

## Madison Cultural Plan Public Participation Summary

### I. Introduction

This document summarizes the themes and issues that rose to the top during the Madison Cultural Plan's group meetings (including discussion groups, focus groups, and roundtables) conducted and reported during 2010 and its key informant interviews and surveys.

Meetings were held in a variety of locations across the city and reached into a wide range of community sectors working in commercial, independent, and nonprofit structures in the arts, sciences, and history. Participants included artists, creative workers, arts administrators, curators, historical preservationists, scientists, business persons from the entertainment and new technology fields, science educators, civil servants, developers, architects and landscape architects, and students and arts and cultural educators.

Some of these meetings were facilitated by the consulting team, some by Madison Cultural Plan Steering Committee members, and some by volunteers from the broader community. These meetings were surprising in their consonance. Themes of community identity, connectivity, voice, place and sustainability emerged from virtually every discussion.

The process included surveys of consumers (193 respondents), artists and creative workers (240 respondents), and nonprofit arts and cultural institutions( 79 respondents).

Below, major themes from these discussions and surveys are documented.

#### READER'S NOTES

1. Suggestions contained in this document are not final recommendations associated with this planning process. Rather, they are ideas submitted by citizens in cases where similar suggestions emerged from a variety of sources. They are included to give the reader a clear picture of the thoughts of those contributing to date. These suggestions are included to accurately reflect conversations and written thoughts submitted. Final recommendations for the plan will be built with additional citizen and Steering Committee input.
2. Text printed in bold are direct references to City of Madison policies, practices, or issues.
3. Opinions represented in this document are those that were broadly held, rather than suggested by only one or a few participants. Where the weight of the data gathered suggests an opinion is broadly held, it is reflected here. Many other valuable opinions were gathered, but did not rise to the level of widely shared views.

## II. Community Identity

Madison is a community that lacks a defined, unifying identity that captures all its unique characteristics and riches. Fragments of the community's identity are present and trip off every tongue: a place of lakes, a city of bike paths, home of the University and its sports empire, and the state capitol. But the community needs to formally frame a distinctive brand identity that names its unique identity including its creative sector. It needs a good answer to the question "Why would I want to go to Madison?"

## III. Connectivity

### A. The Elephant in the Room

Madison is rich with arts and cultural resources with an array that outstrips expectations for a community of its size, but severely hampered by absence of connectivity among those resources. Participants from all corners of the creative community underlined this problem and itemized the costs of disconnection. The need for a creative commons was the single most frequently desired change in the Madison's creative community.

As one participant put it like this "Seems like the question of connectivity is the lurking elephant in this room. What model would work? Is developing a shared agenda among so many individuals and institutions a practical goal? What kind of organization, council, or network do we need? This is the big challenge for the cultural plan."

Costs of this vacuum are many. Examples include

- ✓ Comparably minimal penetration of arts and cultural education and outreach activities into the broader community;
- ✓ Limited experience with collaboration within the creative community;
- ✓ Unsatisfied hunger in both the arts, science and history sector for mechanisms through which to connect for and implement joint programming;
- ✓ Great variability in connectivity among individual artists practicing various disciplines and concomitant isolation for many;
- ✓ Reduced ability to effectively engage all citizens to join the creative conversation, especially with regard to children, communities of color, impoverished residents, and others;
- ✓ Diminished access to arts and cultural participation;
- ✓ Lack of cohesiveness among arts and cultural workers, leaders, donors, and institutions;
- ✓ Inability to harness the creative community as a major resource in advancing civic discourse and the identification of creative solutions or changes;
- ✓ Inability to conceptualize, design, and execute community-wide arts and cultural collaborations at a scale consistent with Madison's size and energy;

- ✓ Wasted efforts and duplicated costs spent searching for fundamental information;
- ✓ Unmet technical assistance and organizational development needs;
- ✓ Higher costs associated with absence of joint purchasing (including health insurance), joint marketing, fund development, audience development and shared use of spaces and equipment;
- ✓ Absence of leadership development specific to arts and cultural stewardship and concomitant absence of diversity and breadth within the boards of local arts and cultural institutions; and
- ✓ Diminished private sector participation in nonprofit funding and stewardship.

## B. The Commons

Madison does have examples of successful networking, partnership, and collaboration but they are the exception to the rule. Edgewood College has redefined itself to place emphasis on partnership. It and is working to learn more about the development and maintenance of deep, sustainable, college-community partnerships including many in the arts and sciences. The Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery are designed to be an intentional places of cross-disciplinary creative work. An effort to increase communication among history organizations is beginning.

Still, the overwhelming cry for an intentionally framed commons for creative workers, industries, and institutions is Madison's most obvious cultural need. The range of people and the depth of their sense of urgency in naming this need and requesting resolution is profound.

