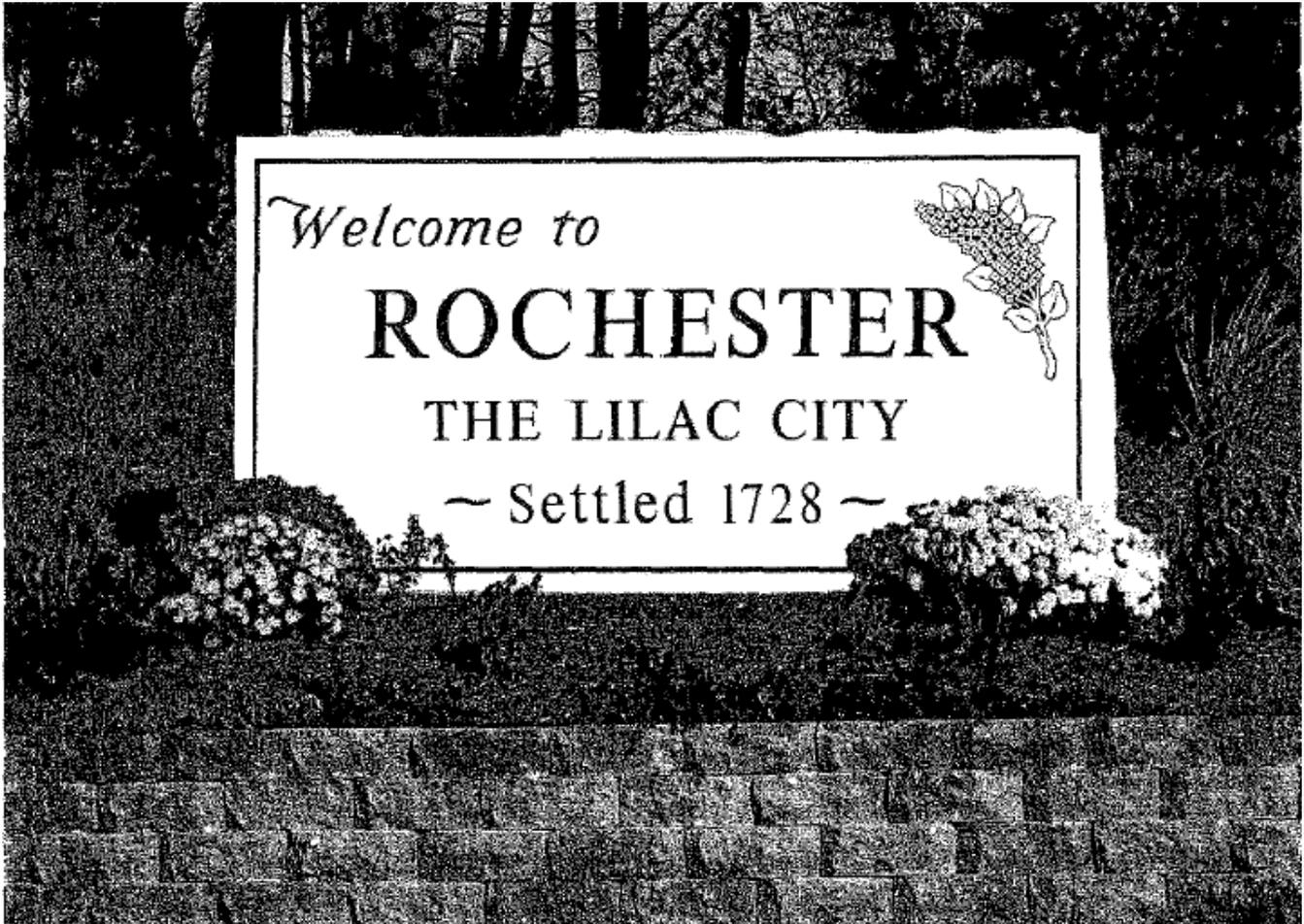


COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION AND THE ARTS; A Cultural Plan for Rochester, New Hampshire

Honoring Yesterday, Envisioning Tomorrow;
Celebrating Arts and Culture in Rochester



Culture is the process by which a person becomes all that they were created capable of being.
Thomas Carlyle

A Product of Arts Rochester, Inc., and Rochester's Cultural Plan Advisory Committee

Funding provided by The National Endowment of the Arts and The New Hampshire State
Council on the Arts

Completed by the Committee - January 2006
Endorsed by the Rochester City Council - September 7, 2010
Adopted by the City of Rochester Planning Board - October 4, 2010

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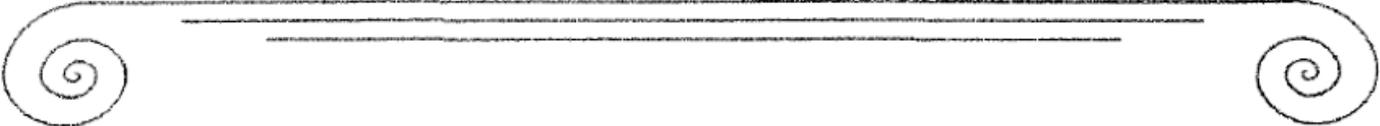
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The seal of the City of Rochester depicts scenes from the City's proud agricultural and industrial heritage.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rochester's Cultural Plan Advisory Committee formed in January of 2005 to create a plan to support and develop Rochester's heritage, culture, and arts. The committee, made up of a broad cross section of artists, business owners, City Councilors, consultants, and other community leaders is the latest stage of a process started by a grant written and supervised by Arts Rochester and funded by The National Endowment of the Arts and The New Hampshire State Council on the Arts. Now in it's third year, the process has also included gathering information from eight focus groups and an on-line survey. The Cultural Plan Advisory Committee has organized the data from the focus groups and survey into a coherent and comprehensive plan to be included in the City's master plan. Below are the goals by which the committee proposes to foster growth in the arts and celebrate Rochester's culture and heritage.

