factory
3. Albuquerque Community Foundation
4. El Rey Theater
5. Main Library
6. 516 Arts
7. Central Features
8. KiMo Theatre
9. Civic Plaza
10. Convention Center
11. SCA
12. The Box & Tricklock
13. Century 14 Movie Theater
14. The Cell Theater
15. Warehouse 508
16. YDI Warehouse Theater
17. Epicenter
18. Innovate ABQ



Arts & Cultural District Boundary

Developing Albuquerque's Downtown Arts & Cultural District is an opportunity to revitalize downtown, increase awareness of the arts and cultural venues downtown offers and thus attract new users and visitors. The boundaries for the district are based on where there is a high concentration of arts and cultural services, existing strengths of a growing mixed-use area of the city, and proximity to other anchor attractions. As such, we see this arts and cultural district as presenting opportunities for strengthening the downtown core and making stronger connections outwards to other areas of the city. Delineation of the boundary is based on where goals for a downtown arts and cultural district can best be attained: increasing business activity, enhancing tax revenues, providing space for arts activities and organizations, providing employment opportunities for the creative and cultural economy sector, creating safe and clean public areas for leisure-time activities (for daytime and evening times), and encouraging housing development to activate downtown 24/7.

The boundaries of the Downtown Arts & Cultural District were established according to recommendations by the New Mexico Arts & Cultural District State Council, and adopted by the New Mexico Arts Commission in 2012:

- The district size is one that can be managed and enhanced with available funding and resources, and is the area of focus for new projects and future funding requests.
- The majority of the arts and cultural assets (historic buildings, art centers/galleries, libraries, museums, performance venues, creative class entrepreneurs, significant cultural features, restaurants/lodging, etc.) are contained within the district boundaries.
- A critical mass of buildings within the district boundary is dedicated to the creative and/or cultural economy and cultural community.
- Has a "there-there" related to a destination or center, and a distinct district edge.
- The district is a compact and walkable area, generally a 1/4 mile radius, which creates a 5 minute "ped-shed" walking distance (area in which a pedestrian is willing to walk within a district).
- The facilities and venues of partnering organizations may be included within the district provided partners are committing resources (funding, staffing, etc.) that enhance the district's vitality and financial sustainability.

The Downtown Arts & Cultural District lies almost entirely within the Downtown 2010 Sector Development Plan boundaries. The Sector Plan focuses on the entire downtown core, encompassing 5-1/2 square miles (~ 3,550 acres); it covers the Downtown Core. Establishing the arts and cultural district in relation to the boundaries of the Sector Plan allows for a focused physical anchoring to strengthen arts and culture in downtown.

Background

The roots of creativity and culture run deep in New Mexico as seen in its abundant examples of art, cuisine, architecture, and literature. The creative economy, which includes the arts, humanities, entertainment, and design, places an emphasis on knowledge and information over labor, capital or resources. More and more, cities are seeking to attract and retain their creative classes because of the higher wages and problem-solving skill set innovators are known for, plus this sector tends to gravitate towards and thus create more vibrant communities. But vibrant communities don't always happen on their own: Leadership, vision, resources, and strategies are required to overcome community shortcomings that result in sluggish local economies.

To address the economic instability affecting multiple communities across the state, the New Mexico Legislature adopted the National Trust for Historic Preservation's MainStreet program in 1985. Many historic downtowns throughout the state have benefited immensely from the program's fundamental tactics to stimulate local jobs, preserve historic assets, build community capacity, and encourage leadership.

In 2005, the New Mexico MainStreet program developed a statewide Arts & Cultural District initiative to augment the MainStreet activities, but with a strong emphasis on building upon the local arts and cultural industries. As each District has been approved, Resource Teams were sent in to examine the new District and assess its strengths and challenges in terms of: cultural planning, capacity building, marketing/tourism, and physical design. Details on their findings can be found in the Downtown Albuquerque Arts & Cultural District Resource Team Assessment Report. Using these findings as a platform, we have created this document that provides logical and realistic strategies that will result in a more vibrant downtown for Albuquerque.

Eight Guiding Principles In the nearly three decades of Main Street's history in the U.S., the National Trust Main Street Center has identified eight essential guiding principles that local MainStreet organizations must embrace to be successful.

1. **Comprehensive** – For successful, sustainable, long-term revitalization, a comprehensive approach, including activity in each of Main Street's Four Points is essential.
2. **Incremental** – Over time, small successes can lay the groundwork for larger ones, leading to more ambitious projects tackling complex issues.
3. **Self-help** – No one else can save your Main Street. Long-term local commitment is what must sustain revitalization.
4. **Partnerships** – Both the public and private sectors have a vital interest in the future of downtown and must work together to achieve common goals.
5. **Existing Assets** – Business districts must capitalize upon their unique qualities, like distinctive buildings and anchor businesses.
6. **Quality** – All aspects of a MainStreet project must reflect quality if downtown is to become competitive again; shoe-string budgets and "cookie-cutter" efforts can send a negative image.
7. **Change** – Changes in the physical environment, business practices, and perceptions of downtown are essential to support and sustain the revitalization process.
8. **Implementation** – Frequent, visible projects are a reminder that the revitalization effort is underway and succeeding. Completed projects create confidence in the local MainStreet organization and build greater levels of participation.

<http://www.nmmainstreet.org>

PROCESS

The Downtown Albuquerque Arts & Cultural District Steering Committee determined that a different approach would be needed to encourage input, incite passion and result in meaningful strategies. Therefore, the Steering Committee created a cultural planning process that advanced in a three-pronged manner: Stakeholder Focus Groups, National Creative Placemaking “Expert” Conversations,” and Creative Albuquerque research and plan development.

TIMELINE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

May 2010 – May 2011	PREPARATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACD Steering Committee relationship building • Early discussions about final outcome possibilities
May 2011 – November 2011	PRELIMINARY PLANNING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project scope, work plan and timeline developed • ACD boundaries reviewed and established • Project vision statement crafted • 6 core discipline areas identified • National discipline experts identified • Key focus group participants identified
November 2011 – May 2012	CULTURAL ASSESSMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 national discipline experts visit separately for tours and meetings • 6 discipline focus groups meet with experts to provide input • 6 presentations to key City officials • 6 public presentations of observations and recommendations
May 2012 – June 2012	CULTURAL PLANNING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes compiled and analyzed • Preliminary draft of cultural plan released to public for comment
August – September 2015	FINALIZING CULTURAL PLAN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create ACD Steering Committee • Input from public, City and State incorporated into final draft • Final plan presented to City and State
September 2015 and Beyond	IMPLEMENTATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Plan accepted by City Council • Launch Cultural Plan at public event • Continue relationship building • Monitor for success, evaluation and feedback

Process

(CONTINUED)

Stakeholder Focus Groups provided a great deal of information and raised important questions and challenges for the Cultural Planning Team. These “Community Needs and Concerns” were organized into themes (See next section: Findings) that provided entrée to the “Expert Conversations.” Considering the many areas of arts and cultural activities that are strong or struggling in the District, six core creative sectors were identified: film & digital media; visual arts; branding & marketing; literary arts; performing arts & entertainment; and culinary arts. With input from many individuals, a national creative placemaking “expert” was identified for each of the six core disciplines, and invited to come participate in the cultural planning process:

- Brian Newman – Film & Digital Media
- Michael Killoren – Visual Arts
- Gary Steuer – Branding & Marketing
- Luis Herrera – Literary Arts
- Heather Hitchens – Performing Arts & Entertainment
- Barbara Fairchild – Culinary Arts

From March 2012 until early May, one-by-one, each expert arrived for an intensive 48 hours with the Steering Committee. During this time they:

- discussed issues with local organizations, business people, community leaders, and city staff
- toured the district (on foot and by car),
- met with stakeholders at various sites,
- participated in a facilitated group conversation (about how to stimulate the District from the perspective of their core discipline),
- met with select City of Albuquerque officials (at a meeting hosted by the Director of the Cultural Services Department), and

After which they presented their list of best practices, shared their observations, and suggested recommendations for promoting positive activity in the District. Summaries of these can be found in the Appendices.



FINDINGS

Recurring themes began to emerge from the discussions amongst the six core discipline stakeholder group. Many of the identified strengths, barriers, and strategies were the same or similar. A few common assets included the KiMo Theatre, cultural diversity, excellent climate, the location of the Alvarado transportation hub, and others. Some chronic challenges included real or perceived lack of parking, and negative perceptions associated with fear and crime. The community input meetings resulted in a clear list of opportunities and tasks that could be accomplished with the help of a variety of individuals, small businesses, non-profit organizations, institutions, large corporations and government. Importantly, what appears to be crucial to the success of this plan is strong and consistent support from the City of Albuquerque, and solid, responsive leadership from a team that will implement the plan.

Furthermore, our guest speakers were quick to point out that Downtown was not wallowing in a dearth of cultural resources; in fact, just the opposite was the case – Downtown Albuquerque can be characterized by “an embarrassment of riches.” While the addition of new amenities (for example, an incubator for cross-disciplinary innovation) is certainly desired, the focus of the plan’s recommendations is really to better promote, utilize and support what is already here. As long as there is a supply of chronically vacant buildings there may be no need to recommend extensive capital outlay. Opportunities for new or enhanced programming can quite reasonably be implemented by coordinating planning and improving (and multiplying) partnerships. Virtually all of the physical improvements recommended can be implemented within five years.

The biggest hurdle will be that of changing a deep-rooted belief that Downtown is not a vibrant, cultural place for all ages and arts and cultural interests. Therefore, we need to convince residents, especially those who don’t frequent the District, that Downtown is changing. Residents need to recognize Downtown’s potential to truly be the heart of the city and not a doughnut in the midst of cultural riches surrounding it (as the Albuquerque Arts & Cultural District Resource Team Assessment described the area).



Community Needs and Desires

Community Needs and Desires identified by the guest speakers and focus group stakeholders have been consolidated, summarized and grouped by category for ease of understanding, and towards developing the implementation plan. For obvious reasons, leadership is listed at the top; otherwise, there is no particular order of importance.

■ LEADERSHIP

- Cultivate and empower downtown stakeholder champions to lead these efforts, as leadership must be a driving force (i.e., there will be no success without clear, consistent leadership).
- Encourage a cohesive community voice to express needs to leaders at every level.
- Shift the community attitude from a belief of scarcity to abundance.

■ PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Create vibrant Downtown streetscapes with wide sidewalks to encourage strolling, networking, 24 hour eateries, and positive cultural activities.
- Choose two blocks, and focus on beautification and cleanliness.
- Encourage outdoor cafes.
- Add small green spaces with plants and flowers on sidewalks.
- Light up streets evenings to promote safety and add to aesthetics.
- Improve efforts to keep Central Avenue clean by increasing trash pickup and regularly cleaning sidewalks.
- Increase Clean & Hospitality Ambassadors presence.

■ SAFETY

- Develop positive strategies for a safer Downtown.
- Work with the City Police to create a safe, welcoming environment for law-abiding citizens.
- Encourage law enforcement to be a key part of a safe community, help them be proud of Downtown.

■ INCUBATOR SPACE FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY CREATIVITY

- Develop an interdisciplinary incubator space for video game development, digital media, and other arts that will lead to developing sustainable arts businesses.
- Convert empty buildings into one large incubator or several smaller ones.
- Include late night eateries / 24 hour options, to attract different kinds of young audiences.

■ YOUTH

- Actively engage youth in the arts and cultural scene.
- Develop programs, education and training to attract young entrepreneurs to Downtown.
- Provide 24-hour eateries to support their 24-hour creative activities.