Literally hundreds of ideas for roles a creative commons could play were generated by participants. The themes that unite these suggestions are:

- ✓ Providing a physical place where unscripted conversation among creative sector participants could happen regularly, blurring the artificial limits of disciplines and promoting new ventures and ideas;
- ✓ Giving donors and funders a place to come together to consider investment strategies in the context of broad creative sector development needs;
- ✓ Giving voice to creative sector accomplishments, issues, and concerns;
- ✓ Fostering the development of a comprehensive information management and sharing service for the creative sector;
- ✓ Facilitating major community initiatives that reach beyond traditional creative sector organizational bounds;
- ✓ Advancing access to arts and cultural offerings;
- ✓ Providing leadership development training specific to arts and cultural issues;
- ✓ Cultivating arts and cultural participation among businesses and professional practices;
- ✓ Organizing a group purchasing program;
- ✓ Hosting, promoting or supporting collaborative ventures among individuals and organizations;

- ✓ Providing organizational development assistance to nonprofit creative sector institutions; and
- ✓ Serving as a link between creative sector resources and issues and the community at large.

Participants see the commons as a vital mixing pot, a place of energy and imagination where those who come forward galvanize one another to bolder, more meaningful creative activity.

### C. Information Management and Sharing

Madison competes poorly with communities that have invested in building strong information sharing tools for creative individuals, organizations, and businesses. Creative people have no efficient tools for locating one another; there is no master list of creative organizations; arts and cultural educators and outreach workers lack a clearinghouse to identify and share resources and build programs, and the general public has difficulty finding resources and offerings produced by the creative sector.

#### *1. Artists and Creative Workers*

Artists and creative workers have considerable difficulty locating peers and partners both within and across disciplines. Managers of outreach programs, fairs, and festivals cannot easily identify full array of creative performers, exhibitors, and vendors present in Madison. Disconnects exist between different disciplines, ethnicities, and age groups. Those employed in arts and cultural organizations are sometimes isolated from those who work independently. Arts educators often have difficulty in identifying artists for in-school residencies, demonstrations and activities, especially since quality of an artist's interaction with students is an additional expectation. And business and consumers looking to commission or hire individual artists and creatives for specific work find their choices limited by lack of information.

#### *2. Connecting with Community and Visitors*

This problem is particularly pressing for the hundreds of outreach programs that are produced in Madison both by educational institutions and by arts and cultural institutions. Those who are hungry to book such outreach activities for their schools, special events, and neighborhoods have enormous difficulty learning about available programs. Those who offer outreach services have a similar problem identifying potential outreach delivery partnership sites.

Calendaring and scheduling are cumbersome since no comprehensive community calendar of arts cultural events exists. Unlike many similar cities, Madison does not feature prominent links to comprehensive arts and cultural calendars and resource databases on either its municipal, its Chamber of Commerce, or its Convention and Visitor's Bureau websites. In that regard, the front door for visitors to Madison's arts and cultural resources is not just locked; there is no door at all.

#### *3. Beginning Points*

There are a variety of databases that gather information about arts and cultural entities, artists, genres, and interests but few are comprehensive. Fewer still have sufficient functionality, participation, or visibility to be recognized by the public. There are very real options for enhancing, merging, and strengthening any number of the extant databases (Portal Wisconsin; Madstage.com; Madison Artists list serve; Isthmus' Daily Page Guide and the Madison Music Project; the Parks Department's in-house list of special events; various blogs; Madison Festival's volunteer management data base; privately held lists compiled by individuals and organizations; etc.).

## IV. Voice

### A. Champions

Arts and cultural issues have no clear voice in the community. There are few champions visible on the wider public stage, and those who come forward are largely connected to ad hoc issues or single organizations or facilities. There is no cadre of highly visible, highly respected advocacy leaders to whom peers, the press and media, and the public would turn for guidance in times of deliberation about ongoing creative sector development issues.

When arts, science, or history related concerns are a part of broader public debate, they are often overwhelmed by other issues that have more effective champions, and more tools for coordination of position and message. Because fundamental connectivity across the creative sector is weak, community level messaging is uncoordinated.

Public voices are needed to advance a better understanding of the value of the arts in making meaning, the long-term subliminal effects of the arts in everyday life, the value of large scale community events, the economic case for the arts, the case for large public cultural facilities (including parks and gardens) as quality of life drivers, and to raise the level of commitment to sufficiency in public and private support for arts and cultural activities.

### B. Art as Voice

There is also a related question of the local use of art as voice. Madison does not intentionally engage local arts and cultural institutions in efforts to address larger civic issues which constrains the return on investment in the creative sector. Arts and cultural mechanisms are natural allies in shaping public opinion, in building community cohesion, and in changing public behavior. Madison is missing opportunities to utilize the arts in telling environmental stories and creating environmental solutions. The community is inexperienced in using art as a way of engaging public participation in civic visioning and discourse. Madison does not often use the arts as an intentional ally in envisioning and building a sustainable community. And while arts programming has some presence in neighborhood identity building, examples are fewer than omissions.

### C. Press and Media

Local press and media are, as a group, less responsive to the creative sector than its members would wish. There is limited opportunity for arts and culturally related reportage and criticism alike. Press and media interest in events is extremely hard to secure. Public radio has not been supportive of contemporary music programming in general. The community lacks an arts-only publication. Coverage is more likely around conflicts (for example, the historic aspects of issues related to the Edgewater decision) or capital projects (for example, the new Madison Children's Museum, the Overture Center, or the new downtown library proposals) than around the activities they contain.

