



SAN MARCOS
Arts MASTER
PLAN 2022

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"Greetings from San Marcos" by David Rey Perez
Photo: Keen Independent



SECTION 1. Introduction

Introduction

The City of San Marcos, Texas engaged Keen Independent Research LLC in the spring of 2021 to update the 2012 Arts Master Plan.

What is an Arts Master Plan?

An Arts Master Plan is designed to be a strategic guide to help cities with planning and decision-making regarding arts and culture as a driver to improve quality of life, increase tourism and support local economic development. Plans help cities focus their efforts in providing arts-related infrastructure, services, programming and funding for residents, business owners, arts organizations and other stakeholders within a community.

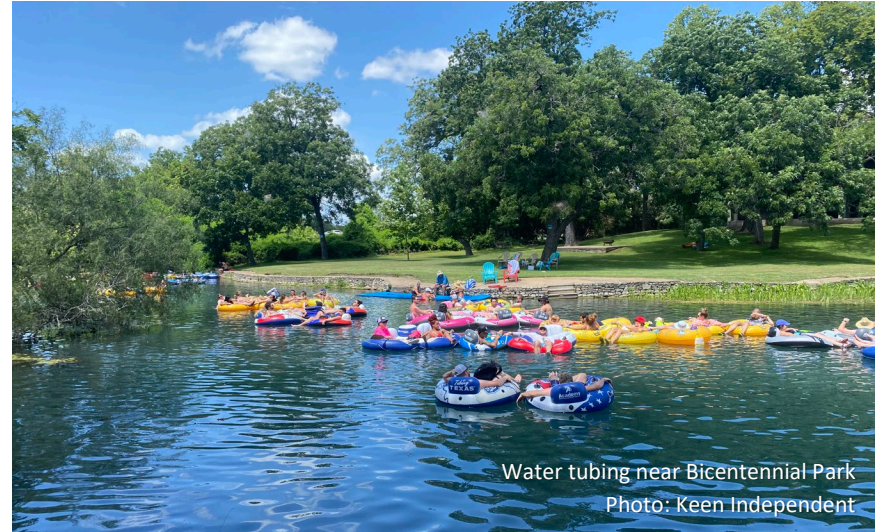
Purpose

The purpose of the City of San Marcos Arts Master Plan is to develop a five-year strategic plan that defines the role of the City of San Marcos in supporting arts and culture, and the role of the arts and culture in accomplishing the City's broader goals of quality of life and economic development.

How to Use this Arts Master Plan

This Arts Master Plan will be primarily utilized by the City to guide decision making. Individuals and arts organizations can use this Plan to help guide their strategic thinking, highlight how their goals align with the Plan when applying for grants and to monitor the initiatives outlined within.

This Plan is not designed to pick winners or grantees or to develop specific programs but rather guide the direction and strategic thinking of future decisions for the City and community.



Acknowledgements

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History

The land that is today known as San Marcos has been inhabited by humans for more than 12,000 years. Early inhabitants include the Coahuiltacan, Comanche, Jumanos, Lipan Apache, Sana and Tonkawa Native American communities.¹ Members and descendants of these groups still reside on this land today.

In 1851, the City of San Marcos was founded and has flourished ever since. Cattle and cotton were early drivers to making the City a center for commerce and transportation.

In 1930, Lyndon Baines Johnson, the 36th president of the United States, graduated from Southwest Texas State Teachers College, which is today known as Texas State University. Texas State is the only university in Texas to have graduated a U.S. president or vice president.²

By the 1960s, tourist attractions began emerging such as the Aquarena Springs and Wonder Cave.³

Preservation of Culture and Heritage

San Marcos has a rich cultural history and heritage. San Marcos Hispanic community history is preserved by organizations such as Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos, which is located in a building that was originally the Mexican school during a time when education was segregated. This school symbolizes the progress the Hispanic community has made for equality and cultural relevance since.

¹ Native Land Digital. Retrieved from <https://native-land.ca/> and San Marcos Convention & Visitor Bureau. Retrieved from <https://www.visitsanmarcos.com/plan-your-visit/about-san-marcos/history/>

A similar story of progress towards equality is preserved by the Calaboose African American History Museum, which is located in what was previously the Hays County jail.

History is also preserved by the Dunbar Heritage Association, the Indigenous Cultures Institute, Heritage Association of San Marcos, the San Marcos LBJ Museum and many other organizations, memorials and public artworks.



² Texas State University. Retrieved from <https://www.txstate.edu/about/history-traditions/lbj-statue.html>

³ San Marcos Convention & Visitor Bureau. Retrieved from <https://www.visitsanmarcos.com/plan-your-visit/about-san-marcos/history/>

History

History of San Marcos Arts Commission

The San Marcos Arts Commission is an important body of council-appointed members that have a direct impact on the future of arts and culture in the City. Below, the Commission's self-described history, purpose, vision and mission is shared.

"The San Marcos Arts Commission was created by city ordinance and approved on October 26, 1998. The Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the San Marcos City Council. The seven-member council-appointed commission provides oversight for the expenditure of city hotel occupancy tax and general funds for the promotion of the arts, including instrumental and vocal music, dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture, design and allied fields, painting, sculpture, photography, graphic and craft arts, motion pictures, radio, television, tape and sound recording, and other arts related to the presentation, execution, and exhibition of these major art forms. In consultation with the arts community, the arts commission develops written guidelines regarding the process for allocation of hotel occupancy tax funds for the arts. The arts commission reviews applications for funding for the arts and makes the final decision on all applications.

Vision Statement

Our vision for San Marcos is a city in which artistic excellence is celebrated, supported and available to all.

Mission Statement

To support and contribute to the artistic vitality, diverse cultural heritage and economic prosperity of our city in an effort to distinguish it from other communities while promoting tourism to San Marcos."

Previous Master Plan

In 2012, San Marcos developed an Arts Master Plan. Since then, the City has grown in population by about 40 percent, from an estimated population of 46,000 to nearly 65,000 in 2019.⁴ In addition to significant population growth, in 2020, San Marcos, along with the rest of the country, endured an economic fallout from COVID-19 that closed businesses, depressed state and local government revenue, and devastated arts and cultural institutions across the country.

While many goals and priorities of this new Plan may fall in line with the 2012 Arts Master Plan, many significant changes have happened in San Marcos since then and the priorities and makeup of the communities have evolved.

Get involved!

Our arts community is vibrant and energetic because of active participation from our residents. Here are some ways you can get involved:

- **Volunteer for the Arts Commission** – Visit www.sanmarcostx.gov/boards for information and instructions on the application process.
- **Attend Arts Commission meetings** – meetings are posted online at www.sanmarcostx.gov/arts.
- **Tell us about your arts and cultural events!** Email cvb@sanmarcostx.gov so your event can be posted on www.visitsanmarcos.com.

⁴ 2012 American Community Survey 5-year estimates and 2019 American Community Survey supplemental estimates

Methodology

For this Arts Master Plan, the following methodology was utilized to develop findings and recommendations. Keen Independent conducted:

- Robust virtual and in-person stakeholder engagement with City leaders and staff, arts and culture leaders and community members. From these efforts, nearly 200 people shared their perspective on the Plan;
- Comprehensive review and documentation of San Marcos arts and culture infrastructure and public art installations;
- Literature review of existing San Marcos plans and 2012 Arts Master Plan;
- Benchmarking of comparable policies, funding tools and implementation cost from other cities; and
- Analysis of demographic and population trends.



San Marcos Open House Workshop
Photo: Keen Independent



San Marcos Open House Workshop
Photo: Keen Independent



Wild Rice by Christopher Al Rodriguez
Photo: Keen Independent

SECTION 2. Executive Summary

Key Findings

In this section, the Arts Master Plan stakeholder and community engagement process is described and key findings are presented.

Stakeholder and Community Engagement

To update the San Marcos arts master plan, Keen Independent conducted extensive engagement with community stakeholders and leaders throughout the spring and summer of 2021.

Stakeholder engagement. The Arts Master Planning process included meetings with 37 key stakeholders who were asked a series of questions about the state of arts and culture in the city, what makes the city unique and where San Marcos arts and culture should be heading. Key stakeholders included city council members, other city leaders and staff, arts commissioners, local arts and culture organizations, university staff and community leaders. They were asked about what success looks like for arts and culture, what barriers are there to participating in arts and culture and where the city should invest its time, energy and resources to improve arts and culture. See Appendix E for an analysis of these interviews.



Community engagement. San Marcos residents were invited to participate in a virtual workshop where they were asked about their perception of the quality of arts and culture in San Marcos, barriers to participation, what makes San Marcos memorable and what they would like to see more of in San Marcos. This workshop had 140 participants. Participants were also asked to consider what values and attributes make San Marcos stand out from other cities in the region. For an analysis of virtual workshop responses, see Appendix F.

Residents were also invited to an in-person Open House where key findings and recommendations were presented for feedback on the presentation and additional input about arts and culture priorities in San Marcos. This Open House also presented a preliminary cultural map for community edits/additions. The Open House had over 50 attendees. See Appendix D for an analysis of feedback from this event.

Additional outreach tools. In addition to the workshop series, an Arts Master Plan telephone hotline and email address was provided throughout the planning process to maintain an open door of communication between the community and Keen Independent.



Key Findings

Stakeholder and Community Perspective

Stakeholder and community members shared their perspectives and common themes emerged through the engagement process:

- San Marcos residents are passionate about their community and its history;
- Residents have a deep appreciation for the natural environment;
- San Marcos residents are becoming more comfortable with attending in-person events (attendance declined during COVID-19 pandemic);
- San Marcos is perceived to have diverse arts and culture offerings;
- There is a perception that arts and culture offerings in San Marcos do not sufficiently serve diverse populations;
- Arts and culture offerings are perceived to be sparse outside of the downtown area;
- There is a perceived geographic and cultural disconnect between the university and city residents;
- Arts and culture organizations reported that they need more support;
- There are challenges with communication and awareness of arts and culture offerings and support services;
- There is a perceived shortage of dedicated performance venues;
- Parking is a significant barrier to participation; and
- There is a delicate balance between allocation of available City funds and funding for arts and culture.

Shared Vision of Success

As part of the Arts Master Plan, stakeholders and community members were asked what success looks like for arts and culture in San Marcos.

Success

Stakeholders and community members reported that success for San Marcos arts and culture includes community involvement and enthusiasm as well as collaboration among various artistic and cultural groups to effectively improve the quality of life for all individuals. They desire a greater variety of events and offerings as well as more ongoing opportunities to enjoy arts and culture.

Emphasis on diversity and equality. San Marcos stakeholders and community members specifically emphasized the importance of offerings that serve and represent as many people as possible including those of various socio-economic backgrounds, race/ethnicities, ages, etc. They envision a city made vibrant through equitable access and opportunity to create and experience arts and culture for all residents. This includes more support systems for artists to live and work here.

Artistic and cultural partnerships. There is also a reported need for Texas State University and the City to work together to find new opportunities for artistic and cultural partnership and to break down perceived barriers between San Marcos residents and the university.

“Success means San Marcos is known as a go-to location at any weekend of the year”

“Involve the community”

“Success is measured in attendance and the willingness of community individuals to financially support the effort”

“Access to events for all ages and socioeconomic status ...”

“A greater emphasis to offer a range of options”

“Locals spending money on local art, shows and events”

“It’s about the folks that showed up ... will they come back again ... to see other parts of the city ...?”

“Community supporting the arts”

“We really need to collaborate”

“There is sustained, regular, consistent activity”

“Where people go specifically for the culture”

“It contributes to the quality of life for all groups”

“More vibrant downtown with buildings occupied “

“... it’s about community engagement ... inspire both university and local community alike to want to make the extra drive or stay late after work to engage with what’s happening here”

Goals and Strategies

Four goals for San Marcos arts and culture emerged throughout the engagement process:

- **Make San Marcos a leading destination for arts and culture;**
- **Foster an inclusive culture that celebrates all races/ethnicities in San Marcos;**
- **Foster the continued growth of arts and culture organizations to where their impact can be felt throughout the City; and**
- **Create a culture of collaboration and a sense that everyone has a seat at the table.**

The following five strategies to help achieve these goals are presented below:

- **Centralize resources;**
- **Support the underserved;**
- **Enhance current resources;**
- **Plan for the future; and**
- **Update the Art in Public Places Policy.**





Balloon Dog by Paul Garson in Imagine Alley
Photo: Keen Independent

SECTION 3. Recommendations

1. Centralize Resources



Centralize San Marcos arts and cultural resources to efficiently improve communication and collaboration.

1-1. Promote a city-wide event calendar that serves the community and university in addition to tourists

There is currently a city-wide event calendar at www.visitsanmarcos.com/events. Advertise this calendar so it becomes a more widely recognized, comprehensive resource for learning about and promoting events in San Marcos.

1-2. Create and promote a central location for inquiries

To avoid confusion about who to talk to for specific arts and culture needs and inquiries, promote the Arts Coordinator as the person to go to for all arts and culture needs from the City. Develop a single portal for all inquiries to be followed up with promptly or redirected to the appropriate party.

This may include:

- Setting up and maintaining a standard email (i.e. artsandculture@sanmarcostx.gov);
- Promoting the standard point of contact on mailing lists, the event calendar, fliers, etc.

1-3. Build and maintain two-way communication with organizations

Make sure all arts and culture organizations know how to reach the City. Directly inform them about and invite them to relevant City programs. Foster long-term relationships between organizations and city liaisons to make them feel more welcome to engage with the City.