■ EATERIES

- Encourage positive food and drink activities.
- Target larger national chains with reputations and funding (e.g., Starbucks, Peets, Coffee Bean; Chipotle, Maestro's, Dean & DeLuca) to invest in and draw other strong, local restaurants.



Community Needs and Desires

(CONTINUED)

- Include Santa Fe eateries like The Compound or Pasqual's.
 - Woo a big name, celebrity restaurant to Downtown.
 - Schedule food truck events on Wednesday evenings with the new growers market at Alvarado Urban Farm.
 - Reduce or remove liquor law restrictions to encourage craft breweries opening.
 - Invite food festivals, craft beer festivals, and outside touring festivals.
 - Offer incentives for restaurants to locate Downtown.
 - Establish partnerships (e.g., between National Hispanic Cultural Center and Central New Mexico Community College) to develop education and training for a culinary arts scene.
- **LINKAGES**
- Connect EDO (East Downtown, East of Railroad Tracks) to Downtown to Old Town (West of 8th Street) with neon, restaurants and culture.
- **INVESTMENT**
- Explore options for stimulating investment and other sources of funding.
 - Revisit the up to one-quarter cent for arts and culture tax (Quality of Life).
- **RETAIL MIX**
- Coordinate with developers and City to encourage an active retail scene that includes a mix of locally-owned small and national anchor stores, movie theaters, and shopping.
- **BRANDING and MARKETING**
- Build a cohesive voice to brand and market Albuquerque and the District as a whole.
 - Build the brand of Downtown as a destination for residents, visitors and talented workforce.
 - Embrace and utilize social media and web channels to promote downtown as an organic, tech savvy, mixed use vibrancy with critical mass of artists, cultural assets and activities.
- **PARKING**
- Improve perception of very limited or unsafe parking: provide parking options like free valet parking located strategically to cover multiple venues; free parking in City garages at night; and free shuttle from parking garages to venues.
- **CITY PLANNING**
- Review and amend policies (City Planning Department) as needed to support long-term development.
 - Create incentives for building owners to address their long-term vacant spaces.
 - Establish incentives to support incubators, mixed-use / work spaces, studios, arts and cultural development.

Community Needs and Desires

(CONTINUED)

■ BUILD ON OUR MULTITUDE OF RICHES

Neon

- Expand our neon signage inventory along Central Avenue / historic Route 66 and Nob Hill as a citywide signature asset by constructing a neon gateway to clearly define the District.
- Conduct a design contest to promote the gateway and Downtown.
- Integrate interdisciplinary events with murals, neon, and street signage.
- Target restaurants for neon signage.
- Build a neon graveyard.
- Build a Route 66 Museum (even if it's tiny).
- Loosen zoning restrictions so businesses can easily use neon signs.



Historic Route 66

- Capitalize on the historic Route 66 identity with cars, food, trolley and walking tours that visit “scenes” in different spots.

Main Library

- Transform the Main Library into a downtown center for the literary arts, community dialogue and engagement.
- Incorporate more efficient community resources to absorb (daytime) homeless population and other social issues.
- Brand the Main Library as a “Downtown Literary Center.”



IMPLEMENTATION

Recommendations

This Plan is a guiding document that is intended to pave the way for establishing ownership and prompting partnerships amongst local government, private and commercial entities, non-profit organizations, and interested citizens and business owners. The Downtown Albuquerque Arts & Cultural District Implementation Action Plan focuses on six priorities that respond to the Focus Group generated “Community Needs and Concerns” and the “Expert Conversations” list of best practices, observations, and suggested recommendations. The priorities are as follows:

- Develop a **Leadership Framework** for implementing the Arts & Cultural District Plan
- Create a **Branding and Marketing** strategy
- Strengthen the capacity of **Creative and Economic Activities and Anchors**
- Attract people downtown through **Physical Planning and Design Projects** to the downtown built environment and **increased and enhanced linkages** within the core and beyond.

GOAL 1: Leadership Framework

Develop a **Leadership Framework** for implementing the Arts & Cultural District Plan.

In order for the Downtown Arts & Cultural District (ACD) to be successful, a leadership framework is being established. As such, during its formation years, a stakeholder network model is the most plausible framework for accommodating the ever-evolving Arts & Cultural District stakeholders downtown. This recommended framework seems the most natural way to further the implementation of the Arts & Cultural Plan, primarily because funds to be allocated to the district will most likely be funneled through the City and onto a 501(c)(3) fiscal agent to fund the Downtown Arts & Cultural District. Upon solidifying its formation, the goal may transition to having the ACD organize into its own 501c3 entity.

OBJECTIVE #1: As a first step in implementing the plan, the City of Albuquerque Economic Development Department shall identify, appoint and empower a Downtown Arts and Cultural District **Steering Committee**. At a minimum, the Steering Committee must have a formal partnership with the local MainStreet organization. Other institutional and organization members representing the district’s arts and culture should also be part of the Steering Committee. Important to identifying steering committee members is the fact that all of the people who participated in this Plan process are potential partners. This Steering Committee shall plan, execute, measure and evaluate the Plan. Since a key goal of this Plan is to better market existing organizations and programming, it is essential that potential partnering agencies and presenters be identified in order to determine marketing, promotion, and funding sources.

GOAL 1: Leadership Framework

(CONTINUED)

Strategy #1A: The Steering Committee will seek funds to implement the Arts & Cultural District Plan. Of particular importance are:

- a) Staffing of the Arts & Cultural District,
 - As part of the early formation of the ACD, the Steering Committee will identify staffing needs with the goal of hiring an Executive Director.
 - The Steering Committee will investigate funding opportunities for the staffing of this position, including City support.
- b) Assessing which fiscal agent/entity retains the ACD staffing.
 - The Steering Committee will investigate the opportunities for “ownership” of the ACD, including its existence as a 5th committee of the Downtown MainStreet organization or as a free standing entity with its own 501c3 designation. If operating as a 5th committee of the Downtown MainStreet organization, funding should be secured to ensure to staff an independent program director.

Strategy #1B: The appointed Steering Committee Members will work as partners, to:

- a) Develop a **Communications strategy** that will allow for transparency and clear, direct communication amongst all plan participants.
- b) Establish a **Timeline** and **Work Plan** for implementation of the Plan.

Strategy #1C: The Steering Committee should develop a plan to regularly monitor and evaluate progress of plan implementation, including the setting of clear and achievable **implementation targets** (based on the priorities listed in this section) and the identification of appropriate and measurable **indicators of success**, and **long-term outcomes** that express the successful implementation of the goals and strategies herein.

OBJECTIVE #2: Develop **Financial/Funding Strategies**. A detailed financial/funding component was not in the scope of this plan, and will be further developed moving forward. However, it is of critical importance that the leadership explore options and opportunities immediately. Therefore, the ADC should explore and advocate for land use and financial tools and incentives that will become the underpinnings of a sustainable financial plan for the district.

Strategy #2A: The ADC working with City Economic Development will and City Council will pursue LEDA funding. In order to pursue LEDA funds, the ADC Steering Committee and City Economic Development will work with City Council to update the Local Economic Development Act to include Cultural Facilities, Metropolitan Redevelopment and a “Claw back” provision, a critical priority for creating new cultural institutions and the support of non-profit arts organizations within the district.

Strategy #2B: The ADC working with City Economic Development and the City Council will pursue TIF implementation for the Downtown Metropolitan Redevelopment Area. An essential component to the development of the Downtown TIF will be the update of the Downtown Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan to incorporate the capital projects outlined in this Plan.

GOAL 1: Leadership Framework

(CONTINUED)

Strategy #2C: The ADC working with City Economic Development will assess and pursue if achievable, the following funding streams and development incentives including LOGRT, Quality-of Life tax, City permit fees, City bond and loan guarantees, grant programs, City property tax exemption and Federal tax credits

Strategy #2D: The Steering Committee will work with the City Council to adopt a resolution officially adopting the ACD boundary of the Cultural Plan, to support the doubling of the state historic tax credit for restoration and adaptive reuse of contributing structures or listed structures in the State Register of Cultural Properties.

GOAL 2: Branding & Marketing

Develop a **coherent and legible identity** for the Downtown Arts & Cultural District.

OBJECTIVE #1: Develop a Branding/Marketing strategy to build a cohesive voice to brand and market Albuquerque and the District as a whole.

Strategy #1A: The ACD Steering Committee should immediately engage a Branding strategy that will:

- a) Develop a cohesive vision and brand for all of Albuquerque and Downtown as a destination for residents, visitors and a talented workforce that includes positive 24-hour nightlife and a critical mass of artists, cultural assets and activities.
- b) Develop a branding and marketing strategy for the District.
- c) Create a campaign to educate the public about and raise awareness of the Arts & Cultural District Plan and the changes occurring downtown

OBJECTIVE #2: The ACD Steering Committee will coordinate branding with local businesses and organizations to implement the campaign to make the public aware of the Arts & Cultural District Plan and the improvements taking place in the district.



GOAL 3: Creative & Economic Activities & Anchors

Promote and support creative and cultural economy activities through a range of incentives and partnerships.

OBJECTIVE #1: Develop incubator spaces for game development, digital media, traditional arts, culinary arts, literary arts, and maker spaces that will lead to youth entrepreneurship and sustainable economic activity.

Strategy #1A: Work with the UNM School of Architecture + Planning and the School of Fine Arts to further develop City Lab and ArtsLab as strong presences in downtown.

Strategy #1B: Work with the City's Cultural Services to develop a plan to utilize the Main Library as a thriving literary arts incubator for downtown and Albuquerque.

OBJECTIVE #2: Facilitate the development of a *Downtown Center for the Arts* to be a regional anchor for Arts & Culture in Albuquerque's Innovation District, by offering diverse arts programs of international acclaim, as well as incorporating strong community involvement with local and regional artists and ongoing educational programs for all ages.

OBJECTIVE #3: Promote and maximize the use of existing, unused/underused spaces as quality spaces for new creative and economic activities.

Strategy #3A: Support Cultural Services Department and non-profits' efforts to enhance performance and theater venues in and around the district.

Strategy #3B: Work with the City's Economic Development Department to assess existing unused and underused downtown properties, and explore strategies to encourage new activation and ownership of spaces.

OBJECTIVE #4: Stimulating investment and other sources of funding.

Strategy #4A: Explore a wide range of financial incentive programs, tools, and strategies to stimulate investment and develop sustainable sources of funding for the continued development of the ACD.

Strategy #4B: Promote and encourage local organizations to apply for local, state, and federal funding to develop programs and projects in the ACD.

Strategy #4C: Work with UNM to develop grant writing training/workshops for local organizations to obtain funding for programs and projects in downtown.

OBJECTIVE #5: Grow a yearly signature event to further build on events-based marketing. The 516 Arts Downtown Block Party is an arts and community focused annual event that has successfully developed into a signature arts and cultural event for the downtown area. It has the opportunity to grow to connect and highlight all of the major activities and amenities in the downtown area. The Downtown Summerfest is another existing successful event option which may be nurtured and enhanced to further involve local artists.

OBJECTIVE #6: Actively solicit a mix of locally-owned small businesses, national anchor stores, movie theaters, and shopping.

Strategy #2A: Work with the City and local developers to create incentives and provide support for local businesses (e.g., The Frontier), national anchor stores (e.g., Walgreen's, Barnes & Noble), and other shopping and retail venues (e.g., coffee shop) to move to downtown.

OBJECTIVE #7: Encourage positive and healthy food and drink activities.

Strategy #3A: Work with local healthy food/eating initiatives, the new downtown market, and the Branding/Marketing team to make encourage businesses to provide healthy food and encourage healthy drink activities.