Heritage

Highlight our unique heritage to inspire a sense of place and pride in the City of Rochester.

Potential

Identify, strengthen, promote and broadcast Rochester's cultural assets, infrastructure, and artistic treasures.

Community

Facilitate community involvement in the arts.

Commerce

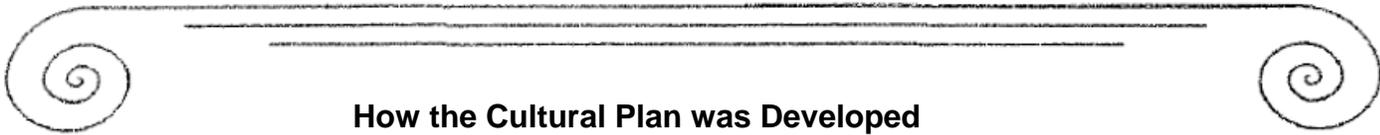
Recognize the economic power of the arts and culture in Rochester.

Image

Invigorate Rochester with an emphasis on the City's unique blend of old-fashioned charm and progressive vision.

Leadership

Create a commission of Arts and Culture to act on the City's behalf on arts and cultural matters.



How the Cultural Plan was Developed

Writing the Grant

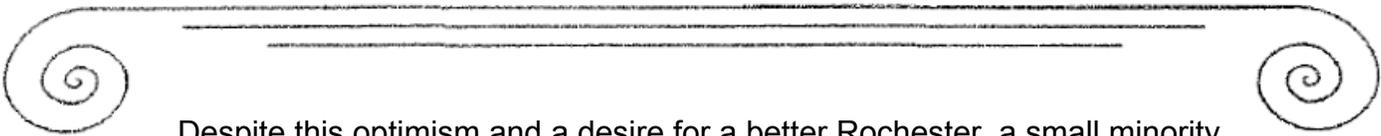
In 2003, Kate Kirkwood, then director of Arts Rochester, wrote a grant to develop a cultural arts plan for the City of Rochester. The grant, funded by The National Endowment of the Arts and the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts, was approved. To gather information, the next director of Arts Rochester, Jane Forde, and the Executive Producer of the Rochester Opera House, Matt Gianino, developed an on-line survey, which received responses from 258 people. Next, Jane Forde conducted eight focus groups in various sites in Rochester and attended by a cross section of citizens including artists, business people, et al.

Gathering Information

The process invited the community to articulate its experiences, perceptions, delights, frustrations, and dreams regarding the artistic and cultural opportunities in Rochester. Community members answered a number of demographic questions related to impressions of, involvement in, and satisfaction with the arts and culture in Rochester. They also dealt with questions relating arts and culture to the overall quality of life on both a societal and individual level, economic development, and education. They were then given the opportunity to answer such open ended questions as "When you think of arts, culture, and heritage in Rochester, what comes to mind?" and to offer suggestions and comments.

From the focus group discussions and the review of corresponding survey results, a common theme emerged: Rochester is the Lilac City with a proud Franco-American history of "dairy farms and woolen mills" and big dreams for its future. Community members express grand visions for the Rochester of tomorrow, seeing the City as an eventual host of such diverse events as international and independent film festivals and bluegrass concerts. They imagine a community whose by-ways are enlivened by public art installations, whose downtown is invigorated by quaint boutiques and eateries, and whose natural resources are enhanced by a pastoral river-walk.

But despite its rich past and the enthusiastic images of its future, Rochester is perceived by participants to have stalled. They readily acknowledge that the City has huge potential and character as they cite the City's many treasures, both old and new, including: The Rochester Opera House, artstream, French heritage, Arts Rochester, Inc., The Rochester Public Library, The Rochester Historical Society, The Rochester Fair, and The Common.



Despite this optimism and a desire for a better Rochester, a small minority of participants believes that outsiders view Rochester in a negative light. These nay-sayers help to identify the problems and can be seen as making constructive contributions. Although the participants were candid about Rochester's arts-and-culture-challenges including the aforementioned negative perceptions, funding problems, zoning issues, dissemination of information, and the availability, diversity, and quality of programming, the mood that emerges from the data is one of shining optimism: Rochester residents deeply value the arts, they are encouraged by the small artistic and cultural changes they have begun to witness, and they want more.

The Cultural Plan Advisory Committee's Role

In January 2005, Rochester's Cultural Plan Advisory Committee was formed with the goal of taking the survey and focus group information and developing an exciting and feasible cultural plan to be incorporated into the City's master plan. This committee is a group of men and women affiliated with business, art, culture, community service and education in the greater Rochester area.

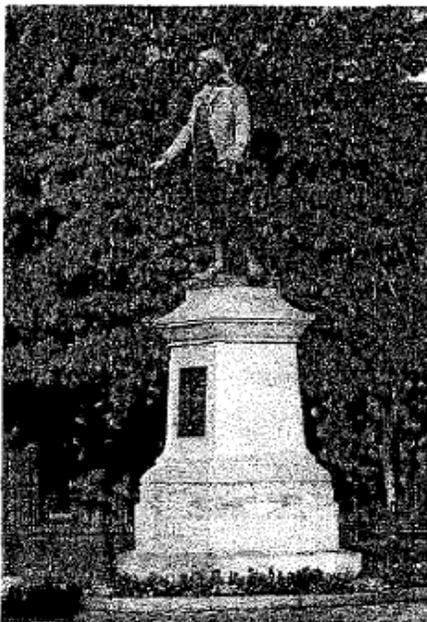
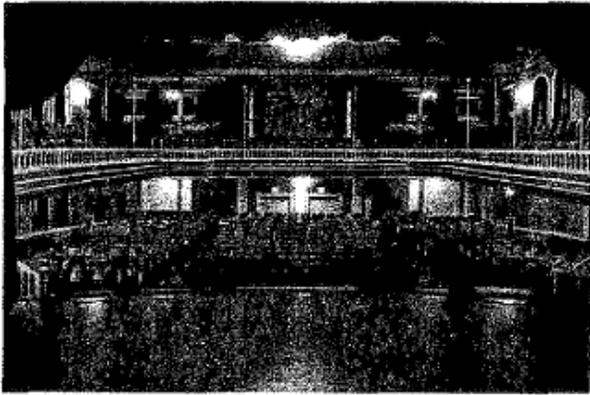
The advisory committee identified the major themes of the discussions and written survey responses and articulated goals and objectives, which both celebrate and promote the arts and culture of Rochester's past, present, and future. The committee has worked diligently to assess the strengths and needs of Rochester in the area of arts, culture, and heritage in the City.