This may include:

- Initiating the relationship through a first human contact by a City liaison;
- Showing interest in each organization by having one or more City liaisons attending events that are produced by these organizations; and
- Having the same City liaison(s) maintaining regular contact with each organization through appropriate channels.

2. Support the Underserved



Make sure that all groups in San Marcos have an opportunity to experience arts and culture in a way that is suitable for them.

2-1. **Speak with diverse community members about how to best serve them and their communities**

Contact community leaders and members to ask about their arts and culture needs. Have a conversation and listen to what they have to say.

This may include:

- Directly contacting organizations that serve minority communities for input;
- Identifying community champions to help with outreach to specific communities; and
- Conducting engagement activities in Spanish.

2-2. **Develop initiatives and programming specifically for minority groups**

Once an understanding has been developed from recommendation 2-1, follow through with initiatives that serve these groups in a way that makes them feel heard and represented.

This may include:

- Supporting initiatives that these groups are asking for or are currently working on;
- Developing or promoting programs that are designed to serve specific ethnic groups; and
- Increasing the funding for the diversity grant category to further support organizations serving minority groups;

2. Support the Underserved

2-3. Develop and encourage arts and culture offerings in diverse neighborhoods

Incentivize arts and culture groups and individuals to develop offerings in diverse neighborhoods. Neighborhoods east of I-35 have been specifically identified by community members as neighborhoods that could use more engagement.

This may include:

- As an example, programming a Latin pop or mariachi performance in the parks in and near historically Hispanic neighborhoods and cross promoting with the Summer in the Park concerts to maximize awareness and participation. Ensure that these efforts are representative of the groups being served (see recommendation 2-1); and
- As an example, programming an R&B or hip-hop performance in the parks in and near historically African American neighborhoods and cross promoting with the Summer in the Park concerts to maximize awareness and participation. Ensure that these efforts are representative of the groups being served (see recommendation 2-1).



Volunteers at Music on the Square
Photo: Paul Cardoza

2-4. Cultivate diversity among members of the San Marcos Arts Commission

Make efforts to ensure the Arts Commission is representative of as many San Marcos communities as possible. Maintaining a diverse Arts Commission will increase the likelihood that decisions involving grants and other initiatives will be equitable. A diverse Arts Commission may also provide opportunities for reaching and welcoming underserved groups.

This may include:

- Actively seeking out and inviting diverse community leaders to apply to join the Arts Commission;
- Considering Arts Commission applicants' involvement and connection with underserved groups in San Marcos; and
- Cultivating diverse future arts leaders by engaging with young artists and inviting them to participate in Arts Commission meetings, subcommittees, working groups and initiatives.



Community members at Music on the Square
Photo: Pixels Creative Media

2. Support the Underserved

2-5. Encourage/develop partnerships with schools and organizations focused on serving the youth

There is a perceived lack of arts and culture offerings for the youth. Children are our future. Fostering a love and appreciation for arts and culture at an early age is an investment into support for the arts in the long term.

This may include:

- Developing and funding a grant category specifically for youth arts and culture education;
- Creating more programs that bring artists into classrooms; and
- Supporting youth performing arts programs by facilitating free or reduced-cost rehearsal space at City facilities.

2-6. Develop and support family-friendly programming

Many families with children live in San Marcos. In addition to providing children with access, supporting the creation of activities for families to do together is another way to support a child's exposure to arts and culture.



3. Enhance Current Resources



San Marcos already has a great foundation established for arts and cultural programming. Help make what is already great even better by increasing investment in existing artists and organizations.

3-1. Foster communication and collaboration between local arts and culture groups

We are stronger when we work together. Invite everyone to the table to have a conversation. Create incentives for collaboration and help develop partnerships.

This may include:

- Developing a grant category for programs that include collaboration between organizations;
- Holding networking/mixer events for organizations and emerging artists; and
- Making introductions between organizations that may make great partnerships. This may require a relationship with one or both organizations.
(See recommendation 1-3.)

3-2. Encourage and support partnerships with the City and Texas State University

The City, university, artists and organizations have several goals that fall in line with each other. Find ways to explore these opportunities.

This may include:

- Contacting university faculty and staff about their goals and finding ways to support common goals;
- Working with the university to develop community theater programs and opportunities; and
- Promoting opportunities and information on grants, commissions, auditions, exhibitions and performance opportunities to students, artists and organizations.

3. Enhance Current Resources

3-3. Develop training/mentoring programs

Provide emerging artists and organizations with training in the form of workshops, seminars and conferences. In addition to these offerings being great training opportunities, they can also be networking opportunities, which can provide a basis for a mentor/mentee program.

This may include:

- Developing a mentor/mentee program for emerging artists and young arts and culture professionals; and
- Facilitating live grant application workshops to give opportunities for smaller organizations to ask questions and have stronger applications;
- Facilitating professional development workshops for emerging artists and organizations.

3-4. Establish arts, cultural, historic districts

The designation of districts can be utilized to support the funding of projects, programs and facilities through tax incentives at the state, regional or local level.

This may include:

- Establishing a cultural district around the San Marcos LBJ museum, Calaboose African American Museum, Cephas House, Hays County Jail preservation and Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos; and
- Establishing cultural districts around the African American and Hispanic neighborhoods.

3-5. Enhance existing arts and culture facilities

Enhancing existing facilities can encourage utilization, increase efficiencies, improve program quality and support growth of existing artists and organizations utilizing the facilities.

This may include:

- Renovating one or more existing facilities to enhance or expand the ability for each facility to support creative programming and education.

3-6. Activate underused spaces

Arts Master Plan participants have reported a notable number of underused spaces and empty storefronts in the downtown area. Find ways to activate these spaces to increase the liveliness and vibrancy of downtown.

This may include:

- Incentivizing the owners of empty buildings downtown to activate their spaces with art, even temporarily;
- Developing pop-up galleries in empty spaces in downtown;
- Repurposing an unused building for an arts and culture initiative; and
- Subsidizing rent for creative organizations to maintain a presence in downtown.

3. Enhance Current Resources

3-7. Foster growth of existing artists, organizations and city programming

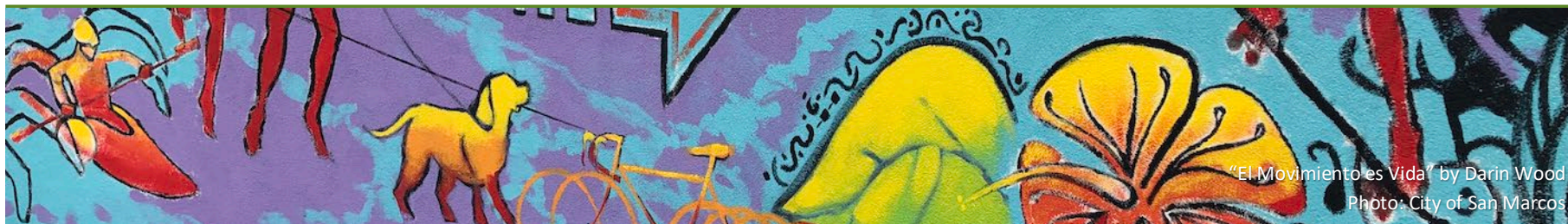
Help build the capacity and impact of existing artists and organizations. They are doing great work today, but many are made up of very few staff or mostly volunteers, which can be unstable without dedicated professionals to focus on the work throughout the year.

This may include:

- Increasing grant funding;
- Making grant award evaluations more transparent by providing an evaluation rubric for scoring each grant application during the application process and providing scoring and comments to grant recipients explain reasons why they receive the amount of their award;
- Increasing city arts and culture spending and programming to support the fulfillment of other recommendations; and
- Provide an artist incubator space to allow emerging artists to rehearse, create art and collaborate with others.



4. Plan for the Future



The population in San Marcos has grown significantly over the last 10 years and it is projected to continue to grow quickly over the next 50 years.¹ Make plans for this future growth today.

4-1. Plan for future arts investments

Plan for future investments such as murals and sculptures throughout town by identifying a list of locations for potential artwork. Estimate costs for installations at potential locations to develop a funding goal to vitalize all these spaces. These findings and estimates can be used for campaigns to help fund these projects.

4-2. Conduct a study on the feasibility of a new performance facility

Before making the investment to build a new arts center, first make sure it is a feasible project as well as understand where the building would go, how often it would be used, how much it would cost to build, how much it would cost to operate annually and other key considerations.

This may include:

- Conducting a feasibility study for a new cultural and performing arts facility; and/or
- Conducting a feasibility study for a new visual arts gallery/arts incubator/museum.

4-3. Investigate revenue generating tax initiatives targeted for supporting arts and culture

For example, consider allocating a larger portion of Hotel Occupancy Tax income for arts and culture grants. For more details regarding taxation tools, see Appendix B.

4-4. Examine implementation of a spending ordinance for arts and culture

A percent for the arts ordinance can be applied to municipal capital improvement projects where a determined percentage of the total project budget is set aside for public art. These ordinances can offer a stream of funding for arts projects outside of some City budget constraints.

¹ See Appendix H for San Marcos population projections out to 2070.

4. Plan for the Future

4-5. Consider developing a Local Arts Agency

San Marcos is growing quickly. The City's arts resources need to continue to grow as well. Fulfilling these recommendations is going to eventually require more than just an Arts Coordinator. A modest-sized team of staff focusing on these efforts will ensure a higher likelihood of success and effectiveness.

Local Arts Agencies (LAA) promote, support and develop the arts at the local level ensuring a vital presence for the arts throughout the community. Each LAA, in its own way, works to sustain the health and vitality of the arts and artists locally, while also striving to make the arts accessible to all members of a community. Every LAA is unique to the community that it serves and evolves with its community.²

This may include:

- Establishing a standalone city Arts and Culture Department; or
- Helping to establish or revitalize a nonprofit with a mission to support and enhance arts and culture access for all in San Marcos.

4-6. Evaluate the designation of a cultural “river district”

San Marcos is widely recognized by its river, and it flows right by downtown. A notable number of artworks throughout San Marcos relate to the river and activities involving the river are a significant tourist attraction. Connect this attraction to downtown businesses and increase activity and traffic between these areas.

This cultural “river district” could further enhance San Marcos’ designation as the “Mermaid Capital of Texas” as officially decreed by the State of Texas government in May of 2021.

² What is a Local Arts Agency. *Americans for the Arts*. Retrieved from <https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/networks-and-councils/local-arts-network/what-is-a-local-arts-agency>

5. Update the Art in Public Places Policy



The City of San Marcos tasked Keen Independent with providing recommendations for revising the Art in Public Places Policy. For a deeper analysis on the San Marcos Art in Public Places Policy, see Appendix G.

5-1. For each permanent art request, the Arts Commission should consider forming a subcommittee that includes a resident representative from the affected neighborhood or area in which the art would be placed.

Having an option to include at least one representative of the community in which the artwork is placed may help ensure that the artwork accurately reflects the culture of the community that it would be serving.

5-2. Consider a community review process for select artworks

For artwork that is intended to serve a specific community, or if the proposed location is within a designated district, consider including a community review process and additional public notice to increase local buy-in and representation.

5-3. Streamline public art approval process

Permanent public art currently must go through four approvals processes, two of which are with City Council. By having the City Council provide just the final approval, the application and approval process for new public artworks will be faster while still earning the approval of all overseeing entities.

5-4. Require only one application process for each piece

The current policy states that an artwork representative must go through the application process twice if they have a concept in mind for which site approval is requested. Consider requiring only one application where the piece is conditional to the location to reduce the number of applications and approval processes needed to further streamline the art in public places process.

5-5. Consider adding details about how the City is funding public art

Openness and transparency about funding mechanisms helps foster community and collaboration. All public art policies from other cities that Keen Independent reviewed for this project include details about public art funding.

Integration of this Plan with Other City Plans

Here is how recommendations for strategies 1 through 4 align with findings and goals from recent San Marcos plans. The following recommendations are presented along with the plan in which the recommendation would satisfy. For a deeper analysis of how the Arts Master Plan can integrate with these and other city plans, see Appendix C.

Vision San Marcos Comprehensive Plan (2020 — in progress)

This plan is still in progress. An online platform was available for the public to provide input on the vision and goals for the Comprehensive Plan, which included a section focused on arts and culture. Common themes that emerged on this platform related to arts and culture include:

- Arts and historic preservation groups – create museum district around San Marcos LBJ museum, Calaboose African American Museum, Cephas House, Hays County Jail preservation and Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos (aligns with Arts Master Plan recommendation 3-4);
- Provide more amenities for families with children (aligns with Arts Master Plan recommendations 2-5 and 2-6)
- Develop an arts and culture city-funded program with a nonprofit status (aligns with Arts Master Plan recommendation 4-5);
- Increase library locations;
- Create an Art Center with gardens and outdoor spaces for community gatherings and events (aligns with Arts Master Plan recommendations 4-1 and 4-2);

- More murals (aligns with Arts Master Plan recommendation 4-1);
- Museums and summer programs for Pre-K to 12 (aligns with Arts Master Plan recommendations 2-5 and 2-6); and
- Increase access to arts (aligns with Arts Master Plan recommendations 2-1 through 2-6, 3-3 and 4-5).

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (2019)

This plan presents goals and action items organized within seven categories. Within the “parks and facilities” category, the plan identified the following goal related to arts and culture.

Goal PF-4. Continue to diversify the parks and recreation system by providing outstanding culture and art opportunities. This goal aligns with Arts Master Plan recommendations 2-3, 3-6 and 4-1).