GOAL 4: Physical Planning & Design Projects, Linkages

Create a legible, friendly, and inviting Arts & Cultural District that is connected to public transit options and the rest of the City. Some changes are already in progress; for example, improvements are in the works for the 4th Street Mall. Other improvements, connections, and changes need to be made in order to make downtown easily accessible and an enticing destination.

OBJECTIVE #1: Create vibrant Downtown streetscapes with wide sidewalks to encourage strolling, outdoor eateries, and positive cultural activities.

Strategy #1A: Increase the number of **street trees** to create shading & aesthetic opportunities.

Strategy #1B: Enhance **street lighting** in alleys and other areas to help improve perceptions of safety and create opportunities for evening activity.

Strategy #1C: Implement a program of **street banners** to highlight seasonal and event-based activities.

Strategy #1D: Enhance and expand pedestrian **wayfinding** signage throughout the district, including adding walk and bike times to encourage those forms of transportation.

OBJECTIVE #2: Connect East Downtown (Edo) to Downtown to Old Town by working with the City's Long Range Planning and the Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency, and Cultural Services:

Strategy #2A: Expand Historic Route 66 / Nob Hill assets by constructing a neon gateway into Downtown.

Strategy #2B: Integrate interdisciplinary events with murals, neon, and street signage.

Strategy #2C: Capitalize on historic Route 66 identity with car culture, food, trolley and tours.

OBJECTIVE #3: Support policies for long-term cultural development. Coordinate with the City of Albuquerque so that district-wide physical improvements and linkages are integrated with existing and proposed city planning projects and policies.

Strategy #3A: Create incentives for building owners to address long-term vacant spaces.

Strategy #3B: Establish incentives to support incubators / mixed use / studios / work spaces, etc.

Strategy #3C: Loosen zoning restrictions so businesses can easily use neon signs.

Strategy #3D: Develop a network of bus service and bike routes/paths/boulevards to develop safer and more legible linkages between downtown and other parts of the city.
a) Plan for bike stations (as part of the new bike sharing plan) to be an integral part of the district improvements plan

OBJECTIVE #4: Create/enhance cultural corridors to provide meaningful linkages between anchors, both within the Downtown area and also to other anchors in Albuquerque, creating program and marketing collaborations that connect the arts activities. For example:

Central Ave - Connecting Route 66 to the West to Old Town Museums, BioPark, and to the East to the University of New Mexico and Nob Hill activities. Coordinate with Nob Hill Main Street Program.

1st Street - Connecting the Warehouse area, the Alvarado Transportation Center, and the Albuquerque Rail Yards Market and cultural events

Fourth Street - Connecting the National Hispanic Cultural Center to the South, Barelás, the Route 66/Route 66 crossroads of 4th Street and Central Ave, Civic Plaza, and cultural amenities further in the North Valley.

This effort will be developed in partnership with Albuquerque Convention & Visitors Bureau to maximize both in-state and out-of-state visitors to Albuquerque.

Proposed Capital List

The following presents a list of projects that would support the development of the Arts and Cultural district as a vital, pedestrian friendly filled with creativity.

- 1. Streetscape Improvements**, on corridors throughout the District, focusing on the creation of sense of place:
 - a. Street trees
 - b. Street tree irrigation
 - c. Wayfinding
 - d. LED Streetlights
- 2. On-Street Improvements**
 - a. On-street parking additions: restriping curbs to allow more on-street parking
 - b. Bicycle infrastructure including bike sharrows, bike racks, and bike lanes
 - c. Embedded bollards for pedestrian streets events
 - d. Parquitos/Parklets
- 3. Downtown Wayfinding.** Support an overall program of destination finding throughout the ACD.
 - a. Signage that supports wayfinding for pedestrians and bicyclists and highlights arts and culture destinations
- 4. Downtown Contemporary Arts Center (s)**
 - a. Arts hub(s) that act(s) as catalytic arts anchor featuring contemporary visual and performing arts exhibits and programs
- 5. Live/Work Housing for Artists**
 - a. Projects that support repositioning of existing office spaces into artists housing & work spaces
 - b. Projects that support new live/ work housing
- 6. Incubator Work Spaces for Artists**
 - a. Performing Arts: spaces supportive of a variety of performance venues, large and small, including studios for instructional purposes
 - b. Shared studios/Arts incubator/Shared gallery
 - c. Makers Space
- 7. Culinary Food Hub/Commercial Kitchen**
 - a. Downtown Commercial Kitchen: providing access to food entrepreneurs
 - b. Product Development
 - c. Shared showroom
 - d. Test Restaurant
 - e. Group purchasing power
- 8. Cultural Corridor First Street South** of Central
 - a. Preparing properties for redevelopment including 2 historic Railroad buildings (Curio Shop, Freight Building)
 - b. Streetscape and Plaza improvements to support the redevelopment of corridor, including lighting, bike lanes, sidewalk improvements, on street parking additions and wayfinding
- 9. Cultural Corridor First Street North** of the Albuquerque Convention Center
 - a. Projects that support the emerging Theater/Performing Arts Corridor anchored by the Cell Theater, including support the redevelopment of vacant properties into indoor and outdoor performance spaces, studios, workshops, and arts driven co-working spaces
 - b. Streetscape improvements to support the redevelopment of corridor, including lighting, bike lanes, sidewalk improvements, on-street parking additions and wayfinding
- 10. Civic Plaza Iconic Art.** Building on the momentum of reactivating Civic Plaza and the public investments made to the Albuquerque Convention Center, develop an iconic art piece that captures the character of the emerging arts and cultural district.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:
Notes from Stakeholder Focus Groups

FILM & DIGITAL MEDIA

VISUAL ARTS

BRANDING & MARKETING

LITERARY ARTS

PERFORMING ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

CULINARY ARTS



FILM & DIGITAL MEDIA





please join the Downtown Albuquerque Arts & Cultural District Steering Committee and special guest Brian Newman for an

exploration of our community's film & digital media assets

focus group for film & digital media stakeholders

wednesday, march 14 from 9:00 – 11:30a

creative albuquerque, 115 4th street nw

public presentation:

“creating a vibrant media arts environment”

wednesday, march 14 from 4:30 – 5:30p

the cell theatre, 700 1st street nw

events are free. rsvp to info@creativeabq.org or (505) 268-1920

Brian Newman is the [founder of Sub-Genre Media](#), focusing on business development projects in the entertainment and cultural industries as well as helping filmmakers, artists and organizations to distribute content, connect with audiences and achieve greater impact through innovative uses of new technology. Brian also serves as a partner in The Futures Agency, an international consulting firm specializing in think-tank events, workshops and executive team seminars.



Prior to his recent work as CEO of the Tribeca Film Institute (TFI), Brian served as executive director of Renew Media, which he merged with TFI in 2008. He was executive director of IMAGE Film & Video Center, producer of the Atlanta Film Festival, and has held positions at the IFP and the South Carolina Arts Commission. Brian serves on the board of Muse Film & Television and Rooftop Films, as well as on the editorial advisory board for Art Papers magazine and the advisory board for VoDo. He was an officer of the board of Grantmakers in Film & Electronic Media (GFEM) for five years.

Brian speaks regularly on new media, innovation, audience development and the future of the industry, and contributes to the Sub-Genre blog on these subjects. He also recently authored “Inventing the Future of the Arts: Seven Digital Trends that Present Challenges and Opportunities for Success in the Cultural Sector” for the book 20 Under 40: Reinventing the Arts and Arts Education for the 21st Century.

He was born in North Carolina and has an MA in Film Studies from Emory University.



For more information, please contact
Creative Albuquerque
(505) 268-1920
info@creativeabq.org

FOCUS GROUP NOTES

Each stakeholder focus group was asked: "How do we stimulate the Downtown Arts & Cultural District from the perspective of your particular industry?" To arrive at answers, each group was guided through a process – in which our expert guests participated – of identifying assets and challenges within the District, followed by brainstorming a variety of strategies to improve the DACD. The following represents the Film & Digital Media Focus Group's input throughout the session.

ASSETS

- Large trained crew
- Downtown fiber system / Giga-pop lambda rail
- 25% state film rebate
- NM hospitality
- Young people
- Halflife Digital as downtown anchor
- KiMo Theatre w/ silver screen
- Proximity to UNM
- Downtown "cultural" hub activities, especially corridor from Old Town to Downtown
- Hispanic & Native American heritage
- Proximity to airport
- Weather / climate excellent
- Omni powerful City Film Ofc / Ann Lerner
- Rail Runner
- Infrastructure at Railyards
- 12 Film Festivals
- Established producers in City/NM
- Electric / pop houses established
- Arts & Cultural Centers nearby
- Micro arts districts
- ARTS Lab at UNM – campus to community
- HS & College film programs, especially charter schools
- Quote UnQuote
- Enthusiasm
- Foley studio (Wildfire → ABQ post studio)
- Empty buildings have potential for use i.e. Rosenwald
- Sandia Labs, brainpower
- Arts and gaming
- Affordable housing
- Low cost of living, high quality of life

"You have an art community that is very visible - they are at the table, compared to other cities where they're not."

Brian Newman



CHALLENGES

- NM Governor Susana Martinez (perceived as unsupportive to the industry)
- Amenities spotty, inconsistent restaurants (especially compared to Nob Hill, etc)
- No grocery stores downtown
- Dangerous downtown (perception or reality)
- Film fatigue – not enough "city" look - only 10 square blocks that can pass for a more major city (NYC, Chicago)
- Not enough architecture from 1940s, 50s, 60s, 70s (all torn down)
- Lack of venture capital investors
- Sony Imageworks leaving city July 2012
- Lack of highly skilled post workforce – despite training opportunities
- Lack of parking (real or perceived)
- Lack of space for (film production) storage
- Homeless presence
- Crime presence
- Jail drops off released offenders downtown
- Militarized police presence downtown on weekends with bar scene is overkill
- Marketing NM outside of NM
- Studios full – need more space
- No green downtown
- Some property owners holding out for unrealistic \$, contributing to long term vacancies and downtown blight

UNDERUTILIZED ASSETS

- Rebates (mostly for production – but post has no access) production companies could benefit; bricks and mortar companies could also use rebate
- Independents not benefitting enough
- Workforce not challenged enough here / no major studios
- Recruitment / retention (brain drain)
- Do more with local film festivals (like SXSW)
- RailRunner schedule not accommodating
- Railyard / studio connections, how?
- Savor Abq and film activities – build connection and grow
- ComicExpo connection should be developed
- MusicQ / digital & film connections
- Music scoring film facility
- UNM isn't integrated with community
- New technologies – Giga pop/fiber underutilized
- Citywide wireless inconsistent, not everywhere
- Simplicity of starting / support for new businesses isn't there
- UNM area most desirable to young people
- North downtown has potential infrastructure with empty warehouses (Marble Brewery, trendsetters)



STRATEGIES

- Cultivate and empower downtown stakeholder champions to lead these efforts
- Consider alternatives to militarized policing that will keep downtown safe and encourage positive presence
- Develop interdisciplinary incubator space for gaming development and digital media:
 - Partner with UNM (9th best university for game development in the country) for skills, education, resources
 - Use vacant / underutilized spaces like Rosenwald / Kress buildings
 - Cultivate students and recent graduates for middle of the road talent, experience
 - Build culture of app developers and programmers - attract them w/24-hour eateries, work environment and safe environment
 - Build places for youth to develop skills, market, education
 - Encourage art/tech start-ups
- Encourage downtown day workers to stay downtown after work:
 - Build and develop additional cultural assets and activities
 - Develop green spaces/mini-parks for worker breaks
 - Create daytime to early evening activities
 - Encourage 24-hour working environment Downtown (not entertainment, but employment) to support growing 24-hour gaming development business and because 24 hour workforce improves safety feeling
- Encourage and support mixed use vibrancy with critical mass of artists, cultural assets and activities:
 - Bring in big, positive retail anchor (like Uptown, but not Wal-Mart) to support small shops like Nob Hill
 - Develop / promote theatre district "Cultural Cul de Sac" – Warehouse 508, YDI, The Cell
- Bring in grocery store, coordinate with City Planning Dept to create infrastructure support for long term development:
 - Develop incentives/requirements for chronic vacant property owners to develop
 - Solicit major developer for downtown master plan to:
 - Improve use of Civic Plaza – revision its master plan
 - Improve use of 4th Street Mall – consider that Central Park makes NYC wonderful
 - Implement Citywide (consistent and free) wireless
- Promote Downtown programming / events for ongoing consistency:
 - Look at Montreal LESAT model
 - Coordinate with ACVB to implement master Arts & Culture Calendar

