

## City unveils new cultural arts plan, seeks public input

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The Madison Arts Commission unveiled a brand new Madison Cultural Plan Wednesday to promote the city's cultural identity.

The event's purpose was to collect ideas from the public to progress Madison culturally in order to establish a more vibrant center of creativity and innovation.

"This plan gives us the opportunity to connect businesses and families to arts and culture," said.

Steven Goldberg, member of the Madison Cultural Plan Steering Committee. "We will have that brand engrained in all of us."

According to MAC members, Madison's cultural identity will allow institutions to experiment with new ideas to advance capacity and earn income.

"The business community is waiting for this kind of alignment that says if you invest in the culture of this community, your dollar will go much further because there is alignment and a sense of purpose," Goldberg said.

Five themes of the cultural plan were introduced as a platform in an effort to create a brand for Madison. The themes are community identity, connectivity, voice, place and sustainability, all of which offer avenues to enhance the city's unique qualities.

"We can protect and enhance the unique character of the place in which we live, we can give voice to creative issues and we can move more intentionally towards sustainability," said Mary.

Berryman Agard, a MAC consultant, about the presented themes.

MAC used various roundtable discussions, surveys, interviews, and focus groups to further understand the public's current perspective of Madison's culture and to construct the themes of the city's cultural plan.

According to Agard, Madison's community identity is not clearly defined, and as a result, there is nothing to help shape or drive a community spirit.

"This is a kickoff of a long, fruitful, rich discussion about where we want to take culture and to broadly define it in our community," Mayor Dave Cieslewicz said. "This is a living, breathing document, not something set in stone, just as creativity is not set in stone."



Kathryn Weenig

Members of the Madison Arts Commission, along with Mayor Dave Cieslewicz, presented the city's new cultural arts plan Wednesday night.