Integration of this Plan with Other City Plans

Transportation Master plan (2018)

This master plan presents several transportation improvement proposals which could include environmental aesthetic enhancements, such as functional art (benches, shade structures, railings, etc.), sculptures and murals. Aesthetic enhancements could be considered with the following initiatives:

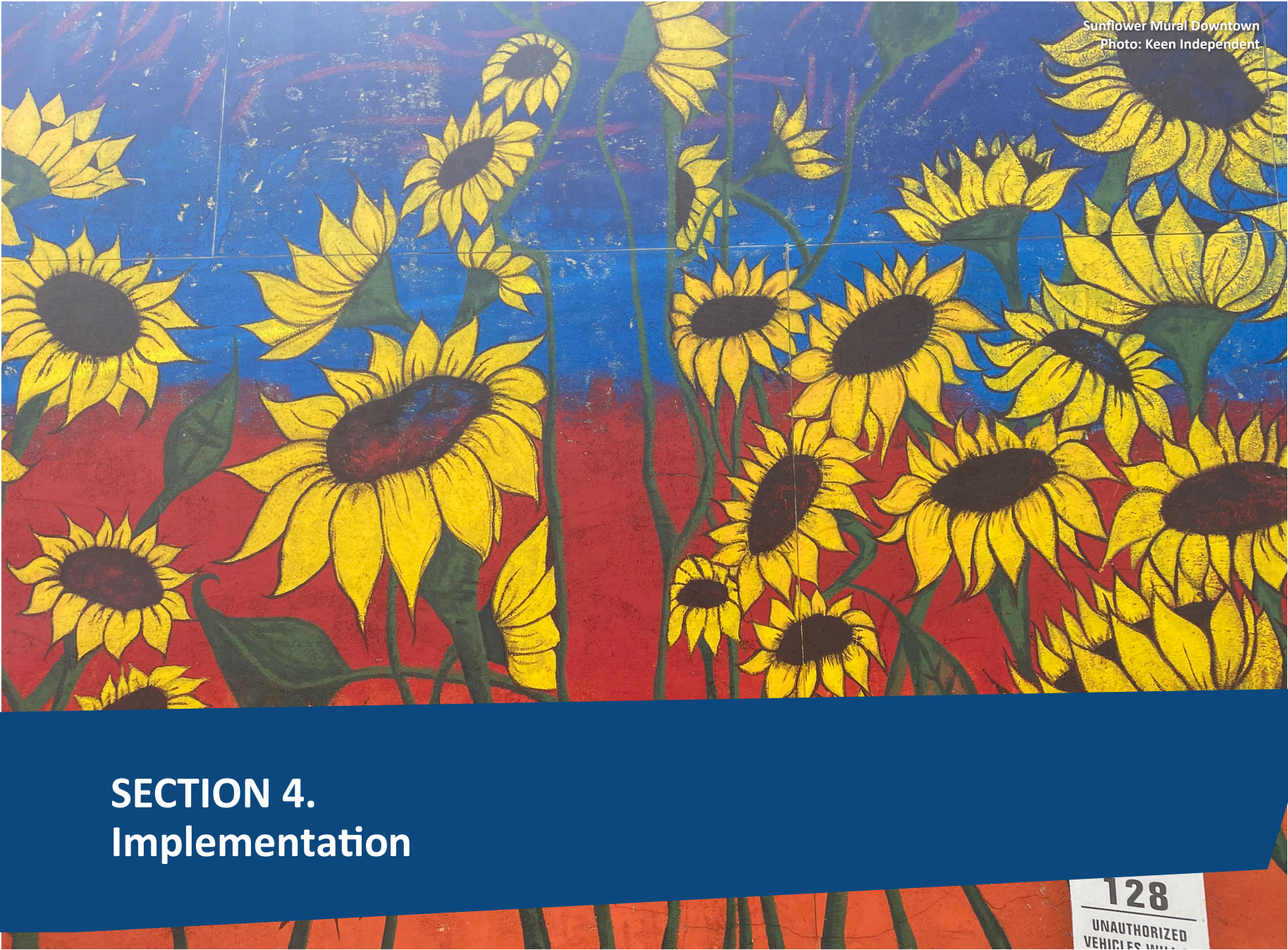
- Bicycle network;
- Pedestrian network;
- Greenways Master Plan; and
- Proposed transit network.

Initiatives from this plan aligns with Arts Master Plan recommendation 4-1.

San Marcos Land Development Code (2018)

The Development Code was adopted to promote public health, safety, morals and general welfare, to protect and preserve places of environmental, historical, cultural and/or architectural significance within the city limits of San Marcos. Key considerations related to arts and culture include:

- **Section 3.10.2.7 Plazas.** Typical features include public art. Opportunity to explore the addition of public art and murals to existing plazas and consider in the development of new plazas;
- **Section 5.1.3.4 Home Occupations.** Allowed home occupations includes author, artist, artisan or sculptor; dressmaker, seamstress or tailor; music or dance teacher;
- **Section 5.1.6.1 Civic A. Civic Use Category.** Places of public assembly that provide ongoing governmental, life safety, educational and cultural services to the general public, as well as meeting areas for religious practice; and
- **Division 2: Historic Districts.** Lists all existing historical districts and landmarks which detail cultural and historical significance.



Sunflower Mural Downtown
Photo: Keen Independent

SECTION 4. Implementation

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Implementation Strategy

To provide San Marcos with a checklist and timeline for completion, the following matrix provides guidance for implementing each recommendation.

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Potential Partners	Start By	Interim Goal	Stretch Goal
1. Centralize Resources					
1-1. Promote a city-wide event calendar that serves the community and university in addition to tourists	CVB/LAA	Artists and organizations	2022	Calendar is being regularly updated and promoted	Calendar is the number one place for the community, university and tourists to learn about what events are happening in San Marcos
1-2. Create and promote a central location for inquiries	CVB/LAA	Artists and organizations	2022	Standard email address is created	Arts and culture inquiries are regularly fielded
1-3. Build and maintain two-way communication with organizations	CVB/LAA and City leaders	Artists and organizations	2023	City liaison has reached out to all local arts and culture organizations	City and arts and culture organizations are communicated with on at least a quarterly basis
2. Support the Underserved					
2-1. Speak with diverse community members about how to best serve them and their communities	CVB/LAA and City leaders	Community leaders	2022	City liaison has reached out to all local organizations that serve minority communities	City and all local organizations that serve minority communities are communicated with on at least a quarterly basis
2-2. Develop initiatives and programming specifically for minority groups	CVB/LAA	Artists and organizations	2023	City identifies 3-5 ways to support initiatives developed by minority groups	City supports 10+ arts and culture initiatives developed by minority groups
2-3. Develop and encourage arts and culture offerings in diverse neighborhoods	CVB/LAA	Artists and organizations	2023	City identifies 3-5 ways to develop and encourage arts and culture offerings in diverse neighborhoods	City supports 10+ arts and culture offerings in diverse neighborhoods
2-4. Cultivate diversity among members of the San Marcos Arts Commission	Mayor/Arts Commission	CVB/LAA	2023	Mayor and Arts Commission are actively seeking out and inviting diverse community leaders to apply to join the Arts Commission	Arts Commission demographics are representative of the demographics of San Marcos
2-5. Encourage/develop partnerships with schools and organizations focused on serving the youth	Arts Commission	San Marcos Consolidated ISD, artists and organizations	2023	Arts Commission identifies 3-5 initiatives that encourage youth visual and performing arts participation	Arts Commission supports 10+ initiatives that encourage youth visual and performing arts participation
2-6. Develop and support family-friendly programming	Arts Commission	Artists and organizations	2023	Arts Commission identifies 2-4 initiatives that support family-friendly programming	Arts Commission supports 6+ family-friendly programming initiatives

Implementation Strategy

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Potential Partners	Start By	Interim Goal	Stretch Goal
3. Enhance Current Resources					
3-1. Foster communication and collaboration between local arts and culture groups	CVB/LAA	Arts Commission, artists and organizations	2022	CVB/LAA schedules first networking/mixer event for arts organizations and emerging artists	Artists and organizations feel that San Marcos is a collaborative community that fosters arts and culture. They are regularly asked by the CVB/LAA asked to verify that this effort is on the right track
3-2. Encourage and support partnerships with the City and Texas State University	CVB/LAA	TXST, artists and organizations	2023	CVB/LAA schedules quarterly conversations with TXST to discuss partnership opportunities and upcoming events	San Marcos community feels that San Marcos and Texas State University are in partnership to foster arts and culture.
3-3. Develop training/mentoring programs	CVB/LAA	Artists and organizations	2024	CVB/LAA identifies 2-4 initiatives that support artist training and mentoring	CVB/LAA supports 5+ initiatives that support artist training and mentoring
3-4. Establish arts, cultural, historic districts	City leaders, City Planning and Development Services and City Parks and Recreation Department	CVB/LAA, community leaders and local businesses	2024	City leaders and staff identify and examine 1-3 areas that could be new arts, cultural and/or historic districts	If deemed appropriate for San Marcos, City leaders and staff create 3+ appropriately designated arts, cultural and/or historic districts that have a direct benefit to the community
3-5. Enhance existing arts and culture facilities	CVB/LAA, artists and organizations	City leaders, community leaders and Arts Commission	2024	CVB/LAA works with artists and organizations to identify 1-3 existing arts and culture facilities that can be enhanced	CVB/LAA works with artists and organizations to enhance 3+ existing arts and culture facilities
3-6. Activate underused spaces	CVB/LAA, City leaders	Community leaders, artists and organizations	2024	CVB/LAA works with artists and organizations to identify 1-3 underused that can be activated	CVB/LAA works with artists and organizations to activate 3+ underused spaces
3-7. Foster growth of existing artists, organizations and city programming	CVB/LAA, Arts Commission and City leaders	Community leaders, artists and organizations	2024	CVB/LAA, City leaders and Arts Commission begin process to identify ways to increase investment in arts through fiscal tools, policy adjustments and programming efforts	CVB/LAA, City leaders and Arts Commission are successfully increasing investment in arts through fiscal tools, policy adjustments and programming efforts. The community is regularly asked by the CVB/LAA asked to verify that this effort is on the right track

Implementation Strategy

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Potential Partners	Start By	Interim Goal	Stretch Goal
4. Plan for the Future					
4-1. Plan for future arts investments	CVB/LAA	Arts Commission, City Planning and Development Services and City Parks and Recreation Department	2022	CVB/LAA has identified 3-5 areas that could have future public art investment	CVB/LAA has a fully developed plan supported by Arts Commission and City leaders for 7+ areas for future public art investment
4-2. Conduct a study on the feasibility of a new performance facility	CVB/LAA	City leaders	2024	CVB/LAA and City leaders develop RFP and funding tools for feasibility study	Feasibility study is complete its recommendations are incorporated into planning process
4-3. Investigate revenue generating tax initiatives targeted for supporting arts and culture	CVB/LAA and City leaders	City leaders	2024	CVB/LAA and City leaders examine 1-3 revenue generating tax initiatives that could support arts and culture	Through voter supported efforts by the City, San Marcos increases funding of arts and culture
4-4. Examine implementation of a spending ordinance for arts and culture	CVB/LAA and City leaders	City leaders	2024	CVB/LAA and City leaders examine possibility of implementing a spending ordinance to support arts and culture	Through voter supported efforts by the City, San Marcos increases funding of arts and culture
4-5. Consider developing a Local Arts Agency (LAA)	CVB and City leaders	Community leaders, artists and organizations	2023	CVB and City leaders explore the possibility of developing a Local Arts Agency (including an investigation of existing dormant 501c3 arts council)	If deemed appropriate for San Marcos, a Local Arts Agency is formed
4-6. Evaluate the designation of a cultural "river district"	City leaders, City Planning and Development Services, City Parks and Recreation Department and Parks and Recreation Board	CVB/LAA, community leaders and local businesses	2024	City leaders and staff examine feasibility of creating a "river district" in San Marcos	If deemed appropriate for San Marcos, City leaders and staff create an appropriately designated "river district" that has a direct benefit to the San Marcos community
5. Update the Art in Public Places Policy					
5-1. Expand the Arts Review Committee list of potential members to include a community representative	CVB/LAA, Arts Commission and City leaders	Community leaders	2022	See Appendix G	See Appendix G
5-2. Consider a community review process for select artworks	CVB/LAA, Arts Commission and City leaders	Community leaders	2022	See Appendix G	See Appendix G
5-3. Streamline public art approval process	CVB/LAA, Arts Commission and City leaders	Artists and organizations	2022	See Appendix G	See Appendix G
5-4. Require only one application process for each piece	CVB/LAA, Arts Commission and City leaders	City leaders	2022	See Appendix G	See Appendix G
5-5. Consider adding details about how the City is funding public art	CVB/LAA	City leaders and Arts Commission	2022	See Appendix G	See Appendix G



"Bienvenidos" by Jennifer Khoshbin
Photo: City of San Marcos CVB

SECTION 5. Appendices & Annex

Appendices and Annex Summary

Attached are eight appendices and one annex as supporting documentation for the Arts Master Plan.

Visual Inventory

Appendix A shares a visual inventory of arts and cultural assets in San Marcos. This documentation includes photographs of various facilities and pieces of public art as well as several cultural maps of performance/event venues, historic sites and public artworks.

Financial Considerations

Appendix B presents cost estimates, case studies and examples of costs association with the Arts Master Plan recommendations. Examples include feasibility study costs, construction costs of various types of arts centers, case studies of local arts agencies in other smaller cities and various financial incentives to support arts and culture.