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STRATEGIES

(CONTINUED)

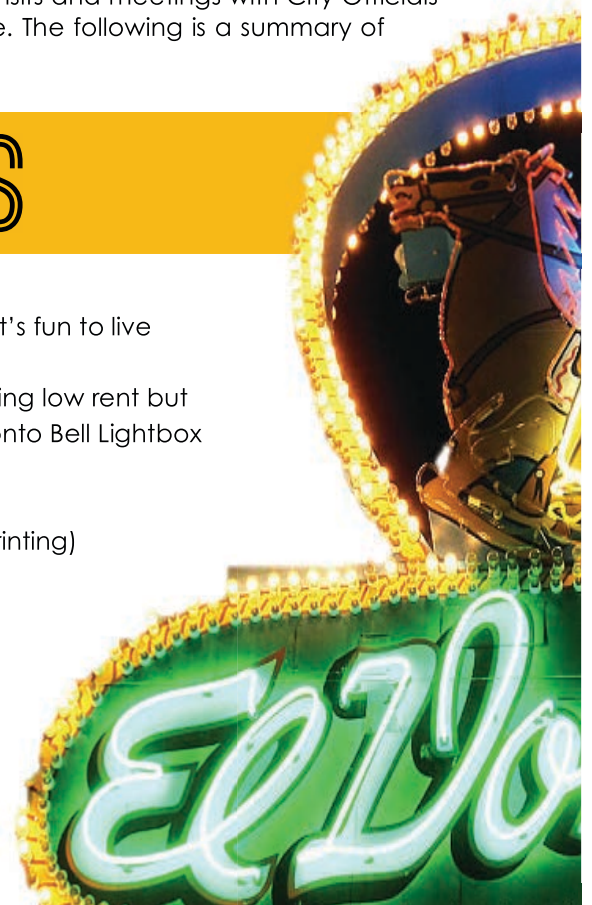
- Work closely with state film office to:
 - Build focus on digital media (they are adding digital media staff person)
 - Amend State rebates to apply to gaming in addition to film
 - Nurture filmmakers with notable promise, cultivate new talent pool
- Learn from Austin model:
 - Make it easy for startups and incubators (permitting, incentives, promotion)
 - Provide training, education
 - Encourage strong music (film, arts, etc) culture
- Explore strategies to attract / increase investment and other sources of funding:
 - Coordinate with Albuquerque Economic Development to attract / develop corporate base in community
 - Position ABQ as good investment, good place to live
 - Message / utilize cultural diversity, great place to live
 - Use growing Latino population to attract sponsors
 - Build upon ISEA 2012 (International Symposium on Electronic Arts) to attract / promote investment
 - Expand out-of-state marketing
- Explore strategies to engage homegrown famous talent and celebrities who come here:
 - Leverage relationships to attract corporate investments
- Increase funding/promotion for:
 - Albuquerque Film Festival
 - Savor Albuquerque

Film & Digital Media: Guest Feedback

Throughout their visits – particularly in response to focus groups, site visits and meetings with City Officials – each expert was asked to offer observations, insights and guidance. The following is a summary of Brian Newman's reflections on his time in Albuquerque.

OBSERVATIONS

- Rethink the “new normal” and downsize scale and plans
- Build a vibrant cultural scene as talent wants to live somewhere that's fun to live
- Look at the Austin model – technology is driving it with start ups
- Develop incubator and studio space – look at NYC model of charging low rent but making money long term from education and training - look at Toronto Bell Lightbox with mixed use
 - Invest in startups for young entrepreneurs (19-25 years old)
 - Include cross-discipline / cross-sector collaborations (like 3-D printing)
 - Training- people pay for it, 1 day long camp
 - Use long term vacancies for incubator infrastructure
- Rethink traditional models to connect: NPO and FP=with profit (community wants services, now more of a participatory culture)
- Support the indie media as independent producers blast through traditional barriers
- Pick a niche – we already have young and technologically based creatives
- Leadership must be a driving force – no success without clear, consistent leadership



VISUAL ARTS





please join the Downtown Albuquerque Arts & Cultural District Steering Committee and special guest Michael Killoren for an

exploration of our community's visual arts assets

focus group for visual arts stakeholders

tuesday, march 20 from 9:00 – 11:30a
creative albuquerque, 115 4th street nw

public presentation: “creative placemaking”

tuesday, march 20 from 4:30 – 5:30p
resource space, 112 gold street sw

events are free. rsvp to info@creativeabq.org or (505) 268-1920

Michael Killoren serves as the Director for Local Arts Agencies and Challenge America Fast-Track at the [National Endowment for the Arts](#). He is responsible for the grantmaking processes for Local Arts Agencies (LAA's), developing partnerships to advance the LAA field as a whole, and the Challenge America Fast-Track program.

Most recently, Mr. Killoren served as director of Seattle's Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, a cabinet-level position, from 2002 through 2010, where he led the city department's funding and public art programs, developed policy initiatives to increase public access to arts and culture, and established a groundbreaking partnership to restore arts education in Seattle Public Schools.

Prior to July 2002, Mr. Killoren was Seattle's first director of cultural tourism for Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau, where he launched an initiative to promote the region's cultural assets. He also served as an arts program coordinator and later executive director of the King County Arts Commission, where he worked to increase access and participation in arts and culture, with a focus on rural and suburban communities. He also served as managing director of the Alice B. Theatre, all three organizations based in Seattle. For three and a half years prior to coming to Seattle in 1993, Mr. Killoren was part of the programming staff at the Sheldon Arts Foundation in St. Louis, Missouri.

Mr. Killoren has served as president and vice-president of the U.S. Urban Arts Federation of Americans for the Arts, and as a member of the Downtown Seattle Association Marketing Committee, among other community service positions. He has a B.A. in Media Arts from Webster University in St. Louis and completed graduate studies in telecommunications at Indiana University, Bloomington.



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FOCUS GROUP NOTES

Each stakeholder focus group was asked: "How do we stimulate the Downtown Arts & Cultural District from the perspective of your particular industry?" To arrive at answers, each group was guided through a process – in which our expert guests participated – of identifying assets and challenges within the District, followed by brainstorming a variety of strategies to improve the DACD. The following represents the Visual Arts Focus Group's input throughout the session.

ASSETS

- Public Art
- 516 Arts, Richard Levy, OffCenter
- High concentration of working visual artists
- Cultural diversity
- Collaborative, supportive environment and people
- History of Downtown
- KiMo Theatre
- Industrial zoning (potential for manufacturing)
- Plethora of arts publications
- Opportunities for youth engagement (Warehouse 508, 516 Arts, Harwood Art Center)
- High Schools creating artists (Amy Biehl HS, etc)
- Downtown Growers Market & Alvarado Urban Farm
- McCune Foundation – investment in Downtown
- Urban Enhancement Trust Fund (and support of arts organizations)
- Community involvement
- Chatter
- Hotel Andaluz
- Mural program developing, beyond public art
- Public transportation and transit links
- Rail Runner
- Gallery spaces, working studio spaces
- Restaurants
- Number of young entrepreneurs increasing
- Businesses that display or collect fine art
- Abq Community Foundation new space Downtown
- Unique architectural styles
- Presence of creative businesses like Ripe Inc
- Seat of City / County government
- ABQ Trolley Co, specialized tours, public art tours
- ArtsCrawl
- Vibrant music scene
- Neon and unique signage

"I am blown away by the authenticity of this community."

Michael Killoren



CHALLENGES

- No cross sector incubation space
- No nighttime restaurants
- Need more police, feels unsafe
- Sidewalks dirty, need more cleanup
- Few incentives for youth / businesses and everyone to come downtown
- Liquor licenses to seedy bars, not enough licenses to restaurants
- Too many headshops
- Perception of no parking, lack of parking
- Lack of shade - especially in summer
- Civic Plaza - built for large concerts that haven't happened – too hot in summer
- Not enough affordable urban housing – live / work
- No grocery store
- NM Mortgage Finance Authority (affordable housing) has qualification limits
- Abandoned Anasazi Building – dangerous, a blight
- No cohesive branding for Downtown
- Lack of funding affects everything
- City isn't willing to invest in Downtown
- City priorities are unknown / unclear
- Broader community doesn't see Downtown as a shared asset
- Other neighborhoods fight to have assets in their areas – don't want investment made Downtown

CHALLENGES

(CONTINUED)

- Other neighborhoods fight to have assets in their areas – don't want investment made Downtown
- Lack of communication between Downtown and other neighborhoods
- Lack of a residential base (splintering of efforts – East Downtown, West Downtown, etc. / no one is facilitating communication between these areas)
- Revitalize Downtown plans in past have been shelved
- Redistricting for City Council has eliminated Downtown representation
- Downtown commuter center – lost
- Perception that heart of Downtown is hollow
- Lack of consistent city leadership (shifts with every election) – need a master plan that maintains leadership despite individual shifts
- No clear starting point (for visitors, for example) – no place to begin / legibility and wayfinding / cohesiveness is missing
- Walkability - other cities have inviting promenades and incentives to sit, eat or explore; Central is closest thing, but so busy, not inviting
- Route 66 car culture is asset... but also barrier
- Lack of critical mass
- Building owners unwilling to lower rent / develop / sell; do nothing to counter vacancies that add to blight
- Generational absentee owners contribute to blight
- Students don't / won't live downtown



UNDERUTILIZED ASSETS

- Gaps in public transportation (can't easily get from airport to Downtown to Old Town)
- ArtsCrawl – increase public and gallery participation
- Underutilized public and private spaces, including empty buildings, vacant storefronts, parking lots, the Railyard
- KiMo Theatre / Gallery Space – could be used more
- Local programming isn't bringing enough community participation Downtown
- Local visual arts programming is of high caliber, but needs to be better appreciated by larger community
- Need additional marketing / promotion for:
 - Rail Runner's additional weekend trains (Santa Fe has shuttles waiting for you when you get off the train; ABQ no such direction / support)
 - Downtown as cultural & artistic center
 - Wayfinding not clear
 - Late night resources – places for everyone / creative youth to go after work, to eat, to drink

STRATEGIES

- Determine and empower Downtown champions to lead revitalization efforts:
 - Demonstrate there is a community with leadership and centralized core of activity
 - Select a "pilot project" to launch revitalization efforts ie Rosenwald
- Actively court a grocery store for downtown
- Attract young entrepreneurs to Downtown:
 - Encourage alternative / low- to no-budget "incubators" – social hours, gatherings, beer & blogs
 - Artists and students are an underutilized population
- Attract greater community to Downtown:
 - Encourage alternative / low- to no-budget "incubators" – social hours, gatherings, beer & blogs
 - Foster shopping, boutique stores, things to do during the day
 - Set up Bike Share
- Foster restaurants / alternative hang outs / food sources
- Develop a cross disciplinary incubator to:
 - Attract young multimedia / arts entrepreneurs
 - Foster collaboration across sectors

CONTINUED →



STRATEGIES

(CONTINUED)

- Build a cohesive voice to brand and market Downtown:
 - Communicate the resources that are already present
 - Unify understanding of existing assets
 - Develop and promote Downtown Asset map to serve as visual aid to our district, to highlight our bright spots and help people choose Downtown
- Petition City leadership for active changes:
 - Creative urban development master plan with City Planning
 - Strategies should be citywide, not just Downtown
 - Explore options for locating incubator in the Anasazi or Rosenwald buildings
 - Incentivize participation from property owners to fill long term vacancies
 - Educate building owners re: civic responsibility, success breeds success
 - Phantom galleries – make them ongoing, in empty store fronts,
 - Enact public ordinances to shut down difficult spaces (headshops, etc.)
 - Commit to fund positive changes like redirecting \$20M from Convention Center to an Arts Center
- Foster communication and coordination with competing arts & cultural organizations to:
 - Help nurture new audiences for all
 - Develop new programming instead of buildings
 - Eliminate isolation and over competitiveness amongst organizations
 - Develop phantom galleries
 - Develop "parade" culture like Old Town Buskers Program
 - Create partnerships to use empty spaces for temporary use / installations
 - Build a centralized source of information / ticket outlet
 - Build on national alliances to develop / build the arts in Albuquerque
- Consider guerilla or temporary art as low / no budget strategy for revitalization



Visual Arts: Guest Feedback

Throughout their visits – particularly in response to focus groups, site visits and meetings with City Officials – each expert was asked to offer observations, insights and guidance. The following is a summary of Michael Killoren's reflections on his time in Albuquerque.

