

# Advisory Committee Meeting

April 8, 2015



City of Houston Arts and Cultural Plan

Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs

*Community Town Hall Meeting*

# AGENDA

Welcome

Project Update

Assessment and Draft Strategies

Closing



Advisory Committee Meetings	Quality of Life Committee	Community Engagement
<p><i>November 10, 2014 Public Kickoff Event – Plan Framework</i></p> <p>December 10 – Project overview, schedule</p> <p>January 21- CPG team intro, cmtly engagement</p> <p>February 11 – Priorities, draft Statement of Place, cmtly engagement</p> <p>March 24 – Findings, existing strategies, cmtly engagement</p> <p>April 8 – Plan goals, assessment, draft strategies</p> <p>May 13 – Statement of place, preliminary vision, Indicators, implementation strategy</p> <p>June 10 – draft plan</p> <p><i>July 8/Aug 12 – tentative</i></p>	<p>October 16, 2014 – CM Cohen briefing</p> <p>November 17 - Framework Presentation</p> <p>March 12 - CM Cohen briefing</p> <p>March 25 – Project update</p> <p>July – draft ACP Strategies incorporated in General Plan</p> <p>August – General Plan to City Council</p>	<p>November to April 2015 – primary offline community engagement/input phase</p> <p>November to June 2015 – online engagement and comment</p> <p>January 5 to Feb 27 – primary stakeholder interviews</p> <p>January 10 to February 4 - Statement of Place focus groups</p> <p>February 9 to 19 – Community Conversations</p> <p>March - Town Hall</p> <p>May – draft Strategies to public</p> <p><i>June – possible Town Hall</i></p>

## **ARTS AND CULTURE** *(Goal CL1)*

A strong, visible presence of arts and culture within the City organization

### **Assessment:**

1. The Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs is developing an Arts and Cultural Plan.
2. Houston is one of the few American cities that does not have a robust Office or Department of Cultural Affairs
3. There are many City Departments, Divisions, Offices and outside agencies investing and deploying public resources in arts and cultural services including Dept. of Neighborhoods, Economic Development Office, Library Department, General Services Department, Houston Airport System, Parks & Recreation Department, Planning and Development Department, Mayor's Office of Special Events, Houston First, Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau, Houston Arts Alliance, Miller Theatre Advisory Board, Theater District Improvement, Museum District Association and SPARK.
4. Greater recognition of Houston's exceptional arts and cultural offerings and the City's numerous ways of investing in and leveraging arts and cultural assets is hindered by the lack of an overarching organizational structure that provides internal and external coordination among the many entities involved.
5. Cross-departmental programs like the Civic Arts Program are often considered less efficient and less effective when they are outsourced to an outside agency, i.e., Houston Arts Alliance.
6. The Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs exists solely at the discretion of the Mayor and currently has two employees.

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## **ARTS AND CULTURE** *(Goal CL1)*

A strong, visible presence of arts and culture within the City organization

### **Assessment (Cont'd):**

7. Houston's current small office structure and undefined scope does not maximize the City Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs to have a strong voice in policy development, assess and report the impact of City arts and cultural investments or develop new programmatic initiatives that are responsive to community needs.
8. No single department or agency is charged with assuring public engagement and participation in the City's cultural development strategies.
9. Community perceptions of inequity are exacerbated by misconceptions about the purposes of revenue streams like the Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) revenue dedicated for the arts and the Civic Art Ordinance.
10. The current process for contracting and allocating Hotel Occupancy Tax revenue dedicated to the arts does not provide the City with a strong mechanism to monitor accountability. Certain organizations receive funding without a formal application process, while the majority of organizations are required to do so. The basis for the funding formula is not documented and it is not clear when it was last reviewed.
11. The City's contract to administer re-granting programs (utilizing Hotel Occupancy Tax revenues dedicated to the arts) through four independent organizations has few performance benchmarks and the varied reporting methods used by the contractors does not provide the City with clear data on the economic and community impact of the City's arts and cultural investments.

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## **ARTS AND CULTURE** *(Goal CL1)*

A strong, visible presence of arts and culture within the City organization

### **Strategies:**

1. *Convert the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs to a permanent City Department of Cultural Affairs to lead City policy development, assess and report the impact of City arts and cultural investments, serve as a point of contact for the community, oversee contracts utilizing revenue restricted for the arts and develop-new programmatic initiatives that are responsive to community needs. Utilize existing revenue restricted to the arts to augment current staffing and operations.*
2. *Assess all City cultural and arts support programs within and outside the City, and determine the best way to align programs within the Department of Cultural Affairs.*
3. *Consult and convene residents, experts and arts and culture leaders routinely to inform policy and programs.*
4. *Evaluate the benefits of utilizing outside agencies for strategic partnerships and specialized services.*
5. *Revise or develop guidelines, procedures, practices and reporting for City arts and cultural investments that are transparent, consistent, measurable and routinely evaluated. Clearly define and articulate the purpose and intent of City programs.*