Literature Review of City Plans

Appendix C is a review of other City of San Marcos plans with key considerations for initiatives that include or impact arts and culture. This analysis can be used to align recommendations from this plan with other city plans. An example of this alignment can be found earlier in this Arts Master Plan in Section 3.

Stakeholder Engagement Analyses

Appendices D, E and F are qualitative analysis of engagement activities that were conducted throughout the Arts Master Planning process. Appendix D contains an analysis of feedback from the in-person Open House, Appendix E is an analysis of comments from in-depth interviews with key stakeholders and Appendix F shares the results and analysis of responses to the virtual workshop.

Analysis of San Marcos Art in Public Places Policy

Appendix G contains an analysis of the San Marcos Art in Public Places Policy and similar policies in other cities to use as guidance for making recommendations to update the San Marcos Art in Public Places Policy. In this appendix, similar policies from five other cities were reviewed.

Population Projections

Appendix H shares population projections for San Marcos reported by the Texas Water Development Board to show that San Marcos is expected to continue to grow in population over the next 50 years.

2012 Arts Master Plan

As the 2022 Arts Master Plan is considered an update to the 2012 Arts Master Plan, the 2012 Master Plan is attached as Annex A.



"Birdhouse" by Rene Perez
Photo: City of San Marcos



"Electric Jazz" by Cody Seigmund
Photo: City of San Marcos



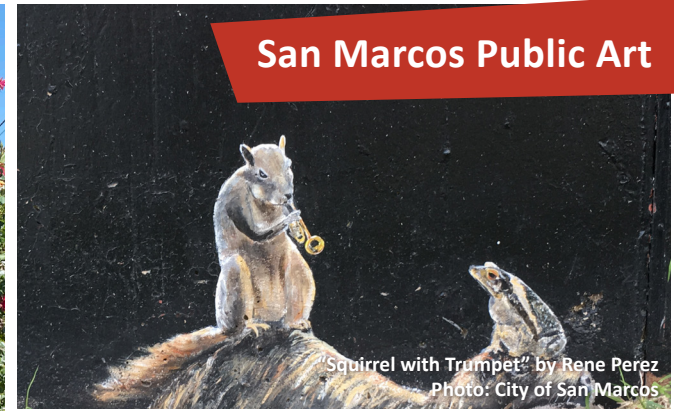
"Texan Twister" by Alice Aycock
Photo: Keen Independent



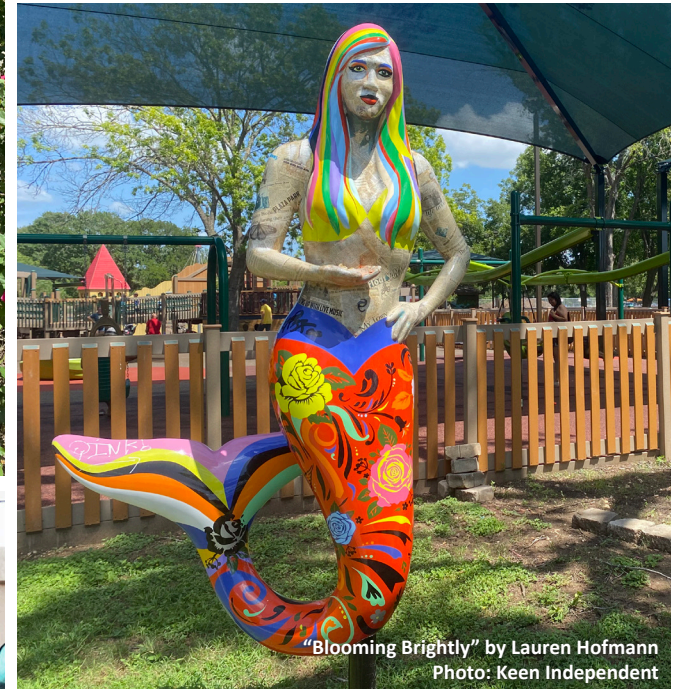
"Chief Placido" by Eric Slocombe
Photo: Keen Independent



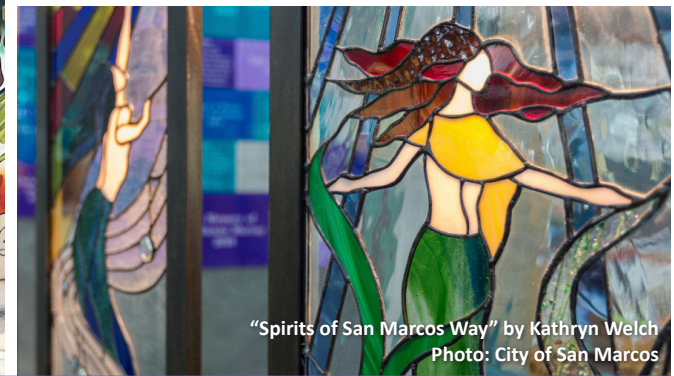
"The Locals" by Buddy Pajak
Photo: City of San Marcos



"Squirrel with Trumpet" by Rene Perez
Photo: City of San Marcos



"Blooming Brightly" by Lauren Hofmann
Photo: Keen Independent



"Spirits of San Marcos Way" by Kathryn Welch
Photo: City of San Marcos



"Caryatids" by Kate Riston
Photo: City of San Marcos



"Enchanted Waters" by Mabel Sirup
Photo: City of San Marcos



"Ticket Timeline" by Amy Hall and Jessica Botello
Photo: City of San Marcos



"Oh For A Muse of Fire" by April Layman
Photo: Keen Independent



"John Coffee Hays" by Jason Scull
Photo: Keen Independent



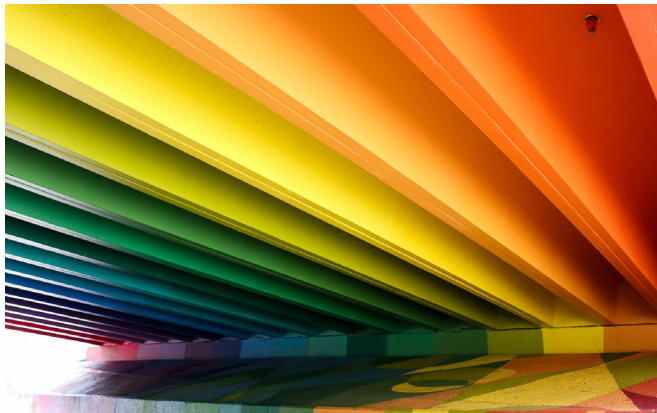
"The Crossroads of LBJ and MLK" by Aaron Hussey
Photo: City of San Marcos



"Life Lessons" by George Lundeen
Photo: City of San Marcos



Downtown Outdoor Gallery by multiple artists
Photo: City of San Marcos



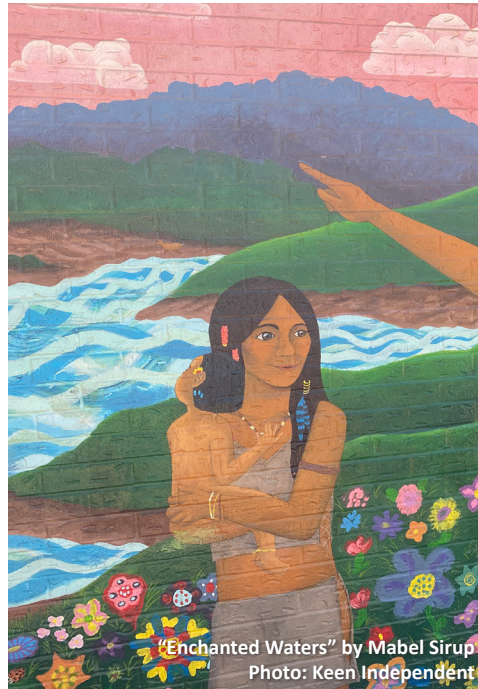
"Kaleidoscope No. 19" by Keep San Marcos Beautiful staff
Photo: City of San Marcos CVB



Balloon Dog by Paul Garson and Woman by Eric Harold in Imagine Alley
Photo: Keen Independent



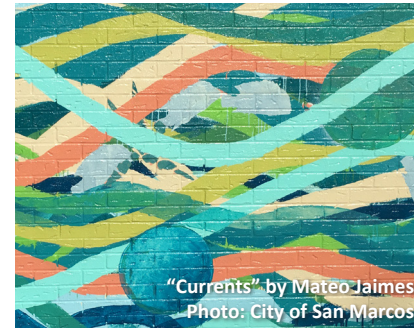
"A Mighty Heart" by Naveen Shakil
Photo: City of San Marcos



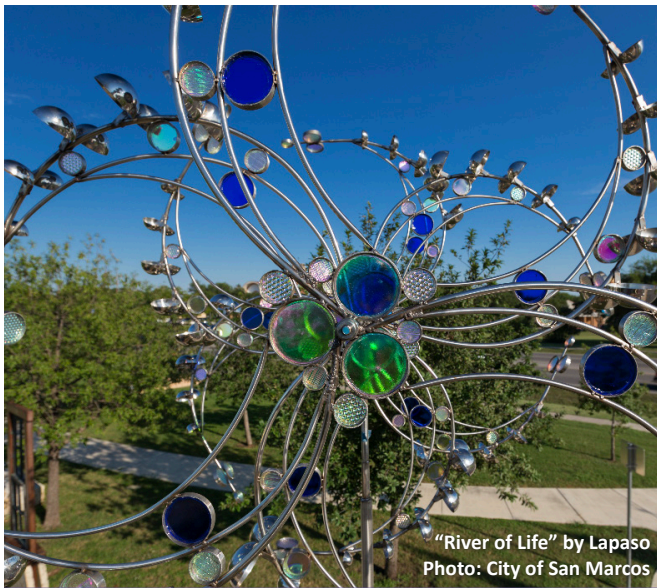
"Enchanted Waters" by Mabel Sirup
Photo: Keen Independent



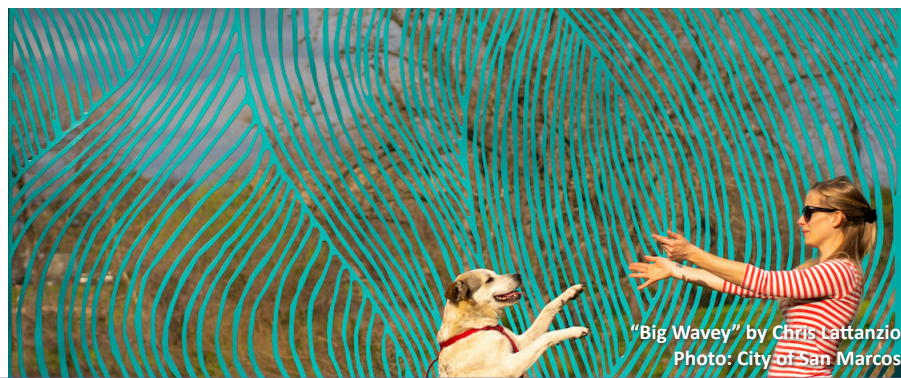
"The Sentinel" by Darin Wood
Photo: City of San Marcos



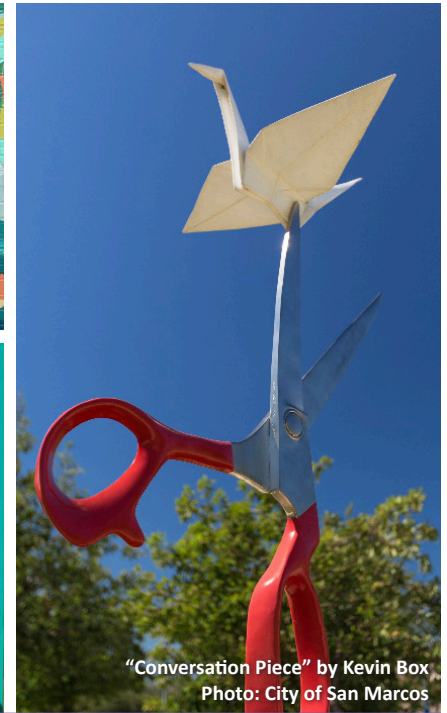
"Currents" by Mateo Jaimes
Photo: City of San Marcos