The members of this committee are committed to embracing and expanding culture in all its forms, to the principle that improved access to and greater involvement in the arts will lead to a better quality of life for Rochester residents, and to the idea that the promotion of the arts will lead Downtown Rochester into a dynamic future of cultural, aesthetic, and economic revitalization.

The Cultural Plan Advisory Committee developed the enclosed plan with six major goals, drawn from the information gathered through the public survey and focus groups. The committee then placed this document in its final form in the hands of Christine-Hounsell, the current director of Arts Rochester, for submission to the granting authorities. The committee plans to submit the final document to the City for inclusion in the master plan process and to garner the City's support. The committee acknowledges that there will be challenges and difficulties in implementing this plan. As with any cultural plan, this should be considered a working document to be updated and modified as existing goals are met and new goals are identified.

What is Culture?

Culture while including painting, sculpture, classical music, theater and dance, also encompasses natural history and science. It further includes cultural expressions like folk music, jazz, gospel, crafts, and folk art. In addition, the historical sites within Rochester from landmark areas such as the Rochester Common to cemeteries comprise part of its cultural richness. Also included in the definition of the word culture would be the traditions and events of the area, including The Rochester Fair, professional wrestling, and Shakespearean performances. All of these forms of expression are vital ways of identifying Rochester's citizens as individuals, and as a community. They embrace the past and lead to a strong future.





A Short History of Rochester

Context

Before enumerating the specifics, the committee chose to include selected historical information about Rochester's heritage, culture, and the arts to put this plan into context. With a familiarity of the City's history and identity, the reader will see that the plan is a natural next step in the development of Rochester and its culture and heritage.

This plan, as set forth by the Rochester Cultural Plan Advisory Committee, is an important step in the future development of arts and culture in Rochester. It is based upon the needs of this community and is the beginning of a strategic process that will, if followed, enable Rochester to reach its cultural potential. This plan should serve as a cultural road map as the City travels toward a shared vision of a strong community, dedicated to promoting the arts.

Rochester's History

Rochester, originally called Norway Plains, was settled in 1728 and was named for the Earl of Rochester (Lawrence Hyde) who was the brother-in-law of King James II. With three rivers, Rochester was the perfect place for farming and future industrial growth. In the 1800's, the establishment of mills for wool and shoe factories along the river made Rochester a major industrial center. Rochester became incorporated as a City in 1891 and had, at one point, four railroads running through the town.

In the first half of the 1900's, Rochester had two pronounced ethnic populations of Irish and French Canadian Americans. "Irish Town" was located by the Common and Charles St, and "French Town" was located by the fairgrounds and Lafayette Street. The result of the competition between these two groups is still evident today in the lack of a bridge between Gagne Street and Myrtle Street (next to Charles Street), spanning the Cocheco River.

Agriculture in Rochester and most of New England has diminished with the advent of refrigeration and efficient shipping of produce that can be more easily grown in the Midwest. However, there are still a number of dairy farms in Rochester and The Rochester Fair still has a strong agrarian component.

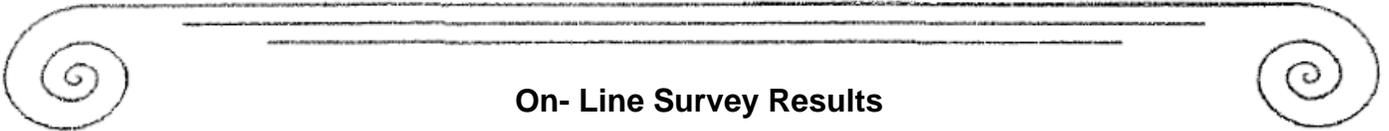


Even into the 1970's and 80's, Rochester's citizens, both French and Irish, worked in the many mills. By the 1980's and 90's, many of the mills were closed. Al-Gor was razed to make room for Wal-Greens, and the Wyandotte Mills, for example, were renovated to make elderly housing.

Today, manufacturing is still a strong component of Rochester's economy, as the 1990's Rochester Times series attested. Rochester's identity used to be clearer as that of a mill town. Nowadays, that's just not so. Today, Rochester's manufacturing is comprised of smaller businesses, but many Rochester residents commute south to work. Rochester, more urban than rural, struggles to define itself, develop its culture, and keep it's heritage. The history of the Rochester Opera House illustrates this struggle. The City hall, with the Opera House on its second floor, was built in 1908. After the Opera House closed in 1974, the community worked to renovate and reopen it in the 1990's, and recently successfully fought for a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system.

Perhaps one reason for the concern over municipal spending has been the dearth of philanthropy in the past several decades. In the first half of the 1900's, the Spaulding family, for instance, were great benefactors of Rochester and the area, giving money to build the Spaulding High School. Until recently, there have been few major philanthropists or philanthropic movements to continue their work. Since the renovation of the Opera House and the generosity of the Champlin Family, Rochester has seen the beginning of a resurgence in community giving.

Known as the Lilac City, Rochester has experienced meaningful and substantial growth in the past few years, and this growth is expected to continue. With this growth and with the change in the economy has come recognition of our need to expand upon the cultural offerings in our community with a view to promoting tourism and recreation as means of strengthening the City's economic condition. Having a wonderful foundation with places such as the Rochester Opera House, the Rochester Historical Society, the Commons, the annual Rochester Fair, and Lilac Festival, Rochester needs to continue to adapt to population and economic changes in the area.