OBSERVATIONS

- Political will is necessary to stimulate innovation at the local level
- Must have clearly defined leadership – at the top, a cadre of visionary leaders
- We have great grass roots artistic talent to tap into and celebrate
- Provide access to information, business training and convening of artists / entrepreneurs
- Operating support is necessary for nonprofit organizations, small business grants, dedicated funding / incentives, tax increment financing
- Creative placemaking - now backed up with research of metrics (by National Endowment for the Arts) - could happen around local pride in Abq's "quirky" elements
- Build relationships between visual arts and Downtown businesses
- Foster relationship of arts to broader community
- Give a voice to and cultivate expression by local artists
- Integrate existing, strong visual arts into the existing, strong magnet of music
- Mobilize public will and voice our request for an incubator
- Build on Central Avenue neon signage / create the brand-people experience
- Brand downtown as a neighborhood - it's a place you go to and can stay
- We have control over public spaces - use them / explore new ideas for arts activation

BRANDING & MARKETING





please join the Downtown Albuquerque Arts & Cultural District Steering Committee and special guest Gary Steuer for an

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focus group for branding & marketing stakeholders

wednesday, march 28 from 9:00 – 11:00a

creative albuquerque, 115 4th street nw

public presentation, “make the message: branding arts, culture & creative economy”

wednesday, march 28 from 4:30 – 5:30p

the cell theatre, 700 1st street nw

events are free. rsvp to info@creativeabq.org or (505) 268-1920

Gary P. Steuer

Chief Cultural Officer, City of Philadelphia
Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy

Gary Steuer has headed Philadelphia's Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy since 2008. The Office's mission is to support and promote arts, culture and creative industries, and to develop partnerships and coordinate efforts that weave arts, culture and creativity into the economic and social fabric of the City. As Chief Cultural Officer, he serves as a member of the Mayor's Cabinet, advising the Mayor and all City agencies on cultural and creative economy issues. Recent major accomplishments including creating the City's first arts and creative industry-targeted Community Development Block Grant capital funding initiative, completing a new study on Philadelphia's Creative Vitality, and initiating a new arts and creative economy data mapping project.

Before joining the Nutter administration, Mr. Steuer was the Vice President for Private-Sector Affairs at Americans for the Arts, and had the additional title of Executive Director of the Art and Business Council of Americans for the Arts. He was responsible for leading efforts to stimulate more private sector support for the arts, including promoting partnerships between the arts and business sectors. Mr. Steuer served for ten years as the President and CEO of the Arts & Business Council Inc. before and during its merger with Americans for the Arts. Earlier in his career he was a theatre producer, both in the commercial and nonprofit theatre, served as Capital Funding program director for the New York State Council on the Arts, and was an aide to a United States Congressman. He has written, lectured and taught extensively on arts management and policy issues and has served on many boards of directors and funding and advisory panels for local, statewide and national organizations. He blogs at <http://artscultureandcreativeeconomy.blogspot.com>



For more information, please contact
Creative Albuquerque
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info@creativeabq.org

FOCUS GROUP NOTES

Each stakeholder focus group was asked: "How do we stimulate the Downtown Arts & Cultural District from the perspective of your particular industry?" To arrive at answers, each group was guided through a process – in which our expert guests participated – of identifying assets and challenges within the District, followed by brainstorming a variety of strategies to improve the DACD. The following represents the Branding & Marketing Focus Group's input throughout the session.

ASSETS

- Neighborhood diversity
- Empty buildings (have potential)
- History of Albuquerque "heart" / Route 66
- Historic Buildings – KiMo & Sunshine Theatre
- Arts & culture venues, theater, performance, galleries
- Murals, street art
- Civic Plaza
- Underutilized areas
- Accessibility to transit
- Public Art
- Walkable place
- Convention Center
- Great hotels
- Residential capacity growing – condos, apartments
- Great restaurants
- A city where if you scratch the surface, there are a million treasures around the corner
- Sense of place
- Farmers market
- High concentration of businesses that support creative industries with technology
- Chatter at the Andaluz / events at the KiMo
- Art of the Song
- Globalquerque
- Located between Denver and Phoenix
- Chocolate & Coffee Festival
- Center of the City (geographical, historical, etc.)
- Hub of the spokes of ABQ's cultural wheel
- Government seat – city / county
- Major transit center right here
- Concentration of cultural attractions
- Theatre district, galleries, KiMo, movie theatre
- Library (main)
- Bars & restaurants
- Music – open doors for local musicians again; key to thriving
- History of district, especially culturally
- Build it (brand it) and they will come – believe it, declare it, do it



CHALLENGES

- Hours limited – places close too early
- No good eateries open after 10pm
- Branding perceptions unclear
- Bar heavy / strange vibe vs. music scene
- Crime is over publicized in local media
- No attempt to create thriving music scene; musicians depressed, wanting to leave ABQ (loss of respect for them?)
- Empty buildings – owners not participating / not interested in using their spaces; no incentives to utilize / lease out vacant buildings
- Some arts / cultural assets not in district; how do we integrate
- City very spread out, including arts & cultural assets – not concentrated – more driving city
- Mass transit on grid instead of circular loop around downtown
- Restrictions on under 21 activity
- Perception that there is nowhere to park
- Time of day affects perception / population; some will never come downtown – cultivate those who will
- Really good music scene needed
- Really good cuisine needed
- Need package – events, eateries, parking, retail, housing, grocery
- Growers market: music, food, arts / crafts, family – how do we make this year round?
- Permitting process for bringing youth into space is extremely difficult

“Brand the whole city – you can’t brand the district separate from the city.”

Gary Steuer



UNDERUTILIZED ASSETS

- Neighborhood diversity
- Empty buildings
- Route 66
- Historic buildings: KiMo, Sunshine Theatre, etc.
- Civic Plaza
- Branding / Marketing Barriers
- Walkability
- The KiMo

STRATEGIES

- Tax building owners who leave their spaces empty instead of short / long term development (disincentives for keeping buildings vacant)
 - Develop mixed use incubator for gaming development
 - Establish a “Culture Bus” to shuttle around City assets (Philadelphia and Hamburg models – asserted themselves as heart / travel hub and made it so, integrated transit into city identity and accessibility)
 - Distribute free magazine publication focusing on music (or any particular discipline) in restaurants, bars
 - Brand Albuquerque and the District as a whole:
 - Brand Downtown as the hub / heart / bullseye
 - Brand time of day – debrand perception that nights here are unsafe
 - Package what’s here with new message to grab attention
 - Brand “creative economy business hub” (daytime)
 - Display everywhere maps and directional signage for City and DACD
 - Brand music scene and cuisine scene
 - Create incentives to support:
 - Incubators, mixed use spaces, studios / work spaces
 - Arts and cultural development
 - Build live music scene by streamlining process for musicians, performers and artists to have practice space, studios, and facilities:
 - Make better use of facilities that can accommodate performances
 - Consider World Café model (public/private music club partnership)
 - Build upon and celebrate existing events like Chatter, Globalquerque, New Mexico Jazz Festival, Comic Expo, Chocolate & Coffee Festival, etc
 - Include KUNM, Outpost, chamber music to build (underground) thriving music scene
 - Attract young people to Downtown by:
 - Simplifying permitting process for hosting youth events
 - Solicit funds to foster young talent, entrepreneurs, etc via City or State
- 



Branding & Marketing: Guest Feedback

Throughout their visits – particularly in response to focus groups, site visits and meetings with City Officials – each expert was asked to offer observations, insights and guidance. The following is a summary of Gary Steuer's reflections on his time in Albuquerque.

OBSERVATIONS

- Have more City Hall public art open houses, more public art trolley and walking tours
- Include Community Development Block Grants as part of the district incentive package
- Use the CVI (Creative Vitality Index) as the benchmark to measure ourselves now and later
- Develop a cultural asset map like Philadelphia
- Create a Community Share Art Program - Like the Forum Community Share Investment
- Plan must address the younger culture and the Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau has to include them
- Brand the city – and make the branding of the district a part of that

“Downtown must be revitalized because downtown is what the business visitors see and determines if they’ll ever come back and what they’ll say about ABQ as a whole and will affect the city’s overall identity.”

Gary Steuer

LITERARY ARTS





please join the Downtown Albuquerque Arts & Cultural District Steering Committee and special guest Luis Herrera for an

exploration of our community's libraries & literary arts assets

focus group for library & literary arts stakeholders
tuesday, april 17 from 9:00 – 11:00a
creative albuquerque, 115 4th street nw

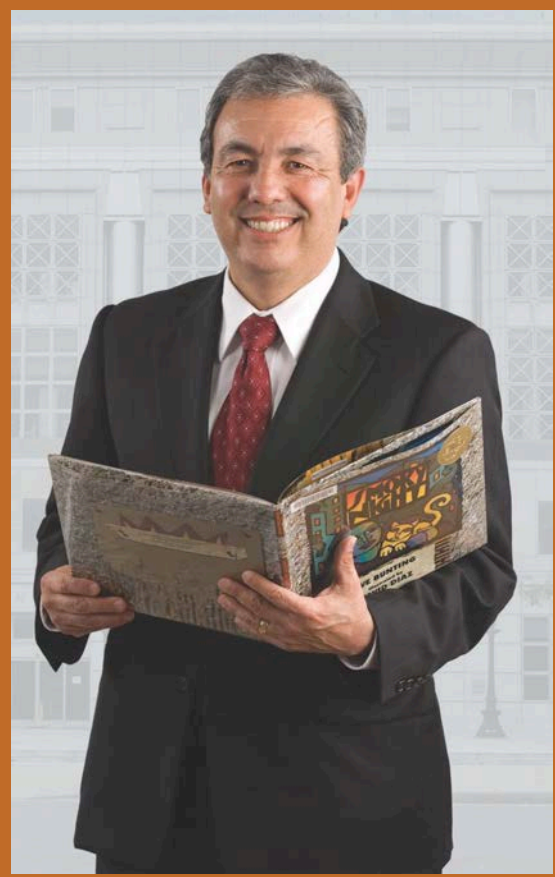
public presentation, “the power of words: building community through literary arts”
tuesday, april 17 from 4:30 – 5:30p
main library auditorium, 501 copper nw

events are free. rsvp to info@creativeabq.org or (505) 268-1920

Luis Herrera

City Librarian
San Francisco Public Library

Luis Herrera is the City Librarian of the San Francisco Public Library, where he is responsible for the administration of the city's 28 libraries including a Main Library and 27 neighborhood branches. Previously, Mr. Herrera served as the Director of Information Services for Pasadena Public Library and the Deputy Director of the San Diego and Long Beach Library systems in California. He has served as president of both the Public Library Association and the California Library Association. Mr. Herrera is currently Chair of the Cal Humanities and was recently appointed to serve on the Steering Committee for the Digital Public Library of America. In January 2012, Mr. Herrera was named the Library Journal's Librarian of the Year. Mr. Herrera was recently nominated by President Barack Obama to serve on the Board of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Mr. Herrera earned his B.S. from the University of Texas at El Paso, a M.P.A. from California State University, and a M.L.S. from the University of Arizona.