"River of Life" by Lapaso
Photo: City of San Marcos

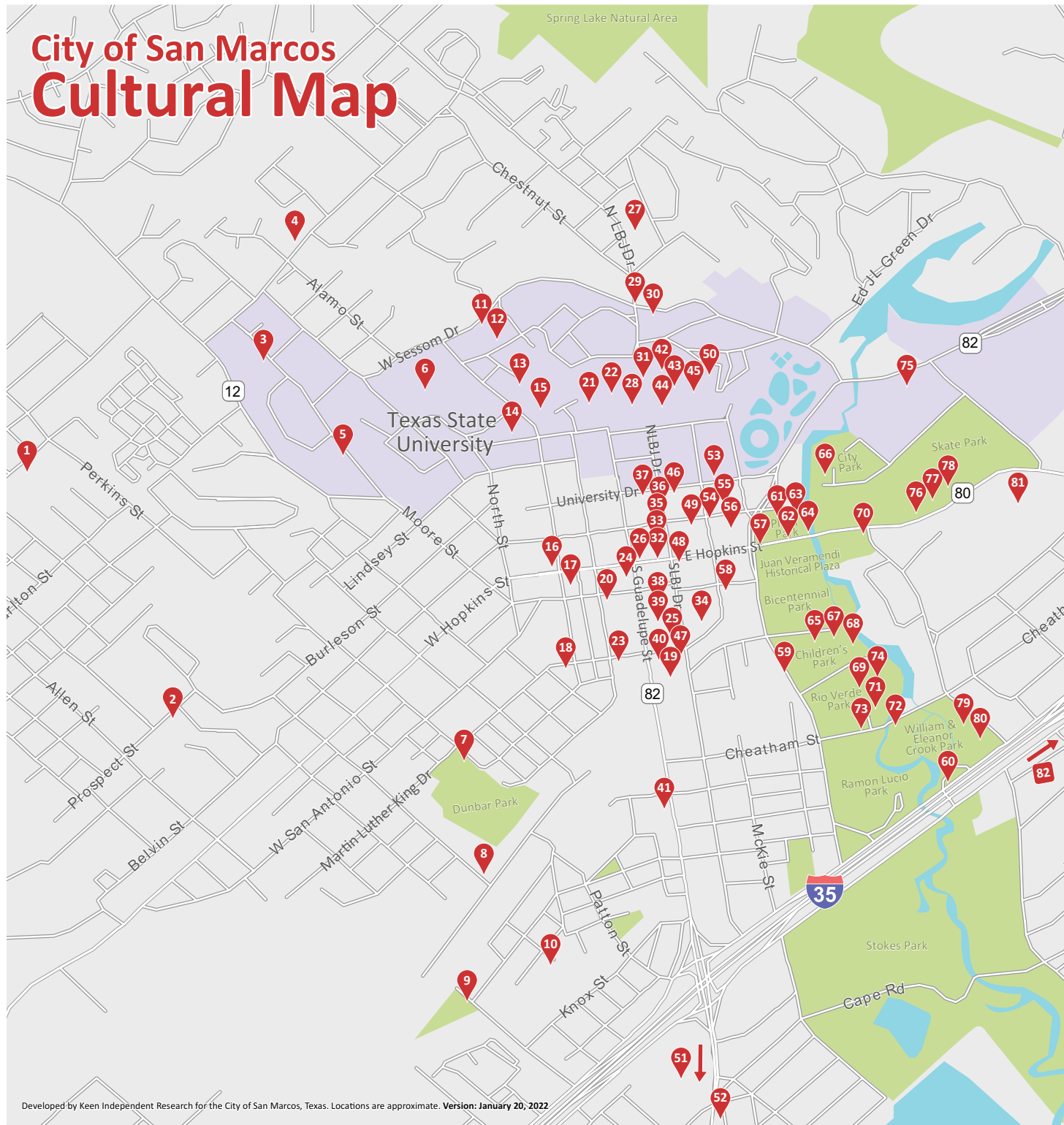


"Big Wavey" by Chris Lattanzio
Photo: City of San Marcos



"Conversation Piece" by Kevin Box
Photo: City of San Marcos

City of San Marcos Cultural Map



Public Art

- 1 The Crockett Mural
- 2 Wild Rice Mural
- 3 Vessels Installation
- 4 Flower Basket Weave
- 5 Diamond with Nine Flowers Sculpture and Seven Eye Flowers
- 6 Aquarena Commission Sculpture
- 7 Birdhouse Mini Mural
- 8 Big Flower Bridge
- 9 Flower Bridge
- 10 Pollinator Garden Flowers
- 11 River of Leaves
- 12 Fish Bellies Installation
- 13 Space of Words
- 14 Texas Twister at Ingram Hall
- 15 Variations on Cabrillo and Coronado
- 16 Goats on a Wall Mini Mural
- 17 Dianne Mermaid
- 18 MLK Wall Flowers
- 19 Celebrate Diversity Mural
- 20 Veterans Mural
- 21 A History of Ranching Mural
- 22 Fighting Stallions Statue
- 23 Electric Jazz Mural
- 24 Oh for a Muse of Fire Mermaid
- 25 Outdoor Gallery
- 26 78666 Mural
- 27 The Electric Juice Progression Mural
- 28 One of a Kind Mural
- 29 Life in Color Sessom Mural
- 30 Sessom Wall Flowers
- 31 Bobcat Statue
- 32 Kissing Alley
- 33 Cat Pie Mini Mural
- 34 Imagine Alley
- 35 Rats Mini Mural
- 36 Cupig Mini Mural
- 37 Blue Heron with Butts Mini Mural
- 38 Rattlesnake/Bobcat Mini Mural
- 39 Tickets Timeline Mural
- 40 Fish of the San Marcos Waterways Mermaid
- 41 The Sentinel Mural
- 42 LBJ Statue
- 43 Untitled Mural at Flowers Hall
- 44 Higher Education Act Sculpture
- 45 Reflections Sculpture
- 46 A Mighty Heart Mural
- 47 LBJ/MLK Crossroads
- 48 Dive into the Divine
- 49 El Movimiento es Vida
- 50 Vaquero Statue
- 51 Quarter Pipe Flowers
- 52 Bienvenidos (Barrio Pescado Mural)
- 53 Texas Door Sculpture at Performing Arts Center
- 54 Yin and Yang Flowers
- 55 Liquid Metal Mermaid
- 56 Mermaid Playground
- 57 Big Wavey Sculpture
- 58 Sunflower Mural
- 59 CM Allen Bridge Mural
- 60 Ode to Ralph Mermaid
- 61 Staged Flowers
- 62 Squirrel with Trumpet Mini Mural
- 63 Chief Placido Memorial
- 64 Before Us Mermaid
- 65 Blooming Brightly Mermaid
- 66 River Mural Mosaic at City Park
- 67 Life Lessons Sculpture
- 68 Enchanted Waters Mural
- 69 The Locals Mural
- 70 Hays County Veterans Memorial
- 71 Heron with Bottle Mini Mural
- 72 Kaleidoscope No. 19
- 73 Cheatham Street Bridge Mural
- 74 Trash Fish Mini Mural
- 75 Rising Star and Victory Star
- 76 San Marcos Sculpture Garden
- 77 Aqua Reina Sculpture
- 78 Spirits of San Marcos Stained Glass Triptych
- 79 Currents Mural
- 80 Mermaid Map
- 81 Police and Fire Sculpture
- 82 Farm to Table Mural



Mardi Gras parade in downtown San Marcos
Photo: Mystick Krewe of Okeanos



Community audience during Music on the Square
Photo: Pixels Creative Media



Sacred Springs Powwow at Meadows Center
Photo: City of San Marcos CVB



Performance and Event Spaces

Musicians perform during Music on the Square
Photo: Pixels Creative Media



Summer in the Park at Plaza Park
Photo: City of San Marcos CVB



Fire performer at Zelicks
Photo: City of San Marcos CVB



Concert at Tantra
Photo: City of San Marcos CVB



Recital Hall at Texas State University
Photo: Keen Independent



Downtown Mermaid Parade
Photo: City of San Marcos CVB



Performance and Event Spaces

Live performance at Texas Music Theater
Photo: City of San Marcos CVB



Chief and the Doomsday Device (Greg Williams)
Photo: Keen Independent



Concert in Kissing Alley
Photo: City of San Marcos CVB



Art Squared Art Market
Photo: City of San Marcos CVB

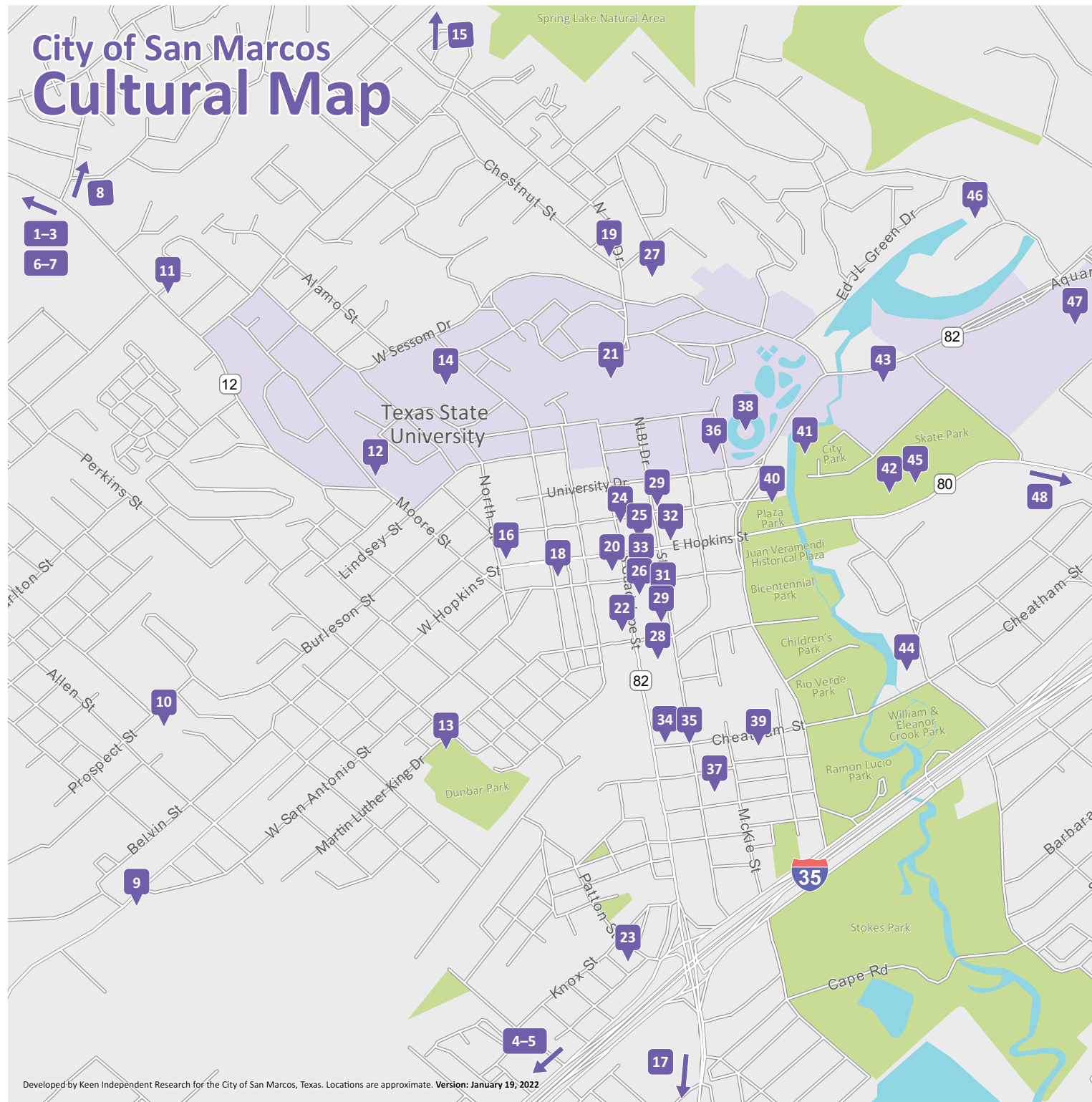


Patti Strickel Harrison Theatre at Texas State University
Photo: Keen Independent



Mardi Gras parade in downtown San Marcos
Photo: Mystick Krewe of Okeanos

City of San Marcos Cultural Map



Performance Venues and Event Spaces

- 1 Middleton Brewing LLC (MBTX)
- 2 Ragnar's on the Compound
- 3 Roughhouse Brewing
- 4 Riley's Tavern
- 5 Happy Cow Bar and Grill
- 6 San Marcos Academy
- 7 Studio San Martian
- 8 Eastwood Hill B&B and Special Events Facility
- 9 Jack's Roadhouse
- 10 Wonder World Cave & Adventure Park
- 11 Wake the Dead Coffee House
- 12 Glade Outdoor Theatre
- 13 Dunbar Recreation Center
- 14 Texas State Galleries
- 15 Eye of the Dog Art Center
- 16 Zelicks Icehouse
- 17 Rattler Stadium
- 18 Price Center & Garden
- 19 Red Bus Food Park
- 20 San Marcos Arts Center
- 21 Evans Liberal Arts Auditorium at Texas State University
- 22 The Davenport
- 23 Cuauhtemoc Hall
- 24 Fire Station Studios
- 25 Kissing Alley
- 26 The Marc
- 27 The Growing Texas Craft Beer Bar Industry
- 28 Aqua Events Center
- 29 CRAFThouse Kitchen & Tap
- 30 Chances R
- 31 The Coffee Bar
- 32 Hays County Historic Courthouse
- 33 Cheatham Street Warehouse and Woodshed Recording Studio
- 34 Headwater Audio
- 35 Performing Arts Center at Texas State University
- 36 Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos
- 37 Theatre Center at Texas State University
- 38 Patio Dolcetto
- 39 San Marcos Plaza Park
- 40 San Marcos Rec Hall
- 41 San Marcos Activity Center
- 42 Strahan Arena at the University Events Center
- 43 Ivar's River Pub
- 44 San Marcos Public Library
- 45 The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment
- 46 Bobcat Stadium
- 47 Martindale River Cafe and Mercantile

Historic Sites



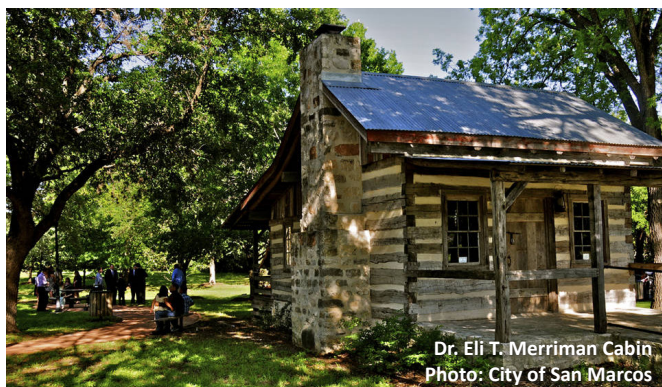
Charles S. Cock House Museum
Photo: Heritage Association of San Marcos