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## **ARTS AND CULTURE** *(Goal CL1)*

A strong, visible presence of arts and culture within the City organization

### **Strategies (Cont'd):**

6. *Determine the most effective and efficient structure for the management of the Civic Arts Program including moving all or portions of it to the Department of Cultural Affairs.*
  7. *Determine the most effective and efficient structure for the management of the grant program funded through HOT revenues for the arts including moving all or portions of it to the Department of Cultural Affairs.*
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## **ARTS AND CULTURE** *(Goal CL2)*

### Internationally-recognized cultural and entertainment opportunities

#### **Assessment:**

1. Houston is home to many significant cultural events, cultural destinations, and cultural districts like Midtown, the Theater District, the Museum District, and numerous neighborhoods and organizations. However, planning policy does not specifically involve coordination with cultural destinations and cultural event programming
2. The Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau (GHCVB), a division of Houston First Corporation, is the primary sales and marketing arm of the City of Houston and Harris County.
3. Previous planning documents by the City and other organizations/entities that mention cultural destinations are general and less specific in nature, however, new promotional efforts by the GHCVB and others are beginning to include more promotional activities related to arts and culture.
4. Houston's remarkable collection of world peoples and cultures needs to be recognized more as part of the City's identity as a major cultural destination.
5. There are a number of tools and resources to connect consumers with arts and cultural activities. New customers face considerable challenges in navigating Houston's arts and cultural system including numerous varying calendars, lack of apps and limited smart phone optimization, multiple ticketing systems and destination districts that are not consistently walkable.

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## **ARTS AND CULTURE** *(Goal CL2)*

### Internationally-recognized cultural and entertainment opportunities

#### **Assessment (Cont'd):**

6. The City's major support of arts programs is Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) revenue dedicated to the arts to advance tourism. Funding is re-granted through a contract with four nonprofit organizations (Houston Arts Alliance, Houston Museum District, Miller Theatre Advisory Board and Theater District Improvement). There is periodic interaction between the organizations and some effort to work with the GHCVB, however, no structure exists to advance coordinated strategies.
7. Residents have strong appreciation for Houston's major downtown institutions. However, many citizens cite barriers to patronizing them such as: financial, transportation, cultural and time.
8. Residents desire a greater number of cultural activities and attractions (highlighting community programs and artists) in their neighborhoods that are effectively promoted and marketed locally and to visitors.
9. Houston has an opportunity better promote historical tours, neighborhood home tours, walking tours of historic districts, neighborhood cultural tourism or utilize historic/cultural destinations in its tourism materials.
10. Artshound.com is a comprehensive database of Houston's arts and cultural events managed by the Houston Arts Alliance. However, many are not aware of this tool, and modernization or change is needed.

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## **CULTURE** (Goal CL2)

Internationally-recognized cultural and entertainment opportunities

### **Strategies:**

1. *Coordinate polices and accompanying tools for cultural destinations and events planning with overarching city and neighborhood priorities through Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau (GHCVB), Houston First and the Mayor's Office of Special Events.*
2. *Coordinate planning between cultural destinations and arts districts to ensure coordinated and efficient marketing and infrastructure planning (i.e. capital improvements, smart phone app with real time parking)*
3. *Assess programs that provide affordable/ free opportunities to visit destinations. Partner with the business community to create new programs to fill gaps.*
4. *Request an evaluation of and need for more festivals/events citywide, including small-scale, ethnically specific festivals, from the Mayor's Office of Special Events (MOSE)*
5. *Provide coordination and/or promotional services for smaller, neighborhood-oriented festivals/events*
6. *Utilize GHCVB to promote the arts, cultural enclaves and arts districts in Houston as a major part of its destination marketing.*

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## **CULTURE** (Goal CL2)

Internationally-recognized cultural and entertainment opportunities

### **Strategies (Cont'd):**

7. *Develop and highlight cultural arts programs and initiatives that celebrate the diverse cultures and communities of Houston and utilize MOSE/GHCVB to initiate a program of neighborhood-based cultural tourism.*
8. *Assess options including an APP to update/replace ArtsHound.com to expand awareness and utilization.*

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## **CULTURE** (*Goal CL3*)