For more information, please contact
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(505) 268-1920
info@creativeabq.org

FOCUS GROUP NOTES

Each stakeholder focus group was asked: "How do we stimulate the Downtown Arts & Cultural District from the perspective of your particular industry?" To arrive at answers, each group was guided through a process – in which our expert guests participated – of identifying assets and challenges within the District, followed by brainstorming a variety of strategies to improve the DACD. The following represents the Literary Arts Focus Group's input throughout the session.

ASSETS

- Main Library on bus route, free 200 seat auditorium & community room, Café, booksales, exhibit areas, book clubs, children's room
- Transit – bus and train lines
- Venues that support spoken word activities – 516 Arts, Blackbird Buvette home to Poetry & Beer and the Slam
- KiMo, downtown coffee shops
- Home to local weeklies, local iQ, Alibi, New Mexico Business Weekly
- West End Press
- El Chante / Casa de Cultura – Speak Poet Events
- Bookshops @ Robinson Park, Mecca
- Children's Library
- Tricklock Performance Lab on Gold
- Silver Gardens Community Room
- Poetry on the bus
- Underground Guide to ABQ
- Working Classroom
- Amy Biehl High School literature program
- ArtStreet, Comic Expo
- El Otro Lado – City Hall 8th Floor Written Word
- Great places to go work / write (for cost of coffee)
- Albuquerque Business & Economic Consortium / library supports them
- Friends of the Library
- "Walkable and amazingly clean" – Luis Herrera
- Downtown Growers Market

"[Albuquerque has] an embarrassment of riches, an incredible inventory and yet we are... always looking for something else outside ourselves."

Luis Herrera



CHALLENGES

- Library grants often require heavy staff time to administer, many don't cover operating costs
- Professional writing needed for Institute of Museum and Library Services grants
- Perception of lack of parking downtown
- Staff turnover, temp staffing & reduction of positions at all libraries affects quality of services
- 150 staff in ABQ libraries system / equivalent metropolitan system would have 300
- Literary community, publishers, authors not located or visiting downtown, lack of connective outlets (bookshops are in ABQ, not downtown)
- Audience for poetry exists, but need for opportunities to share longer works
- Perception downtown dangerous / unsafe
- No late night eateries
- Downtown issues larger than downtown - the hole in a donut / perception difficulties
- With economic downturn, more people utilizing library services, yet funding is reduced
- Scarcity overwhelming opportunities
- Too many calendars?
- Not pedestrian friendly
- Design of buildings ignores pedestrians / streets

UNDERUTILIZED ASSETS

- Main Library 200 seat auditorium underutilized / community event room moderately underutilized
- Lack of funding affects hours and staff to maintain cleanliness at library
- Perception of lack of parking downtown, especially compared to other library branches, keeps people from coming downtown
- Libraries part of City Cultural Services Department, so every book is in constant competition with a bunny and other CSD assets
- IMLS funds operations, leadership, and staff development, but funding administration and reporting can outweigh amount received
- Collaborations with Bookworks at library – success in past, could be replicated / done more often
- Local Poets Guild could / would be interested in working more Downtown and with libraries
- Publicity for Downtown events / literary events in general not enough
- Authors could use office buildings, warehouses, mixed live/work spaces
- ArtsCrawl should be integrating literary arts
- No self publishing venues in NM on-site / print on demand (library is working on this)
- Rare books audience
- Centennial authors
- Not connected to business groups

STRATEGIES

- Increase regular programming of literary events downtown:
 - NHCC, Storytellers, Poetry (“people love to be read to” – it creates a sense of community)
 - Capitalize on NHCC programming ongoing, including Latino Writers Conference
 - Integrate literary activities into existing communities Downtown – like Silver Gardens
 - Promote assets / resources / free spaces available / ease of access for event organizers and attendees
 - Revive and support book festivals like the Southwest Book Fiesta
- Transform Main Library into a downtown “community center” for the literary arts:
 - Focus all programs on partnerships and with outcome to engage community
 - Create map of community centers including main library as a literary anchor “community center” in Downtown, give it the authority and resources to coordinate, curate and collect assets
 - Expand Main Library hours to open 9a – 9p / 7 days a week with funds and staff to support expanded schedule
 - Use Main Library as e-book hub w/ computers, kiosks
 - Develop relationship between Main Library & Downtown Growers Market (geographic proximity programming / audience)
 - Partner to establish satellite community resource offices for homeless, police and healthcare
 - Effective system-wide library communications
 - Engage young audience with hipster poetry beer/wine/cocktail hours
 - Train library staff (and city staff) to be downtown ambassadors
 - Capitalize on safety feeling of libraries to counter unsafe downtown feeling

CONTINUED →



STRATEGIES

(CONTINUED)

- Communicate/brand/market "Downtown Literary Center":
 - Better communicate safety / accessibility / walkability and clean spaces
 - Strengthen and streamline available assets, create a cohesive, collaborative vehicle for communications that focuses on multidisciplinary messaging
 - Better market what is already happening with magazine / newspaper / audience buzz
 - Albuquerque Poet Laureate ambassador for Downtown
 - Implement centralized arts, cultural & entertainment calendar
 - Establish free wireless all over downtown
 - Connect literary events with all disciplines
 - Bring food trucks downtown to encourage 24 hour eateries
- Raise awareness of literature, libraries and spoken word happenings:
 - Target college / universities, especially students and faculty
 - Partner with city busses to increase lit awareness
 - Inform staff of hotels, restaurants, libraries, etc of literary events to share info with customers
 - Integrate volunteers, especially retiring, talented baby boomers to build political cache
 - Partner with schools and have students design library cards
 - Build relationships with all media to better promote literary events
- Provide more access to computers to increase presence of e-books:
 - Create opportunities for "publication on demand"
 - Use Main Library as e-book hub w/ computers, kiosks
- Create year round literary arts programming around major cultural events / activities:
 - Balloon Fiesta
 - Savor Albuquerque
 - Centennial Authors
 - Summerfest



Literary Arts: Guest Feedback

Throughout their visits – particularly in response to focus groups, site visits and meetings with City Officials – each expert was asked to offer observations, insights and guidance. The following is a summary of Luis Herrera's reflections on his time in Albuquerque.

OBSERVATIONS

- Utilize library facilities (auditorium) to increase community engagement
- Weave a cultural narrative in ABQ:
 - Capture and tell your story digitally – fusion of culture, people, history
 - Capture synergy of poetry network – creating readings and performances in library spaces
 - Strengthen relationship with UNM – capacity building, expertise, programs, literary arts community to encourage university as part of community fabric
 - Leverage relationships and partnerships
- Develop community leaders and change agents
- Support libraries management / staff:
 - Give staff ownership over problems / solutions
 - Look at ineffective systems and figure out how to make them better
- Identify and empower a library/literary champion or catalyst to coordinate all downtown efforts
- Integrate public art and city archives into libraries

PERFORMING ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT





please join the Downtown Albuquerque Arts & Cultural District Steering Committee and special guest Heather Hitchens for an

exploration of our community's performing arts & entertainment assets

focus group for performing arts & entertainment stakeholders

tuesday, april 24 from 9:00 – 11:00a
creative albuquerque, 115 4th street nw

*public presentation, "setting the stage:
placemaking through performing arts & entertainment"*

tuesday, april 24 from 4:30 – 5:30p
the cell theatre, 700 1st street nw

events are free. rsvp to info@creativeabq.org or (505) 268-1920

Heather A. Hitchens

Executive Director, American Theatre Wing

Heather A. Hitchens, Executive Director of the American Theatre Wing, is a nationally recognized arts leader, with nearly 20 years of performing arts administration, policy, and program development experience. A percussionist since the age of six and a lifelong theater goer, Hitchens began her career in the development department of the American Music Theater Festival. Prior to joining the American Theatre Wing in July of 2011, Hitchens served as the Executive Director of the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), the largest state arts agency in the country. During her four year tenure at NYSCA, Hitchens oversaw the distribution of over \$123 million in grants to more than 2,000 New York State organizations in every artistic discipline. She also fostered closer collaboration and partnerships between the arts and other sectors including tourism, economic development, and parts, and in collaboration with a number of public and private funding sources, launched the New York State Cultural Data Project, which is developing more comprehensive and reliable data about the impact of the arts in the state. Prior to her leadership of NYSCA, Hitchens served as President of the renowned national arts service organization Meet The Composer, where she revitalized the organization's artistic programs, established a multi-million dollar endowment fund and fostered a thirty-fold increase in individual giving. Ms. Hitchens also served as CEO of the Delaware Symphony Orchestra. Hitchens holds an M.S. in Arts Administration from Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA and a B.M. in Percussion/Music Business from DePauw, Greencastle, IN.



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FOCUS GROUP NOTES

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ASSETS

- Venues – The KiMo, The Box & Tricklock, The Cell, YDI / Wool Warehouse, Warehouse 508, Kiva, Convention Center, Library Auditorium, Sunshine, Launchpad, El Rey, Burt's, Blackbird, Quote UnQuote, Amped, 516 Arts, Civic Plaza
- Out of District: The Orpheum Art Space, Q Staff, Filling Station
- Talent of all types
- Transit / Alvarado
- City Cultural Services, Creative Albuquerque, Downtown Action Team, City Film Office
- 20,000 employees downtown
- Decent selection of restaurants
- Downtown Growers Market
- Pedestrian traffic
- Movie Theatre
- Film Studios / Production Facilities (Halflife, Studio Southwest)
- Streetscape, appearance, presence, etc.
- Friday & Saturday night life scene – sound of commerce
- Cultural diversity
- Young people
- Existing festivals – many have performance components (City, Savor Abq)
- 4th Street Mall
- Arts organizations leadership
- Galleries, presence of other arts and cultural assets
- Home of Weekly Alibi, ABQ Arts, Local iQ

"I haven't been able to identify a revitalization effort that happened without the arts. This is a phenomenal community and I think it has all the ingredients to succeed. You have tremendous assets that are apparently under-utilized."

