

# Cultural Arts

## Guiding Principle:

In 2035, Fairfax is a city with... a thriving cultural arts program that supports a variety of special events, art spaces and performance venues.



The City takes pride in the wide variety of cultural events, programs, and facilities it provides to enhance the quality of life for its residents. The City is committed to preserving and protecting its heritage, recognizing evolving socioeconomic and cultural patterns, and promoting the arts as an integral part of our spirit and vitality with wide ranging economic benefits.

In January 2013, the Commission on the Arts (COA) prepared a Strategic Plan with near-term (one to three years) and long-range objectives for cultural arts in the City. The plan “envisions an economically and culturally booming City with a vibrant arts community serving as a leading arts destination,” supporting the Comprehensive Plan Vision. The goals of this Guiding Principle seek to support and build upon the COA Strategic Plan, exploring

opportunities for inclusion of the arts as the City develops.

Historically, the arts organizations in our community have been the City of Fairfax Band and the Fairfax Art League. Over the past two decades, four theater companies have emerged, as well as several smaller performance groups. The range of performances is constrained by the lack of theater spaces.

Public art has also sprouted in the last decade with art at the Library, in front of City Hall, and in front of the Sherwood Center. More is planned for Old Town Square.

# Cultural Arts Goal 1

## Integrate cultural facilities into the City.

The City currently lacks adequate facilities for performing arts, including a community theater that could provide space for the larger audiences that regional and national artists could bring to the City. Although Fairfax High School and Lanier Middle School have auditorium/theater spaces, theater groups are severely challenged to obtain time in these facilities and are concerned about rental fees. The City must continue to evaluate and expand its cultural venues and to cater to the increasing entertainment expectations of its residents and promote the character and economic vitality of the City, making it a regional arts destination. This should be supported through expanded public art facilities.

**OUTCOME CA1.1:** Cultural facilities that provide opportunities for local, regional and national artists to perform for audiences of all sizes.

**ACTION CA1.1.1** Create a broad-based special commission charged with the mission of identifying short- and long-term needs for performance spaces and other facilities to support a robust City arts program.

**ACTION CA1.1.2** Based on conclusion of CA1.1.1, create a capital program for arts facilities, including a priority for a performing arts facility. This may include upgrading of school arts-related facilities.

**ACTION CA1.1.3** Support the creation of Arts and Entertainment Districts with priority to Old Town Fairfax.

**ACTION CA1.1.4** Identify underutilized or vacant private facilities that can function as temporary performance spaces.

**OUTCOME CA1.2:** Public art such as murals and sculptures displayed to identify, enhance, and promote the cultural nature of the City.

**ACTION CA1.2.1** Promote the City's cultural arts identity through public art.

**ACTION CA1.2.2** Implement the City of Fairfax Public Art Policy and consider additional policies and practices that promote cultural vitality.

**ACTION CA1.2.3** Create a cultural arts bike and pedestrian trail (e.g. Indianapolis Cultural Trail).

# Cultural Arts Goal 2

## Encourage a broad representation of arts.

There are a wide variety of interests in arts programs and events resulting from the ever-changing demographics of the City. Strategic partnerships with local institutions, such as George Mason University's Center for the Arts and Northern Virginia Community College's Fine Arts Program should be constantly sought and promoted to expand opportunities for City residents of all ages, ethnicities and abilities. Alternative means of providing and promoting programs must continually be explored as well.

**OUTCOME CA2.1:** Collaboration and partnership with local schools, colleges, and universities to provide performance, rehearsal and educational opportunities for artists.

**ACTION CA2.1.1** Collaboration and partnerships support establishment of performance, rehearsal and educational opportunities for artists.

**ACTION CA2.1.2** Establish a mechanism for continuous collaboration with local schools, colleges, universities and arts organizations on education for artists, and for arts programming.

**ACTION CA2.1.3** Explore public-private partnerships to develop performance and rehearsal spaces.

**OUTCOME CA2.2:** Cultural programming in the City increases opportunities for a wide range of cultural experiences.

**ACTION CA2.2.1** Consider creating a Cultural Affairs office with a full-time director.

**ACTION CA2.2.2** Identify and create plan to optimize use of existing and future public facilities for cultural arts programs.

**ACTION CA2.2.3** Enhance awareness of current and future programs and facilities.

**ACTION CA2.2.4** Develop and execute strategies to increase funds by charging admission to selected events and to increase sponsorships, contributions, and grants.

**OUTCOME CA2.3:** Expanded and enhanced partnerships with city businesses and other organizations such as City of Fairfax Schools, Northern Virginia Community College, George Mason University, Virginia Commission for the Arts and other local arts agencies.

**ACTION CA2.3.1** Expand partnerships with institutional and business communities for funding and facilities usage.