On- Line Survey Results

Who participated?

56% of respondents native or living in Rochester 10 or more years

85% 30 or older

95% believe arts, culture, heritage are important to cities' quality of life

78% paying audience members

What they think:

91% believe arts, culture, heritage programs are important to Rochester's economic development

66% are satisfied that Rochester provides sufficient opportunities for participation in amateur performing arts

51% cite admission prices as barriers for attending arts, culture, and heritage programs

58% dissatisfied with Rochester's offerings of art or heritage programs

50/50 split on satisfaction with info on opportunities

95% travel outside of Rochester to attend cultural activities and would attend them locally if available

77% think Rochester needs a permanent outdoor performing arts facility

93% concerned about preserving historical sites and structures

1% thinks Rochester is struggling financially and is without arts and culture

Constituencies

Artists and supporters want:

A central site for information, more venues to display art, artists' studios, writers' workshops, foreign films, summer musicals, a cleaned up river walk, an outdoor theater, classical music, live bands, a revitalized downtown, free activities, bigger audiences for choral performances, reduced family rates, dance schools to use the Rochester Opera House (ROH) for their concerts, Renaissance Faire, better advertising of arts events, a centralized billboard, direct mail and website information about arts events, to use the Rochester Fair grounds for vintage car shows, embrace artists who move here, subsidize the dance schools, convince the public to support the arts, events for people under 40, more live performances from NH roster artists, more locally produced plays at the ROH.

Skeptics want:

To provide jobs first, fix infrastructure first, not spend tax money on the arts

Commercially-minded want:

To add coffee shops and boutiques downtown, decent chain restaurants, jobs first, more attractive downtown, quality downtown restaurants, and to leave the elderly in Wyandotte within walking distance of downtown

Heritage people want:

To preserve historic sites and renovate historic buildings

Focus Group Results

Focus groups were led by Jane Forde in eight venues throughout Rochester; she presented questions to the participants, who represented a variety of groups and interests in the city. See the appendices for a list of venues, participants, and notes.

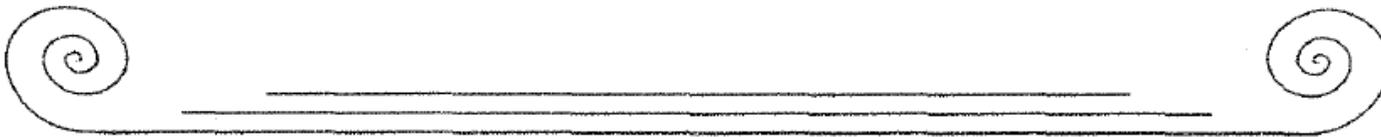
The focus group participants discussed these questions and more: "What are the main artistic, cultural organizations, groups, and events in Rochester?" "Related to your cultural interests, what did you have to go out of Rochester to attend?" and "How could the arts be supported or funded in Rochester?"

In addition to the comments mentioned elsewhere in this document, the focus group participants were frustrated by a lack of information about what is offered in Rochester. They mentioned a wide variety of cultural opportunities available, but characterize them as basic, a good start with more needed.





Goals And Objectives

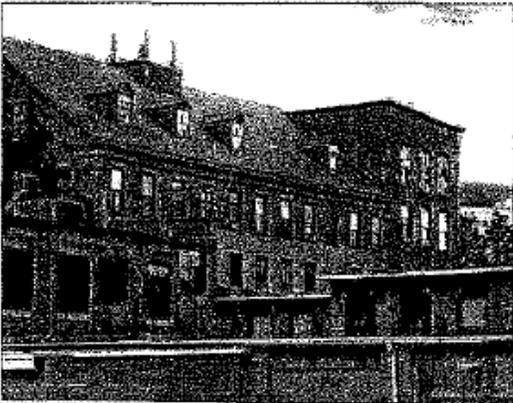


HERITAGE

Rochester's citizens are proud of their heritage and want to preserve the few examples of significant architecture that remain intact and well preserved, hence the appreciation for the renovations of The Gonic Mill and Wyandotte Mill. They bemoan the loss of historic buildings, especially on Main Street. The ethnic groups of the French and Irish are also important elements to Rochester's heritage, as is The Rochester Fair in its 130th season and The Rochester Opera House, almost 100 years old.

Highlight our unique Heritage to inspire a sense of place and pride in the City of Rochester

- Promote the history and heritage of Rochester to develop an understanding of our history, character, arts and culture with a view toward tourism.
- Develop programs that link the arts and history.
- Create public art displays that promote the history of Rochester.
- Develop events and celebrations that honor cultural diversity.
- Preserve and protect Rochester's historic buildings.
- Develop a walking tour of Rochester based on the "Jewels of Rochester" series in The Rochester Times.



POTENTIAL

Everyone agrees that Rochester has something to offer and room to grow. From Roger Allen Park and the Common to The Lilac Family Fun Festival and the Spaulding High School Band, Rochester has its success stories. Conversely, Rochester could use more support for the arts and preservation of its cultural heritage.

Identify, strengthen, promote and broadcast Rochester's cultural assets, infrastructure, and artistic treasures.

- Establish non-performing artists' space for working/living/exhibition.
- Develop a network of resources for the city.
- Identify elements of the culture of Rochester:
 - Visual and performing arts programs
 - Artists and audiences
 - Arts education programs
 - Libraries
 - Ethnic group activities
 - Heritage and history
 - Festivals and community celebrations
- Develop a strategy to encourage the participation of the full spectrum of Rochester residents in arts and cultural events.
- Create a database which will list all arts and cultural programs and opportunities from shows, to church performing choirs, cemeteries to landmarks. Include all performance venues, audition notices, art shows, etc.
- Use the existing venues in new and unique ways to attract larger audiences.
- Support and promote opportunities for film series, festivals.