Heather Hitchens



CHALLENGES

- Perceived / real lack of funding
- Lack of diversity / representation - who isn't here?
- Lack of critical mass as performing arts venues extend beyond district boundary
- KiMo is not about Albuquerque artists
- Downtown after dark:
 - Perceptions (safety) limit who is going to show up
 - Heavy police (military-like) presence (cars, horses, towers) doesn't promote feeling of safety
 - Is removal of cruising working?
 - Blocking streets with massive police presence perceived as threat
- Noisy club / street scene effects carry over and conflict with theater experience, with making Downtown more amenable to cultural activity
- Bar / club owners not willing to work together or collaborate for mutual solutions
- No walkability to comfortably experience downtown and 4th Street Mall
- Perception of no parking
- Next gen may not be theatre goers
- Amenities are lacking
- No city-wide cultural plan for downtown to integrate with (past "plans" were done, but not implemented)
- Empty buildings
- Lack of housing options Downtown
- Building-owner conflict; property owners leaving buildings vacant
- Civic Plaza – hot and lots of concrete
- Ticket prices / cost is prohibitive to many
- Lack of arts awareness, especially among young
- Perception of too much to do – also an asset because Downtown looks empty
- How do you convince people to participate?
- Venues have many small local events that bigger name events have to compete with for booking

UNDERUTILIZED ASSETS

- KiMo – often dark, low attendance, but programming increasing
- YDI Wool Warehouse – limited catering options prevents more utilization
- Civic Plaza – too much concrete, too hot in summer
- 20,000 employees – not staying downtown after 5pm
- 4th Street Mall – filled with trash, crime/gang element, bored population, homeless
- Leadership of the arts – not being cultivated
- ArtsCrawl – could be more interdisciplinary
- Flamenco Institute



STRATEGIES

- Make physical space/design improvements:
 - Convert sidewalks to an inviting promenade (make them wider)
 - Build green spaces with plants / flowers on sidewalks
 - Light up streets evenings to promote safety
 - Require all on 4th Street Mall to have a street presence supporting promenade feeling and well lit up
 - Improve efforts to keep 4th Street Mall clean (increase trash pickup and clean sidewalks) and safe (bring in community policing to discourage crime element)
 - Increase Downtown Action Team Ambassadors presence / Clean & Safe Program
 - Move bus routes to allow for more curb parking
- Engage broader community for common goals of improving Downtown by:
 - Fostering mixed use – housing, retail, etc.
 - Change permitting, planning, etc. to make it easier to create space Downtown
 - Attract retail to Downtown to encourage workers staying after hours
- Conduct and implement a citywide cultural plan, addressing the more barren areas North & South of Downtown
- Creative incentives / penalties for building owners to address their vacant spaces and instead develop
- Revisit the up to one-quarter-cent for arts tax (Quality of Life)
- Revisit bond issues to invest and improve the KiMo as a venue (ie Santa Fe Lensic theatre model)
- Build upon our identity as a cruising culture, remove the buses from Central, allow people to park on the streets and be right there
- Create colorful / artful maps with venues and wayfinding for amenities, parking, signage
- Promote downtown by expanding outreach efforts for audiences:
 - Make it easier for people to come Downtown and figure out what to do by creating a “come to me” environment
 - Coordinate with ACVB to implement a centralized arts calendar
 - Find ways to leverage resources with other people to coordinate holistic, community approach to challenges (business owners, restaurants, etc. coming together for multidisciplinary promotion and strategizing instead of “just planning another show”)
 - Look at models to build audience members, (ie TLC / Alb Theatre Guild)
 - Partner with UNM for cross ticketing, digital labs, theatre department, etc
 - Involve youth to Downtown to help cultivate the emerging, next generation

CONTINUED →



STRATEGIES

(CONTINUED)

- Transform / expand performing arts (and other) programming to attract people to Downtown:
 - Create a “theatre hopping” program / event with multiple venues, involve businesses
 - Expand the Downtown Growers Market energy to include a night time event
 - Encourage diversity of arts disciplines Downtown
 - Combine disciplines, plan several different unique experiences Downtown in a single night
- Create an arts incubator program to develop sustainable arts businesses (Keshet, Mother Road, NM Ballet, etc)
- Convert empty buildings into incubators and include late night eateries / 24 hour options, to attract different kinds of young audiences
- Capitalize on existing festivals / events to promote downtown:
 - Savor Albuquerque
 - Bring New Mexico Jazz Festival downtown
 - Encourage expansion of existing events like Chatter Downtown
- Work with the City Police and Downtown Action Team Law to create a more welcoming, inviting environment instead of a “militarized zone” that deters people (sends message trouble is going to happen, not they’re here to prevent it)
- Encourage law enforcement to be a key part of the community, help them be proud of Downtown (Guardian Theatre Angels?)
- Reroute the Rio Grande river through Downtown! (like San Antonio)

Performing Arts & Entertainment: Guest Feedback

Throughout their visits – particularly in response to focus groups, site visits and meetings with City Officials – each expert was asked to offer observations, insights and guidance. The following is a summary of Heather Hitchens’s reflections on her time in Albuquerque.

OBSERVATIONS

- Better promotion of assets that are here. We have a tremendous theatre company that people don’t necessarily know about
- Opportunity for more live music – bring more of it Downtown – they bring people together, catalyze, inspire travel / visitors
- More coordination within performing arts community; better and broader promotion; determine what ABQ brand is; focus on the amenities (we don’t need to build an arts community, but we do need to build restaurants, grocery stores, streetscapes – the things that bring people downtown to live
- Address police presence, potentially soften it, have a conversation with law enforcement about making inviting and not detracting
- Cultivate conversations with music presenters – demonstrate that we all value the same thing
- Connectivity – develop a Cultural Loop with Transit
- Create sustainable funding – Unified Arts Fund (may be more possible when we articulate, through this plan, what the arts bring to and can do for this community)
- Create the audiences of the future by integrating children into the arts through arts education and thereby into the community
- Because of aging population, we are losing tradition of philanthropy; find ways to cultivate that in young
- Be better about measuring and communicating the economic and educational impact of the arts
- A point person/organization needs to be identified to champion these efforts (cultural plan)
- Don’t get pulled into the “edifice complex” – don’t have to build more



CULINARY ARTS





please join the Downtown Albuquerque Arts & Cultural District Steering Committee and special guest Barbara Fairchild for an

exploration of our community's culinary arts assets

focus group for culinary arts stakeholders

wednesday, may 9 from 9:00 – 11:00a
creative albuquerque, 115 4th street nw

public presentation, "a dozen for the decades: creating impact through cuisine"

wednesday, may 9 from 4:30 – 5:30p
the cell theatre, 700 1st street nw

events are free. rsvp to info@creativeabq.org or (505) 268-1920

Barbara Fairchild

Editor, *Real Eats*

Food and Travel Writer, Editor and Consultant

Barbara Fairchild is currently enjoying a multi-faceted career as a freelance food and travel writer, editor, public speaker, radio personality, and consultant. She is also the editor of the weekly iPad/tablet-only food magazine, *Real Eats*. Barbara was for ten years the editor-in-chief of *Bon Appétit* magazine, based in Los Angeles. She stepped down in January 2011 when the magazine was relocated to New York City. Her career with *Bon Appétit* spanned more than three decades, beginning as an editorial assistant in 1978. A prominent leader in the epicurean world, Ms. Fairchild was inducted into the James Beard Foundation's "Who's Who in American Food and Beverage" in May 2000. Barbara Fairchild is the author of three successful *Bon Appétit* cookbooks. She has made frequent television appearances, including NBC's *Today and Dateline*; CBS's *The Early Show*; CNN; MSNBC; Food Network's *Iron Chef America*, *The Next Food Network Star*; and *America's Top Restaurant*; and Fox's *Kitchen Nightmares*; *Hell's Kitchen* and *MasterChef*, all with Gordon Ramsay. Barbara has also been featured on numerous radio programs across the country.



For more information, please contact
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info@creativeabq.org

FOCUS GROUP NOTES

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ASSETS

- Alvarado Urban Farm
- Downtown Growers Market
- Food truck industry growing
- Number of Downtown workers (~19,000)
- Rail Runner stop Downtown
- Opportunities for new businesses in vacant spaces
- Downtown is a centralized location
- People living downtown or close to
- Potential of beautiful old buildings that are vacant
- Sunshine Theatre
- Hotels in Downtown area
- Graduates knowledgeable in the culinary arts
- Presence of arts / catering downtown venues
- Convention Center – good food / service
- Food-based events – Fiery Foods, Coffee & Chocolate, Savor Albuquerque, Chef Knockout
- South Valley Economic Development Center – food incubator
- Known for signature cuisine (marketing opportunities)
- Proximity of airport
- Route 66 part of New Mexico signature
- Restaurants in District – La Pasion, Lush
- Cultural assets – theatres, movie theatre, (anemic) music venues
- Restaurants / cafes often venues for creatives (cross-genre activity)
- Attracts film industry activities / TV & film
- ABQ Trolley Tour
- Main Library – fabulous
- KiMo Theatre soon to have a wine bar
- Hotel Andaluz
- Chef Knockout on Civic Plaza
- Lowes at 12th & Lomas (closest grocer) will be getting wine / beer liquor license
- Grocery store coming soon - City issuing RFP for grocery store in Downtown proper
- Underground neon Civic Plaza / RR underpass
- Downtown has improved significantly in past 20 years
- Clean downtown
- The Cell / Fusion "Pizza / Beer Night" and 6pm show for downtown workers
- "Poor" area of EDO also has great restaurants
- Alvarado train station / transit center



CHALLENGES

- Lack of mid- to fine dining / wine bars
- TV & film productions decreasing, closing
- Perception Downtown unsafe, perceived "barrier" west of UNM (safe east, unsafe west); efforts to improve not enough
- Cruisers scary / intimidating
- Parking difficulties or no parking perception
- Downtown needs a "cleansing"
- Lack of grocery store
- Lack of variety of ethnic restaurants
- Diminishing quality of service at restaurants
- Vacant-by-choice buildings – landlords not willing to lease / sell
- Serious alcohol / DWI incidences

"Everybody I've met in these meetings is asking how I can help, not what's in it for me."

Barbara Fairchild

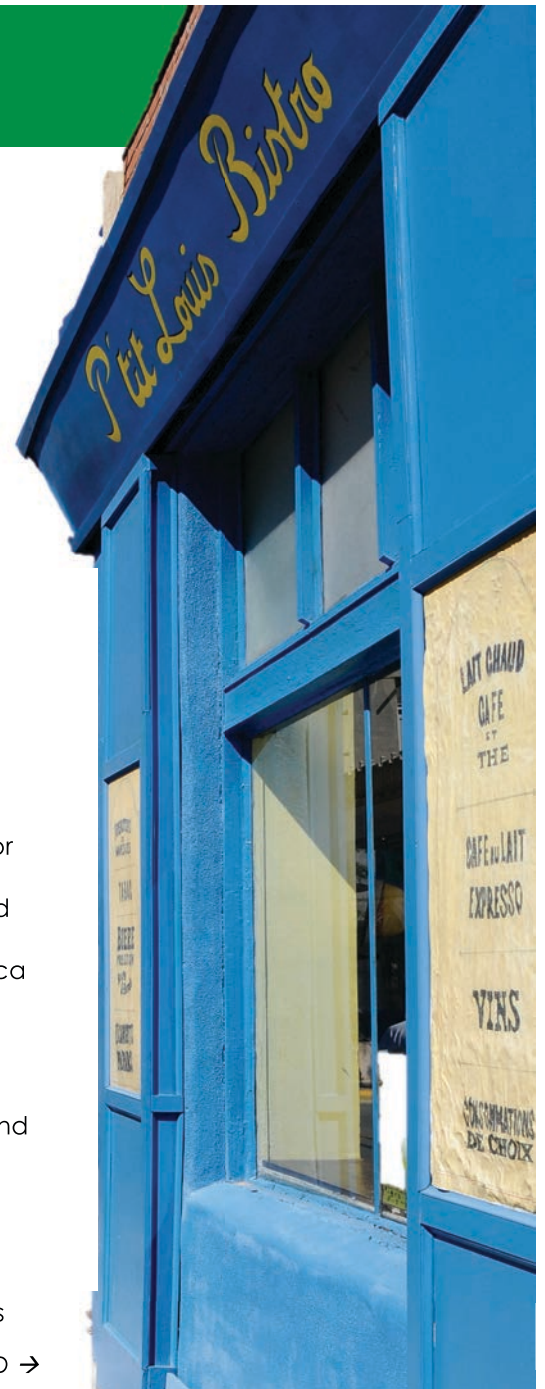
UNDERUTILIZED ASSETS

- Gold Street – how do we capitalize on people there – especially with Flamenco, theatres, etc.—create eateries for parents, visitors, etc.
- Food truck industry could be integrated into Downtown life:
 - Alvarado Urban Farm – Wednesday night food truck night
 - Downtown Growers Market – Wednesday night food truck night
 - Could fill 24 hour eatery needs – should be more quirky like ABQ – use as catalyst off of Central
 - Convention Center – supplement to standard meal service
- Camaraderie between / among chefs and food trucks can be incubators for restaurants that later establish themselves in true spaces
- Central Avenue closed off could be better utilized, if made more accessible