Old Fish Hatchery Building
Photo: City of San Marcos



Cephas House
Photo: City of San Marcos



Dr. Eli T. Merriman Cabin
Photo: City of San Marcos



Dunbar Park
Photo: City of San Marcos



Veteran's Park
Photo: City of San Marcos



Hays County Courthouse
Photo: Keen Independent



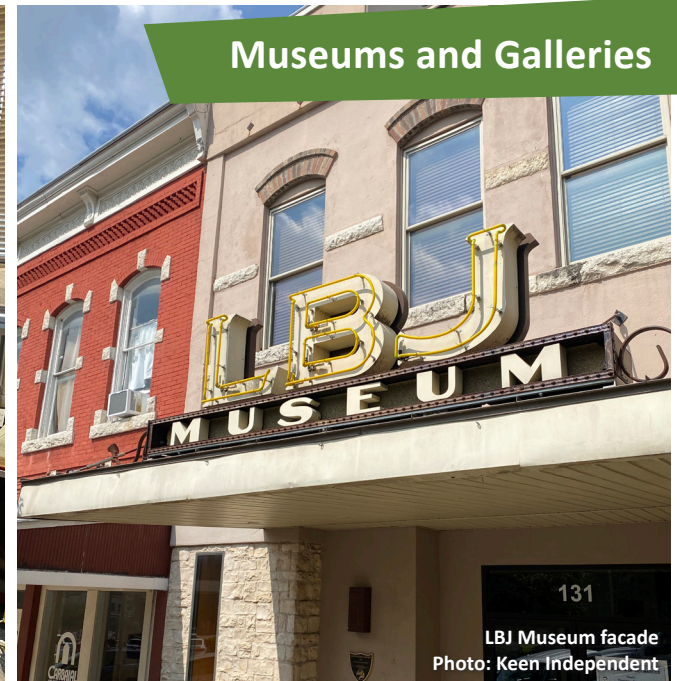
Dunbar School
Photo: City of San Marcos



Eye of the Dog Arts Center
Photo: Keen Independent



Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos
Photo: Keen Independent



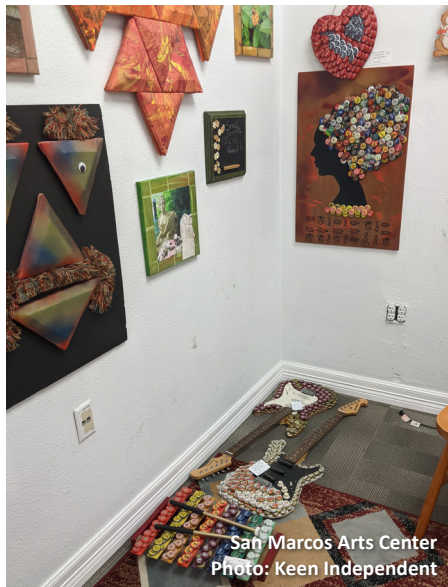
LBJ Museum facade
Photo: Keen Independent



The Walkers' Gallery at San Marcos Activity Center
Photo: Keen Independent



Price Center Gallery
Photo: Keen Independent



San Marcos Arts Center
Photo: Keen Independent

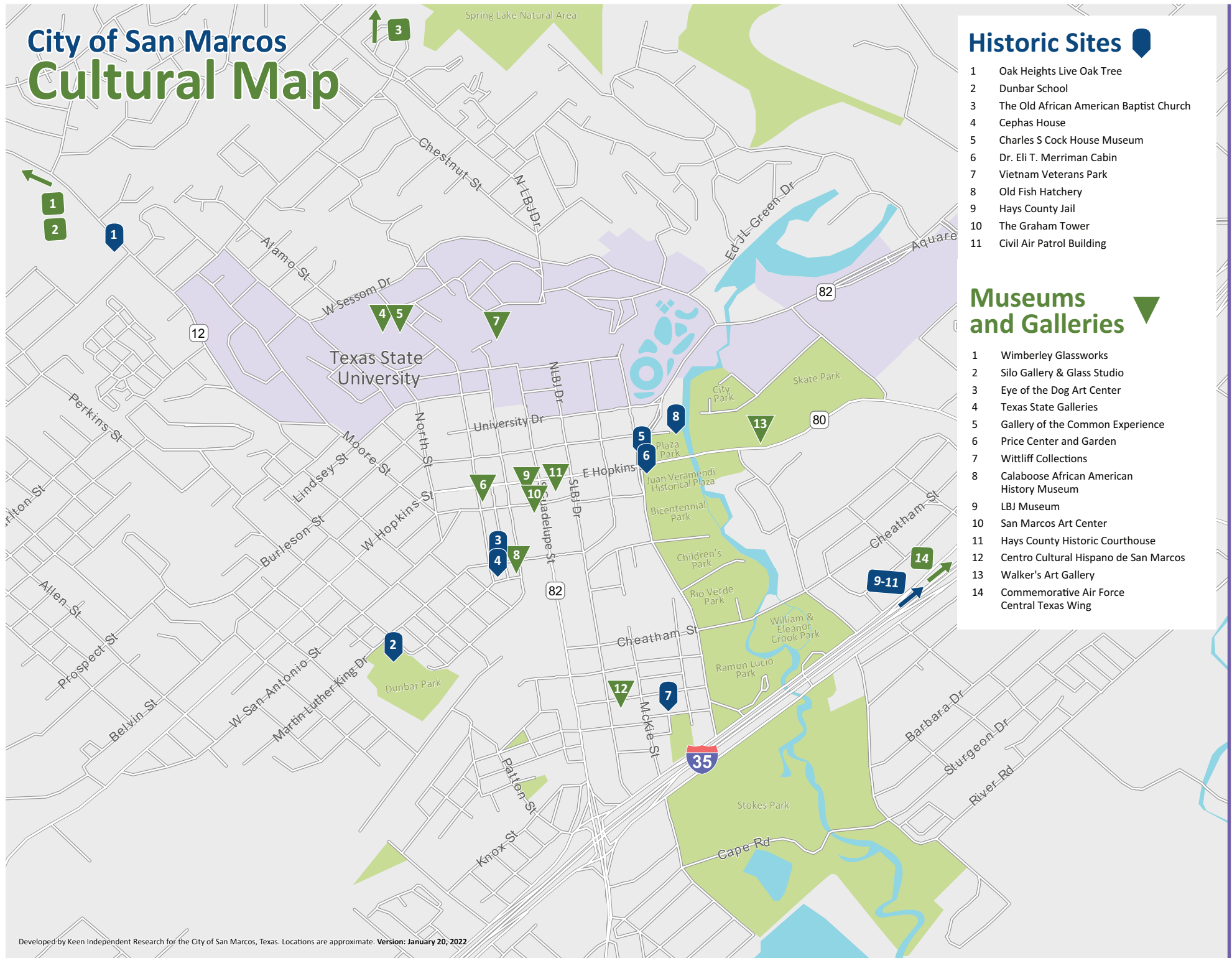


Wimberly Glassworks
Photo: City of San Marcos CVB



Calaboose African American History Museum
Photo: Keen Independent

City of San Marcos Cultural Map



Historic Sites

- 1 Oak Heights Live Oak Tree
- 2 Dunbar School
- 3 The Old African American Baptist Church
- 4 Cephas House
- 5 Charles S Cock House Museum
- 6 Dr. Eli T. Merriman Cabin
- 7 Vietnam Veterans Park
- 8 Old Fish Hatchery
- 9 Hays County Jail
- 10 The Graham Tower
- 11 Civil Air Patrol Building

Museums and Galleries

- 1 Wimberley Glassworks
- 2 Silo Gallery & Glass Studio
- 3 Eye of the Dog Art Center
- 4 Texas State Galleries
- 5 Gallery of the Common Experience
- 6 Price Center and Garden
- 7 Wittliff Collections
- 8 Calaboose African American History Museum
- 9 LBJ Museum
- 10 San Marcos Art Center
- 11 Hays County Historic Courthouse
- 12 Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos
- 13 Walker's Art Gallery
- 14 Commemorative Air Force Central Texas Wing

APPENDIX B.

Financial Considerations

Here, we present cost estimates, case studies and examples of costs associated with Arts Master Plan recommendations.

Feasibility Studies for Performing Arts Centers

The cost of feasibility studies can vary depending on how in-depth the study goes. A full feasibility study generally includes the following:

- **Market assessment.** A thorough analysis of the market to assess the viability of the new facility. This may include a demographic assessment, inventory and analysis of similar venues and assessment of events in the market area.
- **Community engagement/needs assessment.** To understand the needs of the community, a needs assessment entails significant community engagement with potential facility users and visitors. Community engagement may include community outreach efforts as well as interviews, workshops and various forms of virtual engagement.
- **Space plan/program.** A space plan/program is a list of all the spaces that would be included in a new facility as well as the square footage of each space. This plan/program will help inform potential site needs and construction costs.
- **Benchmarking.** Benchmarking involves identifying existing facilities (that are preferably in similar cities) and studying their scope, operations, impact on the community and any other question that may arise in connection to the feasibility study process.
- **Site identification.** This includes weighing pros and cons of potential building locations to assess the best location for a new facility.
- **Capital cost estimates.** Capital cost estimates may include design costs, architecture and engineering, cost of materials as well as furniture, fixtures and equipment.
- **Operating cost estimates.** Even if a city can afford to pay for the cost to construct the building, what is often overlooked is the ongoing operating cost of the facility and understanding how much of the facility's operating costs may have to be covered by gifts, grants and donations each year.

Feasibility studies that incorporate all of these components can cost about \$100,000 to \$150,000. However, some feasibility studies have included only some or parts of the above elements or have been completed in phases, which can lower costs, but may not include major considerations regarding the building's feasibility. Some feasibility studies throughout the country have been performed for as low as \$30,000, but only include a high-level view of some of the above components of a full feasibility study.

Performing Arts Centers

In Figure B-1, we provide examples of performing arts centers with a scope that might be suitable for San Marcos. Construction costs for a performing arts center vary due to factors including, but not limited to:

- Inflation;
- Cost of labor;
- Quality of design and materials;
- Number of seats;
- Number of performance spaces;
- Location and square footage of the building;
- Land stability concerns (building on a hill vs. flat ground);
- Flood mitigation (if built in a potential flood zone); and
- Sound proofing needs (if built near a freeway or train tracks).

Figure B-1.
Recently constructed performing arts centers

Austin ISD Performing Arts Center	
Location	Austin, TX
Number of seats (auditorium)	1,200
Number of seats (black box)	250
Completion date	2015
Building cost	\$36 million
Moody Performance Hall	
Location	Dallas, TX
Number of seats	557
Completion date	2012
Building cost	\$40 million
NESA Performing Arts Center	
Location	San Antonio, TX
Number of seats	750
Completion date	2021
Building cost	\$30.5 million
Cain Center for the Arts	
Location	Nornelius, NC
Number of seats	400
Completion date	Scheduled for Fall 2022
Building cost	\$25 million

Source: Austin ISD Bond Programs FAQs, Moody Performance Hall website, North East Independent School District website, Cain Center for the Arts website.

Other Arts Centers

Much like performing arts centers, other types of arts centers can vary in construction costs depending on the size, scope and other building factors. Figure B-2 provides examples of construction costs of other arts centers with a higher focus on visual arts.

Figure B-2.
Recently constructed arts centers

Boise State University Center for the Visual Arts	
Description: Houses the university's Department of Art as well as public gallery space and a museum	
Location	Boise, ID
Size	90,000 sq ft
Completion date	2019
Building cost	\$48 million
Clifton Cultural Arts Center	
Description: reported to include galleries, classrooms and flexible performance space	
Location	Cincinnati, OH
Size	18,000 sq ft
Completion date	Scheduled for Spring 2022
Building cost	\$8.5 million
Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center	
Description: has 8,000 square feet of gallery space, studios and a 200-seat theater	
Location	Oklahoma City, OK
Size	54,000 sq ft
Completion date	2020
Building cost	\$30 million

Local Arts Agency Operations: Santa Fe Arts and Culture Department Case Study

Santa Fe, New Mexico | 2019 population: 84,683¹ | 2019 local community college enrollment: 7,960²

History. The Santa Fe Arts Commission was established in 1988 and made up of nine members appointed by the Mayor as an advisory body. In 2020, the Santa Fe Arts and Culture Department evolved out of the Santa Fe Arts Commission. Before transitioning to become a standalone department, the Arts Commission was administered under the City’s Tourism Department.

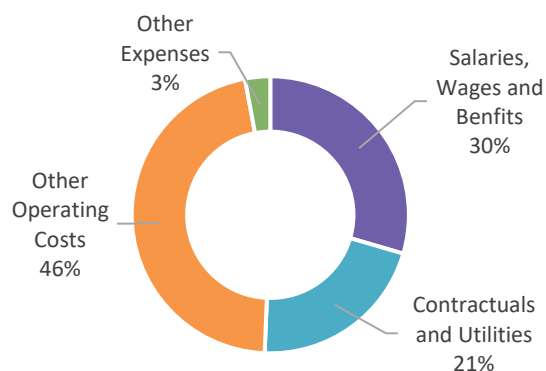
Core programs. The Santa Fe Arts and Culture Department oversees the operations and promotion of the following programs:

- Art in Public Places;
- Youth Arts;
- City Historian;
- Community Gallery;
- Culture Connects;
- Mayor’s Awards for Excellence in the Arts;
- Poet Laureate;
- Santa Fe Youth Culture Passport; and
- Southside Summer Events Calendar.