COMMUNITY

To develop a sense of community, Rochester must connect people of diverse tastes and address accessibility. Art can be used as a bridge to understanding others and expand one's perspective. Art and culture must be broadly defined to include art shows and demolition derbies; the Christmas Parade and Strafford County Wind Symphony; and The Granite State Choral Society and preserving community buildings.

Facilitate community involvement in the arts.

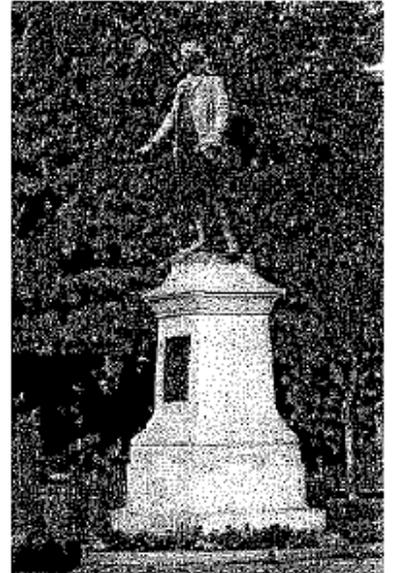
- Through clear and accessible information, attract the public to affordable, diverse, and high quality artistic and cultural programming.
- Build the downtown's image as a destination for culture.
- Develop relationships between local businesses and the arts community.
- Strengthen and promote Rochester's creative economy as an important, recognized, and viable economic sector.
- Expand the arts and arts education to reach people of all ages, socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds in school and community settings.
- Improve the use of existing media to publicize events (e.g. PSA's or "commercials" or "infomercials" on the Rochester Government Channel to traditional broadcast outlets, use of WEVO arts calendar, use of Department of Resources and Economic Development lists of events, etc.)
- Focus on active and on-going linkage to non-traditional "culture" venues (e.g. Rochester Fair, VFW, American Legion, Grange, churches, fraternal Organizations, etc.) to broaden customer/audience base.
- Involve elementary school students in cultural events.
- Display art and develop arts programming on public lands, such as traffic Islands, The Common and Columbus Avenue.
- Create an opportunity for existing arts/ cultural groups to come together for collaboration and cooperation.
- Collaborate with other interested Rochester groups to increase support of the Rochester Opera House.
- Support and collaborate with the Rochester Fair Association.
- Create and manage a central website with a calendar of arts and cultural events and opportunities

COMMERCE

Arts and culture are an under-recognized piece of community development and business. Studies show that the arts by themselves comprise a major slice of the economic pie in New Hampshire. The boon increases when combining the arts with other businesses. Most people, for instance, want to eat at a restaurant before attending the local-musical.

Recognize the economic power of the arts and culture in Rochester.

- Stimulate community and economic development through the arts.
- Collaborate with other interested groups to expand the downtown, East Rochester, and Gonic commercial districts.
- Integrate the cultural plan with the local economic development plans.
- Build relationships between local businesses and the arts-and cultural community.
- Attract more patrons to the downtown and greater-Rochester area.



IMAGE

Rochester has struggled with its image, but the currently prevailing and growing mood is positive. Rochester is excited about its new businesses and the planned river-walk. Steeped in its cultural heritage, Rochester would like its citizens to engender a sense of place and pride in the city, the Lilac City, home to three rivers, and located at the heart of Strafford County.

Invigorate Rochester with an emphasis on the City's unique blend of old-fashioned charm and progressive vision.

- Promote the City as a revitalized cultural, recreational, and commercial destination.
- Improve marketing and communication with a goal of making Rochester an arts destination.
- Develop a marketing strategy using all media to promote the arts and cultural activities in Rochester.
- Help create the river-walk area for increased cultural activities.
- Develop more green space, which would include an outdoor performance space.
- Create a theme that is used continuously in many different venues.
- Create a unique festival event that will attract attention because of the substance as well as its unusualness (e.g. clown festival, clogging festival, ice-carving festival, or blueberry festival).
- Create an environment that increases the number of entertainment opportunities.
- Collaborate with city government, the Rochester Chamber of Commerce, and Community Organization for Rochester Enhancement (CORE) to develop an information booth.
- Create materials to shape the image of Rochester.





LEADERSHIP

With the support and investment of the City Council and the citizens of Rochester, this plan will inspire cultural and economic growth, and a feeling of pride in the city and its direction. This will be impossible without designated leadership to direct a variety of groups to implement the plan.

Create a commission of Arts and Culture to act on the City's behalf on arts and cultural matters.

- Create a cultural directory.
- Establish a City Council-sanctioned arts and culture commission, representing various constituencies, to promote cultural events and to oversee the implementation and development of the goals as outlined.
- Create an arts and culture welcome packet for newcomers to Rochester.
- Work to improve parking to draw in more people for theater and restaurants.
- Create a downtown artist districts. .
- Include this cultural plan as a chapter in Rochester's master plan.
- Support the continued development and expansion of the Rochester Opera House.
- Develop strategies and a time line to encourage the growth of cultural opportunities not currently available in Rochester.
- Establish forums to continue the public dialogue about the potential of community arts and cultural activities.
- Use the Commission of Arts and Culture as an umbrella organization for the various educational, commercial, recreational, and social arts-and-cultural .agencies.