## V. Place

### A. Defining Place

Place includes the notion of the people who occupy and have occupied a particular spot on planet earth, the natural environment, the built environment, and the events that shape and will shape local experience. Madison sometimes loses track of the fact that new families are coming here because it is beautiful and has a great sense of place. This sense of place is at risk from incremental destruction and Madison too often takes the wonder of this place on earth for granted. All of these aspects of place require care and keeping through citizen participation, creative invention, and informed public policies.

### B. Built Environment

Madison is getting better at creating a built environment that is both aesthetically rich and sustainable. Having a Design Commission and a Sustainable Energy and Design Committee is very helpful. Still, there are many opportunities for strengthening the built environment. Protecting place will require a system in which big planning visions are laid down first for each area of the community, and detailed neighborhood plans are fleshed out within the broad guidance of the big picture visions.

Design has to take root locally. “The best creativity comes from the soil.” Generally speaking, Madison is a community of small architectural firms. Often, larger firms secure larger contracts because of their greater capacity (especially UW projects). That undermines the development of a connected architectural community. We must find ways to create a commitment to architectural quality for all public buildings and renovations designed by a blend of local and international architects.

#### *1. Shoreline*

Madison is at risk of losing the very connections that will secure our best future. Madison must create public facilities on its shorelines and bike paths, connecting residents to our defining feature. Those facilities could be surrounded by environmental works of art that beautify the shoreline while improving water quality. Maintaining public access to our shorelines is the most critical and broadly supported aspect of preserving Madison’s sense of place.

#### *Greening the Urban Landscape*

Forty percent of the downtown is public land—largely streets and sidewalks. Public streets and sidewalks need to be brought into the 21<sup>st</sup> century by putting landscape architects in the driver’s seat with regard to streetscape design.

And, more broadly, urban horticulture will need to be elevated to a considerably more important role overall for both aesthetic and environmental reasons. Madison should create living walls in prominent spaces, modernize its urban forestry policies, utilize rooftops as green spaces, build

affordable green housing for artists (perhaps by recruiting artists to help rehab specific property in exchange for low rent or purchase prices), and green vacant and abandoned properties.

Madison should develop tools and practices that encourage builders to conform to new LEED requirements. The environmental impact of materials used can help mitigate negative consequences and raise public awareness. The community should use solar energy sculptures as art and integrate them into building and landscape design on rooftops, band shelters, bus stops, and in parks, park shelters, shorelines, streetscape amenities, and public spaces.

## C. Neighborhoods

Madison’s neighborhoods are the building blocks of the community, and their health is fundamental. They should be better and more equitably connected to arts and cultural opportunities. All neighborhoods should be served by equitably funded neighborhood centers, local arts programs, public art works, festivals and concerts. Neighborhoods would also benefit from local programs and policies that incentivize sustainable living and development among private property owners.

### 1. Citizen Wisdom

Madison’s long history is rife with examples of planning processes in which neighborhood participation improved planning and design decisions. The value of neighborhoods as lead partners in shaping their own destiny has been regularly demonstrated. That role must remain strong.

The unique historic identity of each neighborhood, not just those located on the Isthmus, should be preserved and protected. Green spaces should be folded into all neighborhood plan revisions and their residents, leaders, and associations should be trained to work effectively on behalf of maintaining high standards of design, preservation, and sustainability in their own neighborhoods.

### 2. Neighborhood Design Standards

Neighborhood empowerment is key in advancing good development. While some neighborhood plans address design standards, the city should create a requirement that neighborhood plans address design standards. These standards should encourage neighborhoods to think about design issues, but should avoid “line in the sand” rigidity. The annual Mayor’s Neighborhood Roundtable could be used as a training forum for neighborhood leaders on design issues.

## D. Public Art

Public art is an important part of the built environment. The city’s program is improving, but it is underfunded and lacks visibility largely because the scale of investment and the concomitant scale of works in the collection remains quite modest. The “Blink” program, which supports temporary public art installations, is a “jewel.” It surprises and delights the community. We need both works that endure and those that are here and gone.

### 1. Embedding Artists Early in the Design Process

Generally speaking, reception of public artists by site designers, builders, and customers is positive. Many professionals are excited to work with artists. The new steps the city is taking to imbed public artists earlier in the design phase of public capital projects is a strong step in the right direction; the

city should continue to move away from after-the-fact “plop” art installations. The public art program should refine its skills for making early relationships real, building on its first experiences.

Citizens working on environmental issues related to Wingra dam wanted to capture the opportunity to create a fountain, but City Engineering blocked the idea. There was no municipal sense of an integrated role for the arts in sustainable watershed management. Nor has Madison yet learned how to utilize public art as a lead partner in building neighborhood identity. The city must work to welcome the arts into all its capital and engineering projects.

### *2. Sustainability as a Focus for Public Art*

The current public art plan should be updated to focus more on sustainability, and more frequently support landscape architecture approaches. Guidelines could encourage the use of natural materials, support open space, brownfield, and empty lot installations of art that promote sustainability, help build a sense of place and neighborhood unity, support green art competitions judged by use of recycled/reused materials for educational impact, convert support structures for alternative transit (bus shelters, bike racks, bike paths) and the edges and fronts of parking structures into public art venues, and consider every stormwater project as a water feature in the landscape.