Key partners. Community partners and supporters include local artists and organizations as well as foundations such as the Lannan Foundation and Partners in Education Foundation.

Funding structure. The Santa Fe Arts and Culture Department fiscal year 2022 adopted budget is \$1.2 million which includes about \$357,000 for salaries, wages and benefits. Figure B-3 illustrates the breakdown of this budget. ³

Figure B-3.
Breakdown of the Santa Fe Arts and Culture Department
fiscal year 2022 adopted budget



Source: City of Santa Fe, Keen Independent Research.

¹ 2019 U.S. Census data

² <https://www.sfcc.edu/data-and-analysis/enrollment-data/>

³ https://www.santafenm.gov/document_center/document/12942

Local Arts Agency Operations: Creative Flagstaff Case Study

Flagstaff, Arizona | 2019 population: 72,402⁴ | 2020 local university population: 21,495⁵

History. The local arts agency currently known as Creative Flagstaff was established in 1997 following a cultural needs assessment sponsored by the Greater Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce. Their primary role is to manage the Coconino Center for the Arts facility, administer pass-through grant funds for the Art and Science Fund, and to oversee various creative programs in the community.

Core Programs. Creative Flagstaff oversees the operations and promotion of the following programs

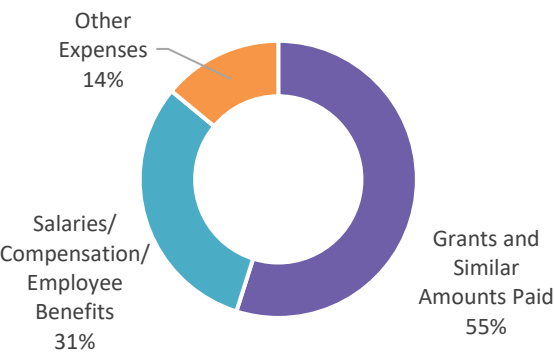
- Six annual art exhibitions, venue rentals and concerts at the Coconino Center for the Arts;
 - Art and Science Fund grants;
 - ArtWalk FLG;
- Viola Awards Gala;
 - Flagstaff 365 Events Calendar; and
 - Professional development, artist workshops and other informal opportunities

Key Partners. Formed as a partnership between City of Flagstaff, Coconino County, Northern Arizona University, Coconino Community College, Flagstaff Unified School District, and Greater Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce. Additional support by Arizona Commission on the Arts, Northern Arizona University, Babbitt Brothers, Art Works, National Endowment for the Arts and Coconino County Arizona.

Funding Structure. In 1988, Flagstaff voters adopted a Bed, Board and Beverage (BBB) tax, adding a 2% levy to gross sales of revenue generated from hotels, motels, campgrounds, bars and restaurants. In 1996, 7.5% of this revenue was allocated to an Arts and Science Fund, coinciding with the formation of what is now Creative Flagstaff. These funds support pass-through grant funds for local art and science nonprofits, which are administered on behalf of Flagstaff City Council by Creative Flagstaff as the lead arts agency for the area.

Creative Flagstaff receives an annual fee of about \$70,000 for administering the grant funds to approximately 40 art, science and culture agencies and special projects, distributing \$447,000 in 2020. In addition, the City of Flagstaff owns the building which Creative Flagstaff operates out of, contributing the use of the building as an in-kind donation.⁶ Figure B-4 shows a breakdown of expenses based on the organization’s 2019 Form 990.

Figure B-4. Breakdown of Creative Flagstaff budget, fiscal year 2019



Source: Creative Flagstaff, Keen Independent Research.

⁴ 2019 U.S. Census data

⁵ <https://nau.edu/about/facts-and-stats/>

⁶ <https://www.flagstaff.az.gov/DocumentCenter/View/57273/CCR-BBB-Revenues-and-Projects>

Local Arts Agency Operations: Creative Waco Case Study

Waco, Texas | Population: 139,236⁷ | University student population: 19,522⁸

History. Creative Waco has been serving as the lead local arts agency for Waco and McLennan County since 2015 with a mission to grow and support a thriving cultural and creative community in Waco and McLennan County, Texas.

Core Programs. Creative Waco oversees the operations and promotion of the following programs:

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Arts-Business Development■ ArtPrenticeship■ Arts Match Program■ Cultural District■ Waco 52 playing cards | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Waco Sculpture Zoo■ Waco Arts Alliance■ Professional development and various artist opportunities |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

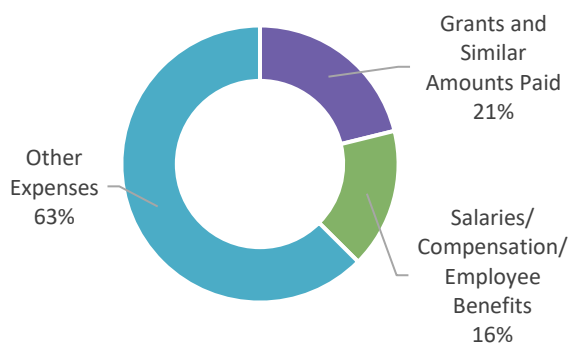
Key Partners. Community partners and supporters include Act Locally Waco, Baylor University, Cen-Tex African American Chamber of Commerce, Cen-Tex Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, City Center Waco, City of Waco, Cooper Foundation, Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce, KWBW Radio, KWTX TV, KXXV TV, Museum Association of Waco, Neighborworks, Prosper Waco, The Bernard & Audre Rapoport Foundation, Texas Commission on the Arts, Waco Convention & Visitors Bureau, Waco Foundation, Waco ISD and Waco Public Improvement District.

Funding Structure. The City of Waco gives Creative Waco funding for about fifty percent of operational costs. McLennan County, national and local grants and fundraising covers other fifty percent of operational costs. The City also uses Creative Waco to conduct grant funding competitively to arts and cultural organizations operationally and gives additional money for that purpose. There is an additional source of City funding for advancing the Waco Public Arts Master Plan. These funds have to go to a nonprofit organization, or an organization sponsored by a nonprofit.

The City of Waco and Creative Waco is currently (as of fall 2021) pursuing a “percent for the arts” program which will bring in a separate funding stream for public art programs that will likely be administered by a formal Arts Commission due to Texas State law.

In fiscal year 2019, Creative Waco’s expenses totaled about \$814,000. Figure B-5 shows a breakdown of expenses based on the organization’s 2019 Form 990.

Figure B-4. Breakdown of Creative Waco budget, fiscal year 2019



Source: Creative Waco, Keen Independent Research.

⁷ 2019 U.S. Census data

⁸ <https://www.baylor.edu/about/index.php?id=88791>

Financial Initiatives to Support Arts and Culture

This section provides an overview of tax initiatives and financing strategies to support arts and culture investments in the City of San Marcos. Respective to the terms of each funding mechanism, the following options could be utilized to finance some of the recommendations from this plan, such as:

- The development or renovation of an existing building for a performing arts center or mixed-use arts center;
- A portion of operational costs for a city-supported nonprofit organization to manage arts programs and related funding; and
- Expanded investments in public art, arts nonprofit grants and special arts project or public festival grants.

Funding mechanisms that could support these recommendations are summarized below.

- **Financing Districts.** The designation of districts can be utilized to support the funding of projects, programs and facilities through tax incentives at the state, regional or local level.
 - **Tax-increment financing (TIF) districts.** Allows taxing entities to repay the cost of improvements to a designated area with the future tax revenues generated by increasing property values.
 - **Public improvement districts (PID).** Also referred to as a Business Improvement District, allows cities to levy and collect special assessments on properties within the city. PIDs may be formed to fund art installations, landscaping and other aesthetic improvements.
 - **Municipal management districts.** Created within an existing commercial area to finance facilities, infrastructure and services beyond those already provided by the City or property owners.
 - **State cultural district.** Encourage arts economic development and community revitalization in designated areas across a state. The Texas Commission on the Arts oversees applications for the designation of new cultural districts in Texas.⁹ An example includes the Dallas Arts District, established in 2009.¹⁰
 - **Cultural tax district.** Establishes local tax authorities to leverage investment in arts and culture. These districts generate revenues through county or municipal taxes that allow the authority to fund cultural organizations within the district, often through sales or property tax.

⁹ <https://www.arts.texas.gov/initiatives/cultural-districts/>

¹⁰ <https://www.dallasartsdistrict.org/>

- **Taxation tools and ordinances.** Economic development funding through city and county taxes can be designated to support the development of arts facilities, arts programs and operations.
 - **Economic development sales tax.** Voters in Texas cities have the option to implement a local sales and use tax to support economic development projects. Type B funds can be used for projects not specifically related to job creation, such as public space improvements, parking facilities or tourism and entertainment facilities.
 - **Venue project tax.** Cities and counties can implement a venue project tax to diversify the sources of revenue for a specific economic development project. Revenue sources could include a sales tax, hotel occupancy tax, event parking tax, event admissions tax and a venue facilities use tax. If a city is at its maximum sales tax rate, legislation allows the voters to approve of a reduction in another existing sales tax to make room for the venue tax. An example includes the Extraco Events Center in Waco.¹¹
 - **Local hotel occupancy tax.** Provides funding for the maintenance of a city's tourism program through an additional use tax on hotel rooms. According to Texans for the Arts,¹² up to 15% of this tax can be allocated to fund art programs which enhance tourism and hotel activity. The City of San Marcos is currently utilizing this tax to fund a convention center that will be paid off soon, presenting an opportunity for more funds to be allocated towards arts programs.
 - **Percent for the Arts ordinance.** Can be applied to any municipal capital improvement project where a determined percentage of the total project budget is set aside for public art. These ordinances can offer a stream of funding for arts projects outside of city budget constraints.
- **State, Federal and non-governmental grants.** Various grants can provide funding for arts and cultural projects, initiatives and operational costs for arts organizations, often in partnership with local government entities.
 - State:
 - Texas Commission on the Arts
(<https://www2.arts.state.tx.us/tcagrant/TXArtsPlan/TAPTOC.asp>);
 - Federal:
 - The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) (<https://www.arts.gov/grants>);
 - National Endowment for the Humanities (<http://www.neh.gov>);
 - Non-governmental and private funding sources:
 - John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
(<https://knightfoundation.org/programs/arts/>);
 - The Kresge Foundation (<https://kresge.org/grants-social-investments/>);
 - National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (<https://nasaa-arts.org>);

¹¹ https://wacotrib.com/news/elections/voters-approve-venue-tax-for-extraco-events-center-overhaul/article_f72183b1-da4f-5c68-8f85-f00e4dede01e.html

¹² https://www.texansforthearts.com/hotel_occupancy_tax

- American Arts Alliance (www.americanartsalliance.org);
- Americans for the Arts (<http://www.artsusa.org>);
- BNSF Railway Foundation (<http://www.bnsffoundation.org/>);
- Esping Family Foundation Grant (<http://www.espingfamilyfoundation.org/grant-guidelines/>); and
- MetLife Foundation (<https://www.metlife.com/about/corporate-responsibility/metlife-foundation>).

■ **Other funding strategies.** Cities and economic development organizations may offer incentives to encourage private investment in their cultural districts and downtown areas.

- Enterprise zone;
- Reinvestment zone;
- Tax abatement agreements;
- Economic development refund;
- 4A/B sales and use funds; and
- Chapter 380 agreement.

APPENDIX C.

Relevant Items from Existing Master Plan

This review includes a summary of current plans for the City of San Marcos with key considerations for initiatives that include or impact arts and culture. Information for each plan is represented as it was written at the time it was adopted. Through this review and assessment, existing and potential arts initiatives have been considered for the 2022 Arts Master Plan recommendations.

The following plans were reviewed:

- Vision San Marcos Comprehensive Plan (2020 — in progress as of fall 2021) (<http://sanmarcostx.gov/3240/Vision-SMTX-Comprehensive-Plan-Rewrite>);
- Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (2019) (<http://sanmarcostx.gov/1193/Master-Plans>);
- Transportation Master Plan (2018) (<http://www.sanmarcostx.gov/339/Transportation-Master-Plan-Appendices>);
- San Marcos Land Development Code (2018) (<https://www.sanmarcostx.gov/1289/Codes-Ordinances>);
- Vision San Marcos Comprehensive Plan (2013) (<https://www.sanmarcostx.gov/685/Comprehensive-Plan---Vision-San-Marcos>);
- Arts Master Plan (2012) (<https://www.sanmarcostx.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2770/Arts-Master-Plan-Draft-2012-PDF>);
- Downtown Master Plan (2008) (<https://www.sanmarcostx.gov/918/Downtown-Master-Plan>); and
- Campus Edge University Strategic Plan (2007) (<https://www.sanmarcostx.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2771/Campus-Edge-University-Master-Plan-2007-PDF>).

Vision San Marcos Comprehensive Plan (2020 — in progress)

The City of San Marcos is currently developing an updated comprehensive plan, which is a rewrite of the 2013 comprehensive plan. It is intended to guide the growth and planning of the City for the next 20 years. As of June 2021, the community, stakeholders and organizations in San Marcos have been engaged in a process to develop a new community vision, goals and guiding principles.