STRATEGIES

- Create a beautiful promenade / wide sidewalks to encourage:
 - Strolling, networking for young creatives
 - 24 hour eateries
 - Clean Downtown
 - Choose two blocks, focus on their beautification / illumination
 - Close Central for pedestrians only to eliminate cruising
 - Encourage outdoor cafes
 - Remove APD (police) “army”
- Incentivize landlords to develop their long term vacant spaces
- Establish penalties for long-term vacancies
- Support anchor locations / venues (KiMo Theatre, Andaluz, etc) to attract new development
- Encourage positive food / drink activities:
 - Schedule food truck events on Wednesday evenings with new growers market at Alvarado Urban Farm
 - Reduce / remove liquor law restrictions to encourage craft breweries opening
 - Support wine bar at KiMo
 - Invite food festivals, craft beer festivals, outside touring festivals
- Offer incentives for strong restaurants (like Jennifer James / The Grove) to relocate / open additional locations Downtown
- City-owned properties could be leased for minimal rent in exchange for build out
- Target larger national chains with reputations and capital to invest, and draw other strong, local restaurants:
 - Starbucks, Peets, Coffee Bean; Chipotle, Maestro's, Dean & DeLuca
 - Include Santa Fe eateries like The Compound or Pasqual's
 - Woo a big name, celebrity restaurant to the Rosenwald Building
 - Coordinate with Downtown Action Team
- Embrace Central Avenue / historic Route 66:
 - Create peaceful coexistence between cultures of existing users and desired users
 - Develop a marketing campaign to encourage perceptive shift
 - Fill beautiful vacant buildings
 - Capitalize on historic Route 66 identity with cars, food, etc
 - Encourage Trolley and walking tours that visit “scenes”
 - Embrace car culture – create (destination) events around displays

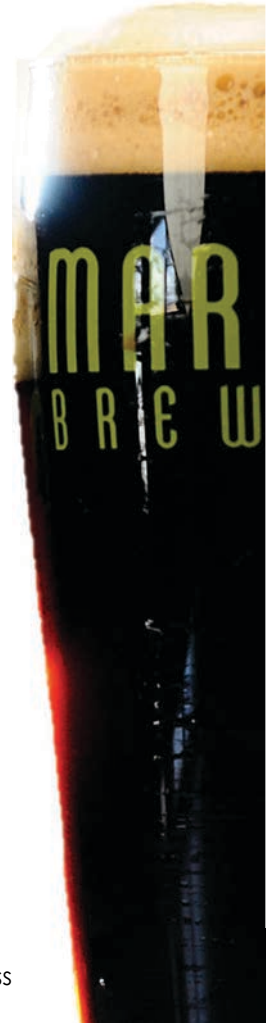
CONTINUED →



STRATEGIES

(CONTINUED)

- Build neon signage inventory along Central Avenue / historic Route 66 as a citywide signature asset:
 - Construct a neon gateway to clearly delineate Downtown
 - Conduct a design contest to promote the gateway and Downtown
 - Extend Nob Hill neon displays to Downtown
 - Support City Public Art's efforts to connect artists with businesses to develop neon signs
 - Integrate interdisciplinary events with murals, neon, street signage
 - Target restaurants for neon signage
 - Build a neon graveyard
 - Build a Route 66 Museum (even if it's tiny)
 - Loosen zoning restrictions in overlay districts so businesses can easily use neon signs
- Provide parking options:
 - Valet (to minimize fear) located strategically located to cover multiple venues
 - Free parking in City garages at night
 - Shuttle from parking garages to venues
- Encourage a rainbow skyline by lighting all of the tall buildings (like Wells Fargo)
- Create incentives for people to come /stay Downtown:
 - Partner with existing restaurants to give discount coupons for Rail Runner riders
 - Encourage a broader variety of ethnic restaurants to open
 - Nurture 19,000 day workers as ambassadors for Downtown
 - Give workers reason to stay in evenings (like Fusion Downtown Employees' nights)
 - Attract foodies (they are all ages)
 - Food Trucks on Fridays – offer shade and seating for them
- Establish partnerships to develop culinary arts scene (e.g. National Hispanic Cultural Center and Central NM Community College) partnerships for culinary training
- Engage a strategic planner / developer to create a vision of what an urban center should look like
- Downtown Action Team should focus on few key projects (currently spread too thin)
- Promote and better communicate low rent options in Downtown
- Embrace and utilize social media and web channels to promote downtown:
 - Develop a new brand versus share it differently
 - Cultivate partnerships with media
 - Create an App for film / tv spaces (Like Trolley Tour, but virtual)
- Promote and develop live music scene, especially those that are already strong like bluegrass



Culinary Arts: Guest Feedback

Throughout their visits – particularly in response to focus groups, site visits and meetings with City Officials – each expert was asked to offer observations, insights and guidance. The following is a summary of Barbara Fairchild's reflections on her time in Albuquerque.

OBSERVATIONS

- Modern upscale fine dining is needed – no white table cloths, but good food
- Incentivize restaurant openings and relocations – both locally and nationally-recognized – to area
- Encourage 2-3 risk takers to move to Downtown, focus on young locals
- Create free valet parking options / make it easier – whether by perception or reality – to come Downtown
- Build more neon - especially neon gateway
- Spend your 66th on Route 66 – automatic audience every year for everyone who turns 66
- Turn Centennial Summerfest event into a Route 66 Style Music, Food, and Cars Festival
- To the Landlords “vacant by choice,” offer incentives

APPENDIX B:

Participants in City of Albuquerque Sessions and Stakeholder Focus Groups

Shari Adkisson, *Rainbow Artists*

Judy Anderson

Lynne Arany, *Ink Projects* ◆

Barbe Awalt, *LPDpress / Rio Grande Books, NM Book Co-Op, NM Book Awards, Southwest Book Fiesta*

Olivia Baca, *CNM Libraries*

Richard J. Berry, *Mayor**

Ron Behrmann, *New Mexico Arts and Crafts Fair*

Trish Behrmann, *New Mexico Arts and Crafts Fair*

David Beining, *UNM ArtsLab*

Regina Bell-Dawley, *Rainbow Studio Theatre* ◆

Andy Braman, *NM(X) & Warehouse 508*

Sherri Brueggemann, *CABQ Public Art Urban Enhancement Program *** ◆◆

Matt Carter, *Program Coordinator, CABQ Public Art Urban Enhancement Program** ◆

Regina Chavez, *Creative Albuquerque*** ◆◆

Julia Clarke, *Creative Albuquerque (board)*

Samantha Clark, *Urban At ABQ*

Amy Cliser, *Creative Albuquerque* ◆

Lara Dale, *Footvox Studio* ◆

Barbara Fairchild, *Consultant*

Dana Feldman, *Deputy Director, CABQ Cultural Services Department**

Dan Fuller, *Collection Coordinator, CABQ Public Art Urban Enhancement Program** ◆

David Garcia, *Halflife Digital*

Lisa Gill, *Local Poets Guild / 516 Arts*

Christopher Goblet, *Downtown Action Team* ◆◆

Shira Greenberg, *Keshet Dance Company*

Jason Greene, *The Grove Café & Market*

Dennis Gromelski, *Fusion Theatre Company *** ◆◆

Tom Guralnick, *Outpost Performance Space*

Luis Herrera, *San Francisco Public Libraries*

Allison Hagerman, *UNM ArtsLab*

Rich Henrich, *Albuquerque Film Festival*

Luis Herrera, *San Francisco Public Libraries*

Terry Hicks, *Earth Reflection*

Heather Hitchens, *American Theatre Wing*

Participants (continued)

Roy Johnson, *Sumner & Dene*

Poppy Johnson-Renvall, *CNM Libraries* ◆

Michael Killoren, *National Endowment for the Arts*

Josh Klein, *Halflife Digital*

Kelly Koepke, *Professional Communication Services*

Ann Lerner, *Film Liaison, CABQ Film Office*

Reeve Love, *National Hispanic Cultural Center* ◆

Helen Maestas, *Creative Albuquerque (board)*

Julia Mandeville, *Creative Albuquerque*** ◆◆

Nan Masland, *Albuquerque Public Arts Board*

Dave Mathews, *Manager, Promotions/Media Resources/GOV-TV 16**

Chad Mathis, *Prometheus Legal*

Megan Mayo, *Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau*

Sarah McCollum, *Light Works Post*

Cathryn McGill, *New Mexico Black History Month Organizing Committee*

Don Michaelis, *Ensemble Music New Mexico*

Lindsey Miller-Escarfuller, *ABC Libraries*

Dodie Montgomery, *Tricklock Theatre Company*

Doug Montoya, *The Box / Cardboard Playhouse*

Petra Morris, *Project Manager, Planner, CABQ Planning and Urban Development Division, Long Range Planning**

Brian Newman, *Sub-Genre Films*

Kelsey O'Keefe, *Keshet Dance Company*

Ben Ortega, *Manager, CABQ Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency*

Alan Paine Radebaugh, *Albuquerque Public Arts Board*

Larry Parker, *Manager, KiMo Theatre*

Brendan Picker, *Program Coordinator, CABQ Public Art Urban Enhancement Program**

Rebecca Puck Stair, *IATSE Local 480 & Filmmaker*

Greta Pullen, *National Hispanic Cultural Center*

Michelle Quiseuberry, *New Mexico Humanities Council*

Mikaela Renz-Whitmore, *Long Range Planning**

Beatriz Rivera, *Director, CABQ Cultural Services Department**

Craig Rivera, *Manager, CABQ Community Events Division**

Gabriel Rivera, *Planner, CABQ Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency*

Len Romano, *Ripe, Inc.*

Joe Sabatini, *Indian Pueblo Cultural Center*

Suzanne Sbarge, *516 Arts*

Becky Schreiber, *Schreiber Shannon Assoc.*

Participants (continued)

Brad Sdoddad, *Music From The Q*

Kenneth Segura Kubu, *SECF*

John Shannon, *Schreiber Shannon Assoc.*

Dean Smith, *Director, Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Library System**

Ron Solimon, *Indian Pueblo Cultural Center ♦*

Deborah Stover, *Director, CABQ Planning Department**

Gary Steuer, *City of Philadelphia Office of Arts, Culture and Creative Economy*

Paul Suozi, *Marketing Coordinator, KiMo Theatre*

Tom Tkach, *Director, Popejoy Hall ♦*

Tierna Unruh-Enos, *Marketing Manager, CABQ Cultural Services Department*

Brooks Walch, *Indie Designer*

Hugh Witemeyer, *Albuquerque Theatre Guild ♦*

Cathy Wright, *Director, The Albuquerque Museum of Art and History*

* Participated in multiple CABQ sessions

** DACD Steering Committee Member (at all CABQ sessions)

♦ Participated in multiple focus groups

♦♦ DACD Steering Committee Member (at all focus group sessions)





MULTITUDE OF RICHES

a blueprint for the creative development of downtown albuquerque