

Cultural Plan for the City of Albuquerque

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Introduction

New Mexico, for all its uniqueness and extraordinary creative genius, is the epitome of American independence. Historically, all efforts to tame us, to make us conform to expectations of the “normal,” have failed. Even in Albuquerque, perhaps the least “New Mexican” place in the state, traditional and creative cultures still flourish behind the mainstream façade of suburban sprawl.

The Cultural Plan for Albuquerque, prepared by the Arts Alliance for City Hall, ably promotes the diversity and quality of our hidden cultural life – to outsiders and to our own ever-increasing population... The Cultural Plan challenges the “mainstream” and celebrates Albuquerque’s great strength as a nonconformist city with both a practical and creative temperament.

V. B. Price
Introduction
1995 Cultural Plan

Since this introduction to the original Cultural Plan was written in 1995, the Arts Alliance has served as the Designated Arts Agency for implementing the plan. A number of the goals from 1995 have been met and many others have resulted in on-going activity designed to strengthen arts and culture in Albuquerque.

When it came time to update the Cultural Plan more than 35 representatives of the arts and cultural community came together for 2 1/2 days of strategic planning. Prior to the planning sessions, the Alliance prepared and distributed a summary of accomplishments for the Plan to each of the participants. At the first meeting, it was clear the group felt the original plan was well conceived with input from an extremely large constituency. There was a desire to keep that collective knowledge intact, review accomplishments and revise the goals accordingly.

One of the few difficulties identified with the original plan was the fact it had six goals – too many to remember and recite easily in an “elevator speech”. At the end of the strategic planning sessions, the six had been pared down to three, easy-to-remember goals:

5. Arts in Education
6. Community Involvement
7. Sustainable Funding for the Arts

The intent of the Cultural Plan is to support, encourage, expand and celebrate cultural expression in our diverse city. Ultimately, the long-term goal of the plan is to increase the benefits of arts and culture for individual growth, community identity, and local economic strength.

A Cultural Plan for Albuquerque: "Strengthening Life-Long Participation in Culture and the Arts"

Goal #1: ARTS EDUCATION: Advocate for the Best Arts Education for Young People & Families as a Foundation for Life-Long Participation in the Arts.

Community participants expressed overwhelming support for a comprehensive program of arts education for young people and families. Arts education is critical as a tool for academic and workplace success, as a means of encouraging creativity, and as a foundation for developing life-long participation in the arts. Through curriculum-based instruction plus community arts resources, the Cultural Plan has sought to support and augment the APS Fine Arts Plan. Key players in this effort have been the Arts Alliance's Arts in Education Task Force, Parent Advocacy Subcommittee and Community Arts Education subcommittee; these groups, in close collaboration with APS, advocate for arts education and encourage supplemental arts programming in schools.

Objective 1.1: Advocate for a comprehensive, sequential program of arts education in all schools.

- Strengthen support for parental involvement in organized advocacy efforts for arts education.
- Advocate for full implementation of the APS Fine Arts Plan in the short-term and advocate long-term for increased hours of arts instruction at the elementary level by certified arts educators.
- Work closely with New Mexico Arts and other organizations throughout the state in their efforts to fund and implement arts education programs.
- Advocate for inclusion of parents and extended families in school-based arts education efforts.

Objective 1.2: Encourage artists and arts organizations to provide arts-related opportunities that support and enhance school curriculum and meet state and national standards in the arts.

- Strengthen support for the coordination, marketing and funding of community arts education programs.
- Identify and secure funding for a coordinator to act as community liaison between schools and arts education programs.
- Support a web site for community-based arts education resources.
- Encourage arts organizations to include a family component in their education initiatives.

Objective 1.3: Advocate for the inclusion of arts courses in post-secondary requirements for elementary classroom teachers.

- Investigate opportunities for implementing statewide change in pre- and post-graduate curricula for elementary teachers.
- Advocate for professional development in arts integration for Albuquerque elementary teachers.

Goal #2: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT IN THE ARTS.

The artistic, cultural and ethnic resources are the essence of Albuquerque's identity. Albuquerque's artistic and cultural community is vibrant—every culture in Albuquerque enriches the community as a whole. The arts community, through the Cultural Plan, seeks to increase awareness of and life-long opportunities for participation in arts and cultural activities. By experiencing the arts directly, individuals come to understand the value of the arts and the role they play in creating a cohesive community that celebrates its diversity.

Objective 2.1: Make arts programming available to everyone.

- Continue and expand arts programming for all ages, populations, and cultural and socio-economic backgrounds by developing partnerships between community centers and arts organizations.
- Ensure support for arts organizations and artists in audience development.
- Create opportunities within existing organizations for multi-generational participation in arts programming.
- Survey existing organizations to determine resources for serving people with disabilities.

Objective 2.2: Establish a centralized arts and cultural information and referral service.

- Create a database and framework for collecting arts and cultural information.
- Implement a well-publicized and publicly accessible arts information and referral service.

Objective 2.3: Maintain and expand the Heritage Council

- Encourage greater participation in the Heritage Council from a wider representation of cultural/ethnic groups.
- Undertake an in-depth cultural survey of ethnic populations and recruit and train volunteers from the Heritage Council and ethnic populations to interview, photograph and record ethnic histories and related cultural/artistic expressions.
- Establish a heritage resource center and heritage archive for Albuquerque's diverse cultures.

- Ensure collaboration between the heritage resource center and heritage archive with the arts and information referral service.

Objective 2.4: Promote Albuquerque’s diverse arts, cultural and ethnic activities.