CREDITS

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Arts Rochester, Inc.
The National Endowment of the Arts
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Focus Group Host Organizations

artstream, The Busy Bean Internet Cafe, the Methodist Church, Rochester Historical Society, Rochester Opera House, Rochester Public Library, St. Elizabeth Seton School, and the Veteran's Association

Focus Group Participants

Rick Agran, Sally Allen, Joshua Belanger, Kitty Beller-McKenna, Al Benton, Marilyn Berry, Suzanne Booton, Cat Bousquin, Marty Brennan, Chris Cartier, Richard Cartier, Judith Cassell, Claude Caswell, Florence Chasse, Kate Clarke, Dean Clegg, Jane Cooper-Fall, Kathy DesRoches, Anthony Ejarque, Steve Eliscu, Salvatore Farina, Martha Fowler, Pat Frisella, John Fuchs, Gayle Gary, Matt Gianino, Monica Haley, Sylvia Hooper, Adrienne Hounsell, Mandy Johnson, Rose Julian-Therault, Janice Kazlauskas, Gordon Lang, Elaine Lauterborn, Marie Lejeune, Kevin Lindsay, Celia Macuiolu, David A. Miller, David P. Miller, Mary-Jo Monusky, Kenn Ortmann, Peggy Parker, Bonnie Patt, David Pearson, Gail Pearson, Alan Reed-Erickson, Laura Ring, Jeremy Robinson, Diane St. Jean, Ron St. Jean, Norman Sanborn Sr., Linda Sargent, Anne Smith, Edna Smith, Lisa Stanley, Kathy Sweeney, Peggy Trout, Jim Verschueren, Josh Wiggin, Jennifer White, and Grace Youngren

Sources:

The Portsmouth Cultural Plan
The Northern New Hampshire Cultural Plan

Tally of Rochester Cultural survey Question #3
Survey Question #3 asked, "When you think of arts, culture and heritage in Rochester, what comes first to mind?"

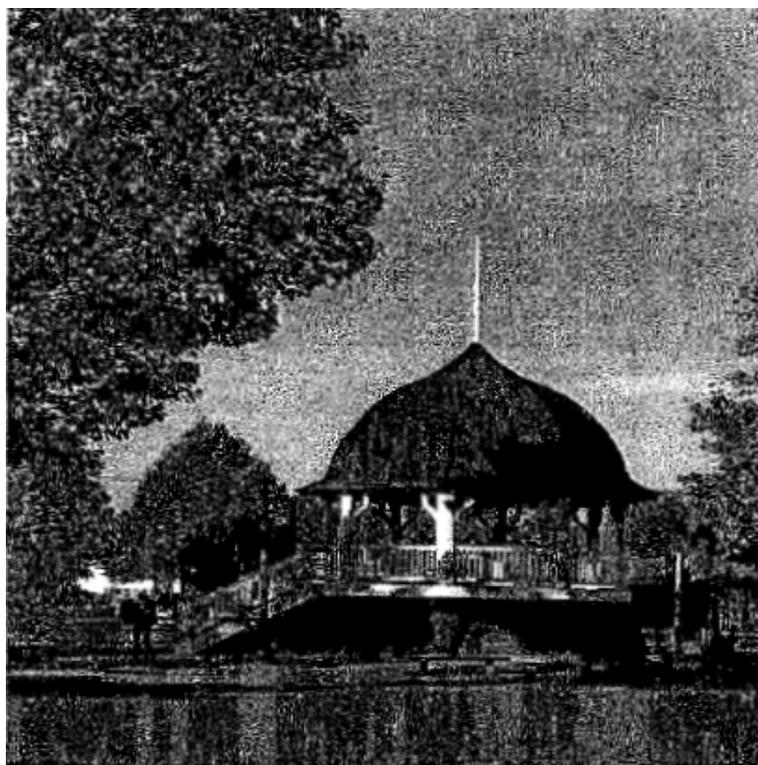
Answer Given Multiple Responses	Number of Times Mentioned	Extending Quotes
Rochester Opera House	123	musicals I saw there as a child
lack of, not much, nothing	20	desperately needing, paucity of offerings, Rochester has art?, abyss, Rochester is in need of a more active arts community, wish Rochester had more cultural events for me and my family
artstream	14	
French heritage, French town, French	8	
Arts Rochester	6	
Rochester Public Library	6	
plays, theater	6	especially for the young
music	5	
Rochester Historical Society	5	
improving	4	just waking up
Rochester Fair	4	
factory heritage, mills	4	old mill town
Dance	4	
concerts on the commons	3	
little	2	
long history	2	
children's dance groups	2	
fine art	2	
not familiar with Rochester's offerings	2	
Negative		
a few artists trying to motivate and inspire a close-minded society	1	
slowly growing but not appreciated	1	
slow	1	

Question 1: What is Rochester known for and/or what would you like to see Rochester known for in the arts and culture?

artstream	Opera House	Busy Bean Cafe	Historical Society
<p>Opera House artstream Library Rochester Fair- allows many people to see art who have never seen it before Spaulding High School- music dept. very active Blue collar city Affordable to live in Viewed from the outside as a depressed mill town Not a destination point Not a city center - there used to be In the past was known as an up and coming city Used to be a premiere city over Dover and Portsmouth 1950 - beautiful vitalized Rochester died Rochester politics aren't conducive to the arts Downtown held back from landlords and revitalizing Use of the empty Buildings More art galleries, art walk Bookstore, combo coffee shop More public art in form of sculpture - community center is dismal Shops/boutiques- to be able to roam the streets, spend all day, gathering center Sense of community for all ages needed a lot of work Consensus from everyone that Rochester has potential and is ready for some real changes.</p>	<p>Rochester Fair Want to be known for the arts Opera House to be focal of town Community involvement People should live in Rochester "Tough Town" Troubled youths in Rochester There are things for the youth to do "Empty downtown" Frisbie Memorial Governors Inn Beautiful River Unfriendly to business Bad Reputation River Walk as focal point Bad politics need to change There are a number of artists living in the area Absentee landlords Working class community Lilac city of NH The history Mills River Railroads Architecture Historical Society High School Rochester is "stalling" when compared to Dover and Portsmouth Town lacks vision Commons- with not much use Known for the biggest waste management facility (outsiders)</p>	<p>-Fair -artstream -Arts Rochester -Blue-collar -Governor's Inn -Lilac City -High School Band -Mill Town -The Commons -Sports Park - Roger Allen -Walk for families -"bedroom" community -rough police -bad image -cars Like it to be known for or have: -Theater destination -children's museum -diversity of performing arts -music hall films -Social dance -festivals on the river -outdoor amphitheater -river walk -rock/night club</p>	<p>artstream Fair Commons Concert High School band/chorus/music dept. Historical Society St Elizabeth Seton has French/Irish events Dance studios Strafford Wind Symphony Granite State Choral Society Christmas Parade Night before the 4th Nice spaces- Grange, Odd Fellows, E. Rochester Firehouse French culture tradition Mills - woolen 30,000 population but act like a small town Need: Boost in what is presented such as plays and drama Have a good library Opera House an asset - needs more use - bands, plays, and cheaper to rent for local groups and non-profits</p>