The public art program could become a tool for sustaining human connections to place and increasing residents’ commitment to local stewardship. This could be accomplished by developing a process for community-led design and creation of public works, by increasing the participation of local artists (including graffiti artists) in providing public art, and by establishing youth initiatives.

### *3. Increasing Support for Public Art*

The City of Madison should increase support for public art by requiring a fixed percentage of all public capital projects to be contributed to a public art fund. The Madison Metropolitan School District should place a public piece in every school yard. Alternatives for incentivizing or requiring private developers to participate in the creation of public works should be implemented.

## **E. Venues, Facilities and Districts**

While Madison is comparably rich in arts and cultural facilities, questions of distribution, identification, and sufficiency and affordability remain.

### *1. Facility and Venue Distribution*

Madison has a well-developed array of downtown arts, culture, and entertainment venues, but distribution across other neighborhoods is unbalanced.

Generally speaking, the strengths of the downtown cluster of arts and cultural venues are in providing exhibition and performance spaces for arts and history endeavors including commercial sales; science has no significant presence. The downtown is also a place of the production or rehearsal of work for organizations; less so for individual artists and creative workers.

As downtown becomes more residential, there is growing tension between the “lively downtown” style of living and the “quiet suburban” style of living. This tension has impacted live music venues.



Some neighborhoods, for example the Regent/Monroe Street corridor and the Williamson Street/Atwood corridor, are densely populated with arts and cultural venues. The South Park Street corridor is emerging as an ethnic communities cultural zone.

## *2. Neighborhood Centers*

Connecting with residents who live in neighborhoods without neighborhood centers is a problem in Madison and has been for many years. Our current funding system rewards both extraordinarily troubled neighborhoods and those centers fortunate enough to have extremely successful community relations and fund raising leadership. Madison needs a more systematic approach to distributing resources to neighborhood centers, perhaps based on a capitation formula in addition to need. All neighborhoods need strong local programs, including arts and cultural offerings.

## *3. Identifying Cultural Districts*

Madison has four natural cultural districts, or viewed differently, one major cultural ribbon with four distinct parts.

The Regent / Monroe Street corridor is home to many commercial galleries, music clubs, Madison's only neighborhood school for the arts, and the Edgewood College campus, already an important local cultural player in the arts and sciences and now planning a substantial new cultural facility.

The Lower UW Campus/Downtown corridor, including the Square and outer ring are home to educational arts facilities including performance halls, studios, and rehearsal spaces; many commercial galleries and creative industry businesses; night clubs and other live music venues; coffee houses with exhibition programs; on-street performance spaces; local foods restaurants; the farmers market; major outdoor special event sites; and several major institutions including the Bartell Theatre, the Overture Center, two historical museums, the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Madison Children's Museum. Administrative spaces for many local arts and cultural organizations are also located in the area.

South Park Street is emerging as a cultural corridor including Centro Hispano (a cultural center), a very active branch library, Latino press and media firms, a Mexican art gallery, Space Place, the large and growing Juneteenth Day Festival, recording studios, Madison's only black owned live music club, and a variety of commercial outlets and restaurants focused on Asian, Latino, and African American foodways.

The Williamson Street/Atwood corridor, including the Central Park development zone has a strong array of cultural venues including many leading live music venues, Broom Street Theatre, the Barrymore Theatre, Olbrich Gardens, local foods restaurants, creative industry retail outlets, outdoor special event venues supporting a significant program of festivals, and a concentration of studios and studio galleries.

Madison should designate these cultural districts, and support that designation with marketing and collaborative event and physical planning. As a matter of course, representatives of the cultural districts should be seated at the table when municipal decisions impacting creative productivity are made. Descriptions of these districts and the amenities they offer should be appear in all the places the city promotes itself both to residents and to visitors.

#### 4. Sufficiency and Affordability of Facilities and Venues

Despite Madison's generally strong profile with regard to arts, entertainment, and cultural facilities, gaps remain. In particular, more affordable performance, production, rehearsal and studio spaces, including live/work spaces, and flexible neighborhood based venues, are needed. As local musicians must generally pay a room fee to perform, having affordable music (especially hip hop, urban and world music) and spoken word venues is particularly important. Deficits were also noted in terms of an outdoor concert space with 5000 seats and a dedicated, comprehensive festival site.

## VI. Sustainability

### A. Investing in Lasting Bounty

Sustainability, in all its faces, is a critical consideration for all arts and cultural endeavors. This concept includes the facilities and venues, the urban forest, human creative capital, institutional wellness, and sustaining the uniqueness of place.

### B. Optimizing Use of Existing Facilities and Venues

Optimizing the use of existing and planned facilities and venues advances the physical and fiscal sustainability of the arts and cultural community. Many venue needs could be met by changing controlling policies and practices, rather than building new facilities.

With regard to major venues, the University of Wisconsin could choose to make the Camp Randall and the Kohl Center more affordable to concert uses, meeting the pressing need for cultivation of a live music audience among students.