### A thriving local arts and creative community

#### **Assessment:**

1. Houston is home to a number of important and long-lived educational, cultural and faith institutions that contribute significant cultural, social and economic benefits to the region. Effectively coordinated, these anchor institutions have the economic potential to leverage their assets and revenues to greatly advance local cultural development efforts.
2. Artists have more earning power in Houston than in any comparable region (except Los Angeles). However, artists are significantly underrepresented in nearly every occupational category when compared to the national average.
3. Promotion and celebration of the arts is included as a goal in previous citywide and neighborhood plans. Attention to the arts is usually called for in neighborhoods that already have an arts community as a focus for economic development
4. The Civic Art Ordinance and *Capital Improvement Plan* sets aside funding for civic art, which is a helpful tool in developing art installations throughout the city, however the Ordinance is limited to qualifying vertical projects of \$500,000 and above.
5. Bond funding includes civic art set aside of 1.75% of qualifying CIP projects but these funds cannot be aggregated, meaning funds generated are restricted to the the purpose of the bond, i.e., tied to a specific City department.

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## ***CULTURE (Goal CL3)***

### A thriving local arts and creative community

#### **Assessment (Cont'd):**

6. There are scores of small and mid-sized cultural organizations which are dependent on the City's re-granting program (utilizing Hotel Occupancy Tax restricted for the arts) and have little capacity to raise private philanthropic support.
7. There is a group of mid-sized "legacy" (in existence a number of years) art organizations that are struggling financially and lack certain capacities, including private fund-raising
8. The Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) revenue dedicated for the arts and culture may not be sufficient to sustain and promote growth of Houston's cultural development in the future.
9. Many of Houston's cultural organizations lack affordable performance, rehearsal, exhibition and production venues.
10. There is a significant need for studio, live-work and production spaces for individual artists and career development assistance.
11. Developers may lack experience or see too many obstacles in the City code to pursue arts space redevelopment projects.

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## ***CULTURE (Goal CL3)***

A thriving local arts and creative community

### **Assessment (Cont'd):**

12. There is a growing demand for increased arts and cultural offerings beyond the City's boundaries. A few jurisdictions outside of the City of Houston are developing new resources to meet the needs of their residents, however regional planning efforts have not included arts and culture among their priorities.
13. The need to have more arts available in schools was by far the most common and consistent priority voiced by residents. The benefits of the arts to student outcomes have been rigorously documented and numerous nonprofit organizations deliver in-school and out-of-school programs to select schools. With the exception of the School Park (SPARK) program, there is no coordinated effort between area ISDs, the private sector and the City to deliver arts and cultural programs to students.

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## **CULTURE** (Goal CL3)

### A thriving local arts and creative community

#### **Strategies:**

1. *Identify a new designated revenue stream to support arts and cultural programs and projects.*
2. *Work with local anchor institutions to promote local cultural sector development through such means as purchasing, hiring, workforce training, new business incubation and advising.*
3. *Explore the economic potential of anchor institutions to leverage real estate development to promote local retail, employer-assisted housing, and community benefit projects.*
4. *Present opportunities for anchor institutions to use pension and endowment funds to invest in local job creation strategies and to provide community venture capital for nonprofits, entrepreneurs, and employee-owned firms.*
5. *Amend the Civic Art Ordinance to include certain horizontal construction to be eligible for 1.75% set aside for civic art. Eligible CIP horizontal projects could include parks and major thoroughfares in order to generate additional funding for more civic art projects throughout the city*
6. *Complete and implement a civic art master plan to coordinate and set guidelines for the expansion of civic art and distribute funding and locations of installations*
7. *Encourage hiring of local artists for creation of civic art, while commissioning nationally and internationally recognized artists for select project*

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## **CULTURE** (Goal CL3)

A thriving local arts and creative community

### **Strategies (Cont'd):**

8. *Develop neighborhood-based civic art projects that reflect the special character of various parts of the city and community gateways to identify, welcome and educate*
9. *Coordinate planning of cultural destinations with overarching city and neighborhood priorities*
10. *Encourage Houston's five Cultural Districts designated by the Texas Commission on the Arts other areas to partner with the development of maker spaces/ multi-purpose shared spaces, etc.*
11. *Develop additional ongoing capacity-building programs to ensure the long-term sustainability of Houston's mid-sized "legacy" organizations*
12. *Create a long-term cultural facilities development plan that responds to the needs of Houston's artists and cultural organizations and the need for access to smaller scale venues throughout the city*
13. *Create economic development incentives for developers/builders and others to create live-work/studio/production spaces for artists, creative businesses and nonprofit arts and culture organizations.*

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# NEXT STEPS



Continue public outreach and engagement campaign,  
Intercept Survey, [BYYOUCITY.ORG](http://BYYOUCITY.ORG)

Finalize draft strategies

Present draft strategies for public comment

Finalize Houston Identity Statement

**[BYYOUCITY.ORG](http://BYYOUCITY.ORG)**