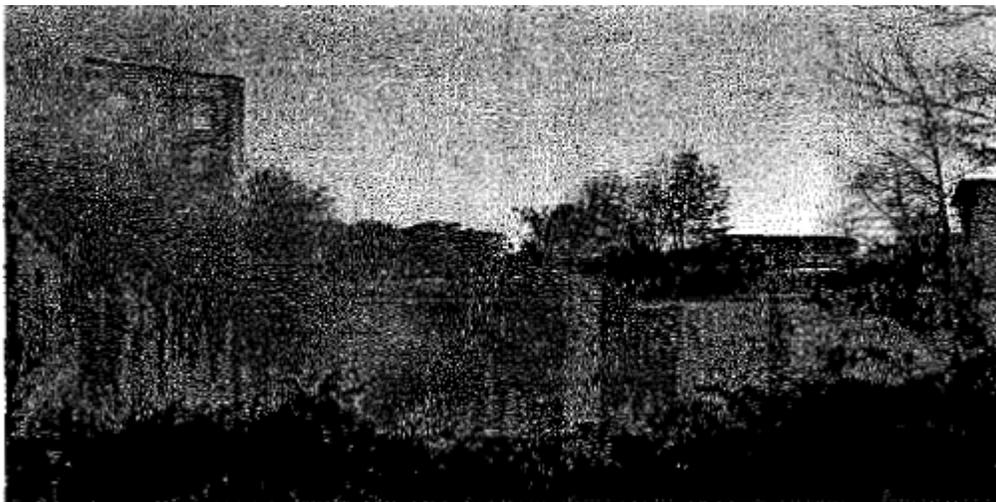
Question 4: Do you think arts and culture add to the quality of life? In what way do they add to your/your family's quality of life?

artstream	Opera House	Busy Bean Cafe	Historical Society
<p>YES (Consensus, seemed like an obvious answer to all) Arts has a responsibility to reflect times Arts are often considered to be a frill, entertainment, decoration, People may be intimidated by the arts and what they don't know, brought on by society, feel uncomfortable, they may think you have to pay when entering a gallery which prevents them from coming in Many kids have never seen and arts museum - have not been exposed to arts Children in arts feel a sense of belonging Children's exhibit- gets much praise ~ parents want to see what their child has done Children are getting involved artstream Getting involved in instruments (have to go outside of Rochester to take specialized study lessons School band</p>		<p>Businesses follow art creates revenue intellectually stimulating relaxing attracts visitors children: building skills life long learning social interaction helps community get a sense of who they are impacts on lives group "energy" release</p>	<p>Connection to heritage Interesting to know what Rochester's current heritage is. Involved because we love Rochester</p>



Additional ideas, suggestions, dreams, visions

artstream	Opera House	Busy Bean Cafe	Historical Society
<p>*** A lot of negative perceptions of the city as a whole, but Rochester has been up and coming. ..Rochester is ready***</p> <p><u>Personal Observations:</u> Many had personal stories about what Rochester was once like. Many agree that there is a negative perception of the city from outsiders which angered a few residents. Rochester lacks a wide sense of community. Some residents stuck up for Rochester while others agree Rochester needs a lot of work. The consensus from everyone was that Rochester has potential and is ready for some changes.</p>	<p>ISSUES: Downtown is not pedestrian friendly Lacking sidewalks River walk has potential There is nothing to see down town Chamber of Commerce need to become involved and be a starting point for the arts We need help from big businesses Fairgrounds is only used two times a year w land is great for other things that aren't being done Strengthen relationships between culture and businesses NO COMMON VOICE Focus on town is sports which the city funds but not arts Target families Parking issues and concerns We could use a decent stage</p> <p>SOLUTIONS: All it takes is a coffee shop babysitters are needed so parents can go out Babysitting service at the venues, so they can bring the kids and enjoy themselves Create a down town Bring artists to town Need transportation, (bus route from Durham to Rochester to bring students from UNH)</p>	<p>Public Art Church: noon-time concerts Center for arts education Artist space Link with the schools: UNH, McIntosh outdoor theater petting zoo walkable community pedestrian friendly mayor involvement Council rule of order: focus on positive as well better image cultural commission better shopping</p>	<p>How do cities that do this successfully organize and keep going? Fairgrounds could be used more, for example: hold an upscale arts and crafts show - could community clubs sponsor this? A shell for outdoor events Lunch concerts Fix cemetery - Franklin St west Economic Planning Working well but need to get non-resident landlords out so we can focus on the vision Shops that will attract Traffic flow needs improvement for access to downtown Parking French cultural tradition start a small French fiddle festival French Food ~ might be some pieces of this already Need someone in charge BACKING from major groups - police, teachers Recapturing shoe shops of the past - shoe shop museum in the Bennet (Old Hubbard Shoes) Garage bands on the Commons Emphasize the "Lilac City" in more ways</p>



Question 1: What is Rochester known for and/or what would you like to see Rochester known for in the arts and culture?