The City could make Breeze Stevens more welcoming to arts and cultural uses, meeting a need for an outdoor concert venue on the near East Side. The Mallards field could host more concerts if its rules regarding keeping the public off the infield were modified. The Overture Center and the Vilas Zoo could become more likely spots for contemporary music concerts through policy and pricing changes. Madison Parks could simplify its festival permitting and parks use rules.

Underutilized resources such as the Collins House should be considered primary targets for cultural uses. It's historic character and location on the lake front position it for an important cultural role.

The private sector could encourage the use of vacant storefronts as temporary visual art installation sites.

Additionally, some needs for rehearsal spaces could be met by improving the arts and cultural sector's tools for notifying one another of spaces available for rental sharing.

Madison should ensure the participation of knowledgeable live music promoters in the design of Central Park's amphitheatre. It should also consider whether the development of Central Park could include creation of dedicated festival grounds with comprehensive festival supporting provisions and amenities.

The City of Madison should optimize the uses of its parks and streets for live festival and music promotion by re-evaluating its current approach. While slowing growing flexibility in street use permitting and recent cooperation in promoting Freakfest has been a welcome exception, the city

has been generally regarded as a hindrance to arts and cultural uses of streets and parks spaces. Currently, costs for local police, including after-hours officers working private security, EMT services, and related park and street permitting are prohibitive. Today, Madison compares unfavorably to Fitchburg in terms of permitting simplicity, cost and hours of operation for festival uses; in fact, Fiesta Hispana moved to Fitchburg for just those reasons.

Entertainment industry professionals regard the entire live music industry and its venues as overregulated. Some called for revisiting costs associated with cabaret licensing, which are barriers to emerging musicians.

The city should insure the access of all citizens to commercial venues through realistic policies of public safety enforcement. Care should be taken to avoid over scrutinizing musical events featuring performers identified with hip hop culture since venue operators do not, in fact, perceive a difference in the frequency of enforcement actions necessitated by those events.

Madison could help festivals by re-examining its general policy position toward live entertainment and festival uses of public venues. There is a need for the city to create a formal festivals policy that state's the city's intention to be welcoming to festivals and lays out basic policy concerns. At present, that information is scattered and does not ground itself in a fundamental statement encouraging festivals.

Municipal policy and behavior should value festivals as benefits to the broader community and demonstrate gratitude for the enormous voluntary contributions that support them.

The city participates financially in some fairs and festivals via line item support (Rhythm and Booms) and fee waivers and in others via Madison Arts Commission grants. A regularized system making financial participation and fee waivers available based on specific, fairly applied criteria is needed. The city should define its role not as a regulator, but as a participating partner in the promotion of outdoor creative sector events.

### C. The Urban Forest

Madison faces a potential loss of 20,000+ ash trees, or 20%+ of its urban forest, as the emerald ash borer advances. The loss of so many trees would profoundly alter Madison's aesthetic and environmental profile. The cost of replacing a loss of that scale has been estimated at \$21 million dollars, with no known source of funds at this time. That threat alone suggests placing priority on protection and management of the urban forest.

Local tree policy, including trees on park land, is outdated. Both tree trimming and planting guidelines need to become much more environmentally and aesthetically based. Parks should be home to grand shade trees, and more important determinants than mowing costs should govern their frequency of type.

Many jurisdictions use arborist approved standards for pruning; Madison does not. Local approaches to tree pruning, the Y shaped cut around the power lines approach, is not sound arboreal practice and is converting sound, mature trees into hazard trees. This approach should be abandoned as a part of protecting the threatened urban forest. In some cases, the trees being weakened by this outdated approach to pruning are an actual component of certain district's historic designations.

The City should lead efforts to increase neighborhood participation in urban horticulture. Efforts could include building more shared leaf mulching sites, revising prohibitions against native

pollinators in yards and fruit tree plantings on terraces, and increasing support to food and non-food gardens and gardeners.

#### D. Sustaining the Uniqueness of Place

Currently, Madison does not vigorously enforce its regulations effecting place. Most enforcement is citizen complaint driven. Fines doled out as punishments for building code infractions are so small as to be just costs of business to many interests. Historical regulations, design issues, and some environmental regulations are in the same boat. A higher standard of enforcement is needed to protect Madison's uniqueness of place.

One aspect of the sense of place is historical identity. Planning processes in Madison are often a train wreck. Madison seems to doom its committees from the start by setting them up only when a conflict exists. Preservation concerns do not get heard within the racket of conflict.

Currently, when a permit requires landmarks/historic district related review, the city begins by saying, "I'm sorry, but you will be required ....." Madison needs to educate the public so no apology is required. Right now, the municipal approach to preservation is all stick and no carrot. The city needs carrots and sticks.

Now, the city is poised to reevaluate its role in historic preservation. Opening the landmarks ordinance for review opens up everything. The ordinance needs to be tightened and clarified so that it becomes more predictable, transparent, and enforceable and so that historic districts are described and regulated in parallel fashion. There will be tension around this ordinance, in part because three historic districts, Third Lake Ridge, First Settlement, and Mansion Hill are all prime development targets.

In reframing that ordinance all parties should consider that regulatory structures often advance the work of local preservationists by forcing otherwise disinterested parties to the table. The balance of regulatory and private advocacy organizations should be maintained. They need one another.