- Work with local media to facilitate expanded coverage of arts and culture.
- Establish a volunteer pool of arts organizations to mentor smaller or emerging arts and cultural groups.
- Establish a biannual meeting with key city personnel regarding culture-focused events to increase involvement of ethnic communities in the planning and implementation of cultural presentations.
- Promote in-depth awareness of the diverse cultures in Albuquerque.

Objective 2.5: Support and advocate for adequate community-based facilities to provide office, meeting, rehearsal, exhibition and performance spaces.

- Provide regular assessment of existing facilities and needed facilities (public and private).
- Create opportunities for collaboration among arts/cultural organizations, City Departments, businesses, other non-profits to provide increased access to facilities for arts and cultural activities.
- Maintain a facilities inventory and identify new resources or develop additional facilities for all disciplines.
- Advocate for balanced long-term investment in cultural infrastructure and in operational support and programming for these facilities.
- Establish a community-based arts facility to provide office, rehearsal, exhibition and meeting space for non-profit arts groups.

Goal #3: Secure Sustainable Funding for Arts & Culture.

The Cultural Plan recognizes the significant need for increased, sustainable funding for arts and culture in Albuquerque. Funding for the arts and cultural activities remains insufficient and unpredictable. Predictable, sustainable funding will enable organizations to focus on broadening citizen participation through local, regional and national marketing, thus providing an even greater economic impact on our community.

Objective 3.1: Promote Albuquerque as an artistic community locally, regionally and nationally.

- Create a public awareness campaign to support increased understanding of the value of the arts. Identify a community steering committee, enlist a marketing firm, and launch a campaign in the metropolitan region within two years.
- Incorporate the information and referral service into the campaign.

Objective 3.2: Integrate culture and the arts into the Albuquerque metro area's overall strategy for economic development.

- Create a "blue ribbon" advocacy committee and speakers bureau to work closely with chambers of commerce, Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau, Albuquerque Economic Development and other civic and government organizations to provide education on the value and economic impact of the arts.
- Establish a downtown arts district.
- Establish and develop public/private partnerships to support the arts community.

Objective 3.3: Develop and implement a strategic plan to secure sustainable funding for arts and culture.

- Research "arts taxes" in other states and existing local tax structure in order to identify community options. Secure buy-in from arts organizations, businesses and both political and civic leadership.
- Advocate for and develop a sustainable funding stream.
- Develop an advocacy structure that includes major institutions as well as grassroots arts organizations, business and the political and civic leadership of the community to address funding issues at local, state and national levels.

Objective 3.4: Provide educational opportunities related to philanthropy, fund raising and board development.

- Plan and implement a series of educational opportunities, such as workshops or lectures focusing on organizational development for arts and cultural groups.
- Collaborate with other citywide organizations to achieve objectives.

Implementation of the Cultural Plan

The objectives of the Cultural Plan will be implemented through:

- **Existing City of Albuquerque programs.**
- **Partnerships with non-profit agencies.**
- **A Designated Arts Agency (DAA).**

The implementation of the plan will be evaluated against plan goals. A volunteer committee made up of arts community participants will assist the Designated Arts Agency and the City of Albuquerque in establishing the priorities for each year's contract negotiations and assisting in the evaluation of progress on those annual goals.

City Responsibilities:

To assure fairness and equity in the distribution of the City cultural resources, the City will have the following responsibilities:

1. Designate a city arts agency to implement the Cultural Plan (Designated Arts Agency).
2. Support local cultural resources and public access to cultural programs through management of the following City-owned facilities:
 - KiMo Theater
 - Albuquerque Museum of Art and History
 - Explora Museum
 - South Broadway Cultural Center
 - Senior centers and community centers
 - Parks and open space
 - Rio Grande Biological Park (Rio Grande Zoological Park, Aquarium, Botanical Gardens)
 - Other quality of life projects
3. Evaluate and monitor City arts and cultural programs.
4. Balance programming opportunities of City-owned facilities between local and out-of-town groups and between established organizations and small, minority and emerging groups.
5. Develop and program future facilities through the Capital Improvements Program and other appropriate departments.
6. Provide funding for a permanent Albuquerque Arts and Culture Endowment.
7. Schedule and route public transportation to improve access to cultural activities.
8. Utilize Government Channel 14 for publicizing events.
9. Coordinate with Bernalillo County, the University of New Mexico and Albuquerque Public Schools as key partners in Cultural Plan implementation.

10. Collaborate with private organizations in development of public/private programs and events.
11. Ensure accessibility of public cultural facilities to persons with disabilities through compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act.
12. Administer service contracts with private entities for implementing the Cultural Plan.
13. Support quality urban design through land use planning development approvals and other City efforts.
14. Evaluate Plan implementation related to the above items.

Designated Arts Agency Responsibilities:

The Cultural Plan recommends that a Designated Arts Agency carry out new programs and coordination of volunteer task forces. The City will designate and fund this agency to develop and manage programs recommended by the Cultural Plan. A contractual agreement between the City and the DAA for specific services is required.

The Designated Arts Agency will have the following responsibilities:

1. Carry out contracted services according to the priorities for implementation contained in the Cultural Plan and reviewed annually by the volunteer committee overseeing the plan's implementation.
2. Be accountable to the City for the record keeping, periodic progress reports and meeting the schedules for products and services required in the contract.
3. Be responsible for staffing advisory committees and task forces.
4. Coordinate the efforts of the City and private cultural organizations.
5. Advocate for sustainable funding for arts and culture.

City of Albuquerque

The Honorable Jim Baca, Mayor
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Connie Beimer, Deputy CAO
Fabrizio Bertoletti, Deputy CAO
Vickie Fisher, Deputy CAO

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Designated Arts Agency, 1995-2001

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