



Heritage Commission

Update on Arts, Cultures and Heritage (ArCH) Project

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Title

Update on Arts, Cultures and Heritage (ArCH) Project

Recommended Action

Information only. No action requested.

Report

Issue:

Staff update on the consultant-led project to review the City's support for arts, cultures, and heritage programs and community groups that support them.

Staff Contact:

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Background and Analysis:

Olympia Mayor Cheryl Selby has initiated a study of the City's arts, cultures, and heritage (ArCH) programs, events, and experiences.

Purpose of the Project:

- To refresh and expand Olympia's efforts to deliver creative and effective public programs and support for ArCH, and to reach participants and supporters of arts, cultures and heritage who are increasingly sophisticated, mobile and diverse.
- To ensure ArCH contribute to the City's comprehensive plan; the Parks, Arts & Recreation Plan, and the Downtown Strategy.
- To grow and enrich participation of community groups, artists, historians and others in Olympia's arts, cultures, and heritage profile.
- To establish a broader nationwide reputation for ArCH.
- To provide analysis, clarify options, and explore mechanisms for strengthening the City's commitments to ArCH.

Project Components:

- Develop an assessment of the community's current efforts, including but not limited to those supported directly by the City.
 - Interview key stakeholders and participants in the Olympia community's current ArCH efforts.
 - Review and analyze relevant policies and plans, including but not limited to the City Comprehensive, Arts Parks and Recreation Plan, and Downtown Strategy.
 - Closely coordinate with a City appointed Resource Committee to thoroughly learn and understand the Community's ArCH status.
- Identify most relevant and promising practices from comparable communities regionally and nationally, focusing on models that should inform Olympia's considerations of ArCH investments and priorities.
- Work with the Resource Committee and key stakeholders to develop a vision, priorities and other options for the community's ArCH efforts.
- Create options that recognize limited City resources including an option with no added City resources, one with marginal increases in funds (\$100,000 -150,000) and an option tied to a broader funding source such as a cultural access sales tax. Provide information on the return on investment gained by the implementation of the priorities and options identified.
- Analyze options and prepare recommendations for achieving the vision, including strategic priorities, financial models for revenue and expenditures, personnel and staffing models, building community support, and strengthening partnerships and alliances within City departments and across the community.

Work to Date:

The consultant team selected for the project is the Athena Group, which is based in Olympia and includes team members from the Seattle area with arts, heritage, and economics specializations.

Thus far, the consultant team has met with one group of community stakeholders to get their feedback and experience as local practitioners (Attachment 1) and a core group of community leaders serving as a resource group which will be working on strategic planning (Attachments 2 and 3).

Attachments:

1. Summary of first stakeholder meeting discussion points
2. Agenda for first Resource Group meeting
3. Background information on heritage and cultures provided to Resource Group