Another aspect of the sense of place is physical. Madison's lakes and shorelines are its signature physical feature. They are in substantial decline. A much more vigorous local commitment to watershed issues is fundamental. The arts and sciences should collaborate in making Madison a center for watershed management based on collaborative energies and approaches from the creative sector as a whole.

A crucial opportunity for the development of arts venues is closely related to the issues of clean water and shoreline development. The lakes are a spectacular backdrop for many outdoor offerings. Efforts to secure and maintain public access to the shorelines should be integrated with provisions that support arts and cultural uses of those spaces.

#### E. Transportation

Creativity often requires people to come together. Sustainable systems of public transportation are vital to filling live performance venues, advancing creative commerce, and improving access for a diverse population.

Alcohol and live music are, at present, frequently a mutually dependent market. Night clubs and similar live music venues would be well served by extended hours of bus service or similar transportation options that give patrons an affordable way to enjoy an evening of drinking and reach home safely. At present, bar time stings in which squads wait in parking lots as patrons leave

clubs are frustrating to club owners. They signal a larger problem that requires a more thoughtful, before the fact solution.

## F. Human Creative Capital

Sustainability demands investment in human capital; without capable and creative community stewards, the physical and social environments decay.

### *1. Systemic Issues in Arts and Cultural Education*

There are a number of systemic issues in Madison that frustrate arts and cultural education, and a handful of local efforts that are working to overcome those barriers.

While Madison has one neighborhood school for the arts, the Monroe Street Fine Arts Center, it does not have a community-wide school for the arts. This gap puts Madison at a severe disadvantage regarding the visibility and delivery of arts education services. Madison needs to create such a school.

The broader education system is rooted in traditionally formed silos based on presumptions that are no longer relevant. Often, structures and leadership are not really aware of the age in which they exist. Younger faculty disregards these traditional silos and the assumptions upon which they rest. There is a detectable shift toward service and applied learning, authentic community based experiences, and internationalism. These trends should be supported.

The arts, sciences and history are all devalued by No Child Left Behind. Damage has been done. And, the Board of Education does not seem to have gotten the message regarding the value of instruction and learning in these disciplines.

There is some turfism between local higher educational institutions with regard to school partnerships. More could be accomplished if that issue could be resolved, with each higher educational institution called on for its own particular strength. Tools to catalogue and connect arts, science, and history outreach programs are needed to make that cooperation feasible.

Parochial schools have made strong partners in some arts and science partnerships, partly because their scale is well-suited to piloting programs and partly because of their greater flexibility.

Many of the teaching and learning partnerships that the UW Madison School of Education gets involved in are issue driven (e.g. low performance of students). That can lead to program constraints.

The University of Wisconsin has an employee whose role is to improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematical (STEM) instruction and to have public better understand the need for STEM research. The current “buzz” in K-12 is 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills which are basically “improved thinking skills” for all students. Advancing commitment to more effective STEM education and higher thinking skills is difficult as both k-12 and higher education system are not generally focused on workforce development driven curriculum.

## 2. Access

Madison is rich with arts, science, and history education resources, but penetration of those resources into the full community is unnecessarily limited. Too often, programs are designed for the same mainstream audience. In too many cases, these resources are consumed by the same population groups over and over again.

Middle and high school students in particular are often without access to performing arts experiences. Clubs and commercial venues are generally not available. Where do interested young people go to find peers with similar interests? Opportunities are few.

Several local efforts to improve access are underway. For example, some outreach programs at the University of Wisconsin recognize that there are many Madison residents who do not feel welcome on campus. As a result, these programs are beginning to explore off campus outreach more. The programming at Villager Mall (including Space Place which is located there) are a part of this effort. A partnership in which the Nelson Environmental Institute developed its environmental film festival programming in partnership with Centro Hispano was wildly successful.

Edgewood College is investing in deep, sustainable partnership to move programs outward from its campus. These efforts demonstrate the value of going to the broader community, rather than waiting for historically disconnected audiences to walk in the door.

The Overture Center's community programs are beginning to gain traction and evidence a growing recognition of the impact of intentionally inclusive programs on the facility's patronage. There are other examples across the community. But much more needs to be done.

Simply discovering arts, science, and historical education opportunities is very difficult, even for people within the broader education system. Until Madison creates community-wide informational access to these programs, public access cannot be fully realized.

## 3. Arts Education

Madison's arts education efforts are, overall, insufficient, in part because arts education lacks a strong, community-wide, ongoing advocacy voice. Most local arts education advocacy has focused on Madison Metropolitan School District budget allocations, rather than the entire system that supports arts education in both the schools and the broader community. And, within the district as across the nation, No Child Left Behind has negatively influenced the institutional status of arts and cultural education.

There are efforts to strengthen arts education locally, both with the public schools and higher education institutions, and among nonprofit arts and cultural organizations. Strong beginning points for strengthened programming include the Overture Center's Kennedy Center Partners in Education participation and its community programs in general, the University of Wisconsin's Arts Outreach efforts, and the increasing role of the Madison Children's Museum in the arts. The Madison Metropolitan School District is working to implement the recommendations of its own Arts Education Task Force, but at a pace constrained by the district's profound fiscal dilemma.