Methodist Church	St Elizabeth Seaton	Veterans Society	Rochester Library
<p>Rochester Fair - Methodist church has provided organ music for the fair Factories (former) renovated Opera House Christmas Parade Spaulding High School marching band - people go to hear the band not just watch the football! Depressed economic community</p> <p><u>Want it known for:</u> Choral Society Strafford Wind Symphony A community that supports the Arts A community that values arts education Organ in Methodist church plus the stenciling and stained glass</p>	<p>Opera House artstream Lilacs Fairgrounds - under used</p> <p><u>Want it known for:</u> outdoor theater/music something different and unique Big, really big festival - bluegrass or French/Canadian Rochester a gateway from both directions - to lakes north and to Seacoast</p>	<p>Opera House Governor's Inn Roger Allen Park Lilacs</p> <p><u>Want it known for:</u> Gateway to the mountains (used to be a sign)</p>	<p>Rochester Fair Two Governor's Frisbie Hospital Opera House Roger Allen Park Rochester Library A place to get around Get to the coast or mountains Volunteer spirit Airshow/airport Through route - not a destination City officials are driving businesses away Reputation as a blue collar town</p> <p><u>Want it known for:</u> Gateway to the mountains and the coast As a beautiful city Vibrant downtown - with boutiques, coffee shops, places to meet and chat, quality shops, arts and amenities Mill conversions - artist space Film series User friendly - encourage new unique businesses Teen drop in art center Highlight our beautiful architecture Community radio station Artist studios and living spaces Gateway City with quality shops and arts amenities</p>



Question 2: What are the main artistic/cultural organizations/groups/events/ in Rochester. Are there any lesser known ones that deserve more recognition and support?

Methodist Church	St Elizabeth Seaton	Veterans Society	Rochester Library
Choral Society Wind Symphony Rochester Rep Theater Co. Arts Rochester Dance Schools artstream and visual arts A children's museum like the traveling museum	Lilac Family Fun Festival Moonlight Madness Dance - studios and performances Talent show needed School programs - music and art shows St. Elizabeth Seton French Night and Irish night - includes food, cooking and performances Busy Bean Poetry Hoots Art Show at Mall Photography in Library	Legion – dances Heritage trust Victory Club - comedy shows, Spring Fling, Dinner dances Sons of Italy - champagne evenings Square dancing clubs Elks have French, Irish and Chinese nights	artstream Arts Rochester Opera House Dance studios/gymnastics Stained glass studios Poet Laureate Busy Bean - poetry readings, movie nights, Story telling for children Frisbee hospital- new meeting space Saving Gagne Farm future recreation

Question 3: Related to your cultural interests, what did you have to go out of Rochester to attend?

Methodist Church	St Elizabeth Seaton	Veterans Society	Rochester Library
Quality arts & crafts shows Classical/orchestral concerts Musical theater Choral music Dance	FILM - art films Symphony World Music Local bands/clubs Cultural cuisine/food Old buildings/mills re-done Books with cafe and used book store Art supply stores Fine crafts/gifts Gourmet coffee Cafe Really good deli		

Question 4: Do you think the arts and culture add to the quality of life? In what way do they add to your/your family's quality of life?

Methodist Church	St Elizabeth Seaton	Veterans Society	Rochester Library
Makes life worth living Inspires the soul- uplifting People in arts more capable, better students Encourages literacy Teaches discipline Community connections Mental/Emotional health Social capital	Takes the place of other negative influences Therapeutic Opens larger view of life Helps identify skills/gifts Generates revenue Families participate together and bond Enhances individual worth with non-competitive element Inclusive not exclusive Higher cognitive skills enhanced	Yes, the arts should be a part of family - culture and heritage Always had music in our lives for dancing and listening The arts are part of our family celebrations	All that's left without it is TV Art makes things beautiful and artists make us think, challenge us Separates us from the animals Creates an environment for children that is not always available in school Part of social, political, and aesthetic education Exercises the imagination Expands the spirit Essential to the health of the body and mind Art stimulates everything

**Question 5: What would encourage you/others to participate more often in arts and culture in Rochester?
What, if anything prevents you from participating?**

Methodist Church	St Elizabeth Seaton	Veterans Society	Rochester Library
<p>Need more opportunities more singing options Cost can prohibit – more financial support would help folks to participate Ability to bring in outside Artists Expensive venues for local performers –ROB Shortages of venues of all Sizes Booking fees for artists prohibitive -no concert ministry, churches don't seem interested in promoting the arts MARKETING Need energetic volunteers that have time Collaboration -a lot of work but worthwhile Cross discipline activities Get kids involved Difficult to get folks to be brave and try something new, both as audience and participants</p>	<p>Advance notice Consistency of an event each Year "Fixed events" Expand notion of what is available in Rochester Childcare for adult geared Events Celebration of our assets Affordable for families Transportation available for late evening</p>	<p>Teaching kids ~ get the kids involved in culture Cost -tickets for plays, etc. need to be more affordable, especially for senior and veterans More big band, Doo Wopp Talent shows Community Showcase</p>	<p>Accessible parking Diverting through traffic Quality and diversity of Programs More than one destination spot - want to see a show and then chat with friends after at a coffee shop or tavern Ability to make a day or night of it Horrible signage puts people off and they can't find amenities Somewhere for kids to hang out, they hang out at the library now More programs for kids Summer reading program Municipal swimming pool (indoor) Rochester needs to rebuild its infrastructure -roads, schools etc. -has caused setbacks in getting other things done, the time is now!</p>

Question 6: How could the arts be supported/funded in Rochester?

Methodist Church	St Elizabeth Seaton	Veterans Society	Rochester Library
<p>Grant writing Foundations Individual Donors Corporate sponsors In-kind-venues, equipment, Personnel Community relations going "both ways" Mending community bridges between organizations and groups Opera House could play a central role Chamber –small organizations working together</p>	<p>Grants –collaborative Solicit from business community to underwrite events City resources made available without fee Better use of the facilities of the airport, fairgrounds, Roger Allen Park Volunteers Specific fund raising</p>		<p>Marketing Grants –NHSCA NH Humanities Council Federal grants Fundraisers Grant writers and 501C 3 organizations to act as fiscal agents City budget Identify arts Administrator –provide salary match Identify patrons, Stakeholders Business support Sponsorships and Partnerships Arts in Education programs Poet Laureate programs Make artists available in public way Popularize cultural Exchanges Spread the Good News of community offerings</p>