The school district should repair arts education by utilizing practices that value creativity in all instruction and resource allocation. Teachers should promote the idea that the audiences are owners of creative experiences, not just passive receptacles. The district should embrace a sequential arts education curriculum, enhance its educators' capacity to integrate the arts as teaching tools across disciplines, help teachers prepare small grant requests, and develop a systematic approach to partnering with nonprofit arts organizations.

Both individual schools and the district as a whole should become intentional in partnering with attendance area resources including libraries, colleges and universities, artists (including alumni), arts organizations, and businesses in the creative sector. They should participate in interschool and international exchanges that help students understand the uniqueness of place.

Local nonprofit arts institutions should strive to improve their K-12 programming. Means of connecting the educators within the institutions and the schools should be strengthened and regularized.

Critical to accomplishing many of these things is the creation of an information resource that would help the district and other local schools identify outreach and education programs offered in the community.

#### *4. Science Education*

Science literacy is important to Madison because it drives stronger public support for scientific endeavors, encourages sustainable behavior among people, drives the creation of better public laws and regulations, and contributes to workforce strength. Ensuring science literacy is the responsibility of many players including primary and secondary schools, school boards, and educators; cultural organizations and institutions; colleges and universities; and scientific firms in the private sector.

At present, science literacy in Madison is fairly good among the general public, stronger among investors, and fairly good among public policy makers, but illiteracy remains a common limitation for many. Science illiteracy diminishes people's appreciation of the urgency and impact of scientific endeavors on health, environment, daily living, and commerce. There is a tension between elected officials, who think in terms of permanent truths and scientists who think in terms of best available information.

There are too few incentives at the University of Wisconsin for scientists to share information with anyone but other scientists. For example, outreach activities are grant-funded, and even the best are not sustained after a given grant expires and departments place varying degrees of emphasis on outreach work as a part of their tenure granting processes. Internal information systems do not effectively connect efforts related to fulfilling the Wisconsin Idea.

The University's science outreach programs are relatively invisible to the broader community, and difficult for potential partners to find. The UW Office of Science Outreach aims to be a focal information point for the UW's many science outreach programs. While they have a mandate to create some kind of publicly accessible database of same, there is at present no timeline for development and implementation. The Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery aim to enhance public access to and understanding of contemporary science, but the degree to which they will penetrate beyond the academic community remains to be seen.

The Madison Metropolitan School District should mandate a more rigorous course of science requirements and curriculum and continue its instructional shift toward engaging students in applied research. This curriculum should include sequential horticulture and sustainability instruction, encourage integration of horticulture into other school subjects, support the extension of school garden maintenance into the summers, and create works that show the impact of many small items and actions when combined into larger whole. Private elementary and secondary schools should take similar steps.

Educators need to work to connect students to plants, sun, and air. Educators need to forget about institutional and instructional traditions and constraints and see one another simply as people.

Madison's nonprofit science education and advocacy organizations are beginning to understand and act on the importance of reaching beyond their traditional audiences, penetrating into neighborhoods and populations previously unserved. Some of these organizations are more skilled at reaching out than others. It is critically important that efforts to reach a more diverse community continue. Science outreach programming in general needs to grow.

The City of Madison could assist in this effort by providing ongoing consultative support to horticultural programs at neighborhood centers and nonprofit organizations, supporting grant-writing for science education outreach work, and expanding the sustainability programs for families and children at Olbrich Gardens and the Vilas Zoo.

Science and technology firms should advance science education by training in-house scientists to reach out to the community, by funding worthy science education projects, by contributing volunteers to nonprofit organizations that advance scientific understanding, and by encouraging employee participation on the boards of directors of local nonprofits advancing science, technology, and mathematical education.

### 5. History Education

Local historical literacy is generally weak, but recently good texts telling the story of Madison's past have become more numerous and more widely available. Instruction in Madison's schools is slowly beginning to do a better job of connecting the past to contemporary decisions and experiences. Instruction in Madison's public schools is particularly weak in its ability to connect students to prehistoric local experience.

A recent partnership between the Madison Metropolitan School District's Social Studies Department and the Madison Children's Museum models the impact of engaging students in applied historical research.

## G. Cultural Investment

Madison is a generous community, giving willingly and often of its time and talent and its chattel and wealth. But in order to sustain a community in which creative ideas are nurtured, celebrated, evaluated, and harnessed to advance civic wellness, methods of making investments in arts and cultural institutions must be coherent, focused, and effective.

Locally, the primary source of private giving are individuals and private foundations; corporate giving is low. The diffuse nature of funders to arts and culture is reflected in Madison Community Foundation's structure where they have nearly 1,000 separate funds.

Madison has been lucky to be better insulated against the current struggling economy than many other communities. It is comparably easy to gain cooperation and capital in Madison, especially around children. By comparison, securing gifts to support operating expenses is very difficult. Donors support what they love and key tenets in Madison include egalitarianism, progressivism, and compassion for everyman.

The Great Performances Fund, which endows the operations of resident companies at the Overture Center is Madison's most aggressive attempt to create a collaborative funding mechanism to date. And, the recent capital campaign for the Madison Children's Museum has set a new standard for engagement with a younger membership, donor base, and board.



Madison has only two highly successful, tested examples of public/private funding structures in the arts and cultural arena: Monona Terrace and the Alliant Energy Center. The community needs to increase its understanding of how such partnerships can be effectively structured.

The City of Madison has a reputation for being difficult. Some nonprofits stay away from the City as a funding partner because they anticipate inflexibility. City arts grants are too labor intensive for their value; both grant preparation and evaluation requirements are out of scale with awards.

## H. Philanthropy, Grant Making, and Fund Development

Nonprofits tend to use fairly traditional approaches to fund development: galas, golf outings, annual fund drives, membership structures and planned giving. Some social media efforts are utilized but generally local organizations only do membership renewals online and seldom other forms of contributions. Many of Madison's cultural institutions' boards seem to be dominated by an old money circle. That may explain why new technology firms are not well represented on them.

Sadly, cooperation among nonprofits in fund development is rare. There is a zero sum game mentality afoot and little recognition that giving donors more choices leads to more overall giving. Even UW departments guard their donors jealously. Madison needs mechanisms to eliminate the dominant competitive culture and support the emerge of collaborative approaches. This change may need to be donor driven.

University of Wisconsin Foundation has been very helpful to local nonprofit groups. They have contributed to a helpful sense of philanthropy in community. They do workshops for community organizations and leaders. On the other hand, the Foundation's attractive salary scale has been a problem among less well-heeled local nonprofits whose most skilled development staff are often poached by the Foundation.

Special events are becoming less frequent forms of fund raising as the cost versus net proceeds ratio shifts. Galas and black tie events are disappearing and being replaced by golf outings and the like. Organizations report increasing difficulty in finding volunteers to chair and support these events.

### *1. Public Role in Investment*

In Madison, government grant dollars are low by comparison to other, similar communities. Comparably few federal dollars reach local groups. The state is a contributor but, consistent with its very small budget by national standards, not a big one. The city and county both make grants to the arts and history, but these programs are not toggled to any larger vision or strategy.

The city supports an excellent public library system, perhaps its most successful investment in arts and culture. It also supports the Overture Center, certain festivals and fairs, makes extremely small project grants to artists and arts and cultural institutions, and conducts a very modest public art program.

The county leadership has a general sense of the importance of attention to quality of life, and understands that the arts and culture are a part of that equation, but the drill down to resource allocation issues is missing.

## *2. Corporate Role in Investment*

In Madison, corporate giving is centered around a 'usual suspects' list. The corporate community is changing and is short on major companies to add to that list. Second tier corporate givers tend to be more interested in proposals with direct link to business goals and marketing objectives. Locally, \$10,000 is a large corporate gift and half that amount is the norm if given in cash. There are many in-kind sponsorships of significant value, and are generally easier to secure than cash donations. Partnerships between corporate donors and nonprofits can be fragile and highly personalized; often, when a particular CEO leaves, the partnership is lost.

## *3. Needed Changes in Cultural Investment*

An education effort is needed to encourage donors to the arts and culture to see their gifts as investments in something of real value. And, that value should be framed to both donors and the public in the legitimacy of art for art's sake rather than always providing secondary justifications.

The community should create intentional systems to support the identification and training of an expanded pool of arts and cultural board members and donors. Young donors and people of color in particular should be cultivated. These people should be welcomed into a larger public agenda for arts and cultural development.

Funders need to become willing to support more development staff positions at fair compensation levels in local nonprofits. When stretched too thin, collaboration suffers.

Both the city and the county should ramp up financial support for investment in arts and culture. At present, there is a tremendous imbalance between expectation, opportunity, and resources. Both the city and the county should become more strategic in making cultural investments.

City and county grant making systems require revision. While project support, their current mainstay, is appreciated the absence of local dollars for operating support suggests that some of their resources should be made available to sustain the ongoing operations of local nonprofits.

In addition, the city and county should consider joining the Wisconsin Arts Board in establishing two-year grants rather than the current annual approach to application, review, and support. This could reduce both administrative burdens at those agencies and the opportunity costs for applicants, which are currently too high. Grant amounts should be reviewed to insure their significance in light of the organizational scale they intend to support.

Paperwork for applicants, a significant opportunity cost, should be reduced and simplified. Over reliance on quantifiable data, at the cost of qualitative data, should be reduced in grant making systems.

Funders should support nonprofit organizations in their efforts to secure and learn to use effective hardware and software in support of fund development and fiscal management.

To drive improved earned income, local nonprofit organizations should be encouraged to experiment with changed hours of operation and changed scheduling of performances and events to accommodate changing lifestyles. Additionally, funders should support efforts to promote low income individuals to the middle class as a way of increasing local arts and cultural patronage. Programs supporting the fiscal security of artists and creative workers, including the development of programs providing affordable health insurance and advancing marketing/sales/paid work should be supported as well.

Local resolution should be sought between nonprofits offering free programs and those that charge admission or tuitions, to stem tensions and forge agreements around purpose, market segments, and mutual benefits. Donors should support free programs that create access to otherwise excluded individuals or develop new audiences.

Funders should increase the amount of money available to support arts programs, in particular music programs and the emerging music scene in Madison.