Virtual Open House: February 26, 2021, through March 30, 2021. An online platform was available for the public to provide input on the vision and goals for the Comprehensive Plan, which included a section focused on arts and culture. The platform received 862 views with 419 unique participant engagements. The bullets below are quoted directly from the draft summary report, which represents feedback from the community regarding their desires for development of arts and culture in San Marcos.

Common themes that emerged related to arts and culture:

- Arts and historic preservation groups – create museum district around LBJ museum, Calaboose African American Museum, Cephas House, Hays County Jail preservation and El Centro;
- Provide more amenities for families with children;
- Develop an arts and culture city-funded program with a non-profit status;
- Increase library locations;
- Create an Art Center with gardens and outdoor spaces for community gatherings and events;
- More murals;
- Museums and summer programs for Pre-K to 12; and
- Increase access to arts.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (2019)

The parks and open space system in San Marcos consists of parks, natural areas and linear greenways utilized for passive and active recreation as well as recreational and cultural programs. There are approximately 1,700 acres of parkland in San Marcos representing 48 parks, special use facilities and greenspace. While greenspace makes up the majority of this total 1,436 acres, some of this area is undeveloped and generally fenced off from public use. This plan presents goals and action items organized within seven categories. The specific goal within the “parks and facilities” category related to arts and culture is summarized below.

Goal PF-4: Continue to diversify the parks and recreation system by providing outstanding culture and art opportunities. Action PF-4.1. Continue to identify opportunities to integrate art and culture in the parks and recreation system.

At the time this plan was adopted, the document listed current Parks and Recreation staff, which included an Arts Coordinator, Facility Events Coordinator and a Special Events and Marketing Coordinator. As of fall 2021, the Parks and Recreation website does not list these as current positions.

Transportation Master Plan (2018)

The Transportation Master Plan intends to “enhance transportation safety, minimize congestion, preserve local character and protect the rivers and the San Marcos environment.” The plan outlines goals and policies for the transportation system and develops recommendations built on data and analysis to accommodate continued growth. It considers data from the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, the 2004 Transportation Master Plan and the 2014 five-year transport plan. This master plan aims to account for the changing needs of the community as it grows, while providing safety and mobility for all modes of transportation.

This master plan presents several transportation improvement proposals which could include environmental aesthetic enhancements, such as functional art (benches, shade structures, railings, etc.), sculptures and murals. Aesthetic enhancements could be considered with the following initiatives:

- Bicycle network;
- Pedestrian network;
- Greenways Master Plan; and
- Proposed transit network.

San Marcos Land Development Code (2018)

The Development Code was adopted to promote public health, safety, morals and general welfare, to protect and preserve places of environmental, historical, cultural and/or architectural significance within the city limits of San Marcos.

Key considerations related to arts and culture:

- **Section 3.10.2.7 Plazas.** Typical features include public art. Opportunity to explore the addition of public art and murals to existing plazas and consider in the development of new plazas;
- **Section 5.1.3.4 Home Occupations.** Allowed home occupations includes Author, artist, artisan or sculptor; dressmaker, seamstress or tailor; music or dance teacher;
- **Section 5.1.6.1 Civic A. Civic Use Category.** Places of public assembly that provide ongoing governmental, life safety, educational and cultural services to the general public, as well as meeting areas for religious practice;
- **Division 2: Historic Districts.** Lists all existing historical districts and landmarks which detail cultural and historical significance.

Vision San Marcos Comprehensive Plan (2013)

The prioritization of overall needs for the Comprehensive Plan from 2013 include the development of recreational/activity centers (small) and a cultural arts center. They further note, “The City should continue to increase the frequency and availability of programs and activities, especially for cultural programming, outdoor recreation and the activity center. There is strong support for these initiatives.”

Other key recommendations related to arts and culture are detailed below.

Economic Development: Goal 7 (out of 7). Sports tourism, eco-tourism, retail tourism and the community’s 13,000-year heritage as an economic generator.

Objectives:

- Engage appropriate partners to create a citywide strategy to better protect the area’s natural resources and ecosystem’s history;
- Create an arts and cultural center/district; and
- Develop and maintain a high-quality system of parks, natural areas, greenways and trails to draw visitors and encourage new business opportunities.

Parks, Public Spaces and Facilities: Goal 3 (out of 5). Includes the goal to develop a vibrant central arts district and robust arts and cultural educational opportunities for everyone. The summary of the Parks and Rec Master Plan states that park expert and city staff priorities include developing a comprehensive recreational and cultural arts activity program.

Objectives:

- Create funding mechanism(s) for the area designated as the Central Arts District;
- Establish an Arts District Development Task Force to identify the location for, and implement the creation of the Central Arts District; and
- Develop Art in Public Places Program. Identify areas of the city that could be used for murals/public art displays.

Arts Master Plan (2012)

In 2012, the City commissioned an Arts Master Plan to direct future growth, execution of guidelines, infrastructure, sponsorship and funding for arts and cultural opportunities in the City of San Marcos. The San Marcos Arts Commission states, “Our Vision for San Marcos is a city in which artistic excellence is celebrated, supported, and available to all.”

Seven focus areas were identified through the community and stakeholder engagement process. The following recommendations for each focus area were established by the Arts Commission as priority action items with the most potential impact:

- **Spaces.** Create, develop and maintain new and existing spaces for arts and cultural programming;
 - Develop and build a community cultural and performing arts center;
 - Develop sculptural walking trails along the river corridor and in the natural areas; and
 - Develop a central arts district.
- **Accessibility.** Improve the accessibility of arts and cultural programming for all community members;
 - Facilitate parking and enhance safety near the Square; and
 - Transform city alleyways into cultural passageways with public art, murals and illumination at night.
- **Arts education.** Provide and maintain opportunities and programming;
 - Encourage and support K-12 arts program in the public schools with dedicated art teachers at each elementary and middle school;
 - Strengthen partnerships with arts educators, arts resource providers and the University; and
 - Support and advance lifelong and intergenerational education in the arts.
- **Funding.** Provide and generate funding to develop and continue arts and cultural programming;
 - Implement a “Percent for the Arts” program to fund public art installations; and
 - Increase the appropriation of Hotel Occupancy Tax Funds for the arts.

- **City involvement.** Establish the role of the city in both arts development and staffing;
 - Promote a variety of cultural activities and attractions in the downtown area;
 - Include the development of a central arts district, an Arts & Cultural Center and Art in Public Places policy in the City’s Comprehensive Master Plan; and
 - Allocate funding for a Cultural Activities Coordinator to develop the strategy and model to implement a vibrant city cultural arts program.

- **Promotion and advocacy.** Distinguish San Marcos as an arts and cultural destination.
 - Develop a cohesive cultural agenda and arts calendar;
 - Develop an interactive and communicative arts website that allows for easy linkages to various arts and cultural venues and events;
 - Create an affiliate multi-disciplinary arts organization in San Marcos that serves as an advocacy organization for the arts; and
 - Develop a strategy for using the arts to define San Marcos as an arts destination to promote tourism.

- **Events.** Develop and continue new and current events.
 - Hold a fine arts festival involving everyone in the arts community (visual, performing, etc.); and
 - Expand the incorporation of the arts into the Farmers Market with music, crafts and publicity.

The following implementation steps were recommended by the Arts Commission to execute the 2012 Arts Master Plan:

1. Employ a Cultural Arts Coordinator to assist with the development of youth and adult arts programs, organization of special art events, promotion of community art assets and advocacy of the arts master plan.
2. Establish a general fund budget line item specifically for the implementation of the arts master plan. These funds would be used to implement programs, events, promotional materials, etc.
3. Implement a “Percent for the Arts” policy. This policy would apply to all publicly funded capital improvement projects. Suggest that privately funded development projects include public art as part of the Land Development Code and/or PDD Agreements.

Downtown Master Plan (2008)

The San Marcos Downtown Master Plan was developed from the 1996 Horizons plan and builds upon other earlier master planning efforts from that time. As part of the vision plan section, the document states, “Great downtown environments engage both the sense and intellect with diverse and detailed architectural facades, preservation of key views, engaging signage, attractive furnishings, colorful planting, sidewalk commerce, public art, and many other points of detail.”

Proposed concepts from this plan include the designation of Downtown districts, the establishment of a Public Improvement District (PID) and the development of a commuter rail stop between Austin and San Antonio. The aspects of this master plan that relate to arts and cultural planning are presented below. Noted in the plan, the Main Street program developed by the Washington State Office of Trade and Development proposes that an ideal funding strategy for a downtown investment includes the following formula: one-third city funding; one-third downtown business and property owners; and one-third other contributors.

Key themes and concepts which reference arts and culture:

- **Vision Plan: The Big Ideas.** This section of the plan proposes the designation of several districts, such as:
 - **Entertainment Village and Transportation Hub.** Envisions the southern half of the downtown neighborhood as the location for a future transportation hub for the proposed commuter rail stop, enhanced by a mixed-uses for retail, entertainment and the arts.
 - **Arts Village.** Adjacent to the Transportation Hub is another warehouse district which could offer a transitional space with structures large enough to serve as artist's studios, music centers or other cultural development venues.
- **Campus Strategic Plans.** In 2005, Texas State University completed a Campus Master Plan that proposed a performing arts center and extended campus greens along the edge of the Downtown. In response, the City completed a Campus Edge Strategic Plan, which won the Texas American Planning Association award in 2007, that identified key areas for town-gown integration.
- **Attract the "Creative Class."** As part of building the identity and placemaking of Downtown San Marcos, the plan notes several times that there is an interest to invest in the physical quality of place to help attract talented, creative citizens and employers.
- **Utility Infrastructure: Public Improvement District (PID).** Also known as Business Improvement Districts, PIDs can offer cities a means to improve their infrastructure through a levy to collect special assessments on properties that are within the city or its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). The PID proposal includes the following relevant areas for invested improvements: park, recreation and cultural improvements; landscaping and other aesthetic improvements; and art installation.

Cumulative recommendations from the Downtown Master Plan related to arts and culture include:

- **Identity and Placemaking:**
 - Make Downtown San Marcos an even better residential, learning, social and employment destination;
 - Establish Downtown as a unique destination;
 - Attract talented, knowledge-workers and Creative Class citizens; and
 - Unify the public experience at the vehicular and the pedestrian scale.
- **Enhance Downtown's Unique Characteristics:**
 - Continue to increase the promotion of cultural events that draw people Downtown; and
 - Establish and enhance centers of activity within each neighborhood.

Campus Edge University Strategic Plan (2007)

The Campus Edge University Strategic Plan was developed in collaboration with Texas State University and the City of San Marcos in an effort to align economic development, resources, services and population growth planning. The plan responds to various actions proposed in the previous University Master Plan, adopted in 2005.

Through the development process, guiding principles were established under the topics of identity, community, natural environment architecture and mobility. Under the natural environment topic, it states, “Identify locations appropriate for public art to enhance the visual character of the environment and to provide instructive day-to-day experience.”

Proposed projects from the plan which mention performing and public arts include:

- **Arboretum.** As part of a scenic walkway for the campus and a scenic drive along a heavily traveled road, the plan identifies the opportunity for public art to be included to enhance the aesthetic appearance of this pathway.
- **Fine Arts and Communication Center.** A newly constructed four-story building was proposed to house the University music, theatre and dance programs, situated at a major entrance to the campus. The project proposes collaborative use of the facility by San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District for performances. A 450-space parking garage was associated with this proposal.

Common Themes

This review of master plans provides a summary of the diverse ways that the City of San Marcos has supported the continued planning and investment in arts and cultural programming and infrastructure. While some of the items from these plans have been implemented, there are several unfulfilled action items that are still being requested by the community, particularly for the formation of a city-funded arts nonprofit and the establishment of a community arts center. Some of the common themes that emerged in this review include:

- Support for the establishment of a mixed-use arts center or performing arts center;
- Investment in public art as part of the identity and beautification of San Marcos;
- Interest to expand operational support for the arts through City Staff or a city-funded nonprofit organization;
- Opportunities identified for funding mechanisms to support the arts;
- Desire to establish cultural and historical districts;
- Attract businesses and creative professionals to move to San Marcos; and
- Enhance accessibility to the arts for the underserved and children.

APPENDIX D.

San Marcos Open House Analysis

Keen Independent and the San Marcos Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB) hosted a public open house at the Price Center in San Marcos on July 28, 2021. More than 50 people were in attendance, representing a variety of stakeholders such as the Arts League, Arts Commission, City Council, arts educators, musicians, visual artists and community members. Participants were engaged with the activities, offering a wide variety of ideas and feedback for the Arts Master Plan.

Keen Independent presented preliminary findings and shared early recommendations for the San Marcos Arts Master Plan 2022. Following the presentation, the participants were invited to provide feedback at four different stations:

1. Feedback on initial findings;
2. What's the big idea?;
3. Cultural maps review; and
4. Vision San Marcos (CVB).

Below, we provide an analysis of feedback from these stations.

1. Feedback on Findings

Participants wrote on index cards to provide feedback on preliminary recommendations for the Arts Master Plan based on four areas: plan for the future, enhance current resources, support the underserved and centralize city resources. Comments were added to individual folders to allow for anonymous feedback. The preliminary recommendations are listed after each area below, followed by the associated feedback.

Plan for the future. Keen Independent presented the following initial recommendations on ways to plan for the future:

- Prepare for future performing and fine arts investments;
- Conduct a feasibility study for a new performance facility; and
- Explore revenue-generating tax incentives.

Open House participants provided comments based on these recommendations, which were grouped into several categories as part of the analysis.

Funding and tax incentives. Several participants presented ideas for funding structures and incentives to support the development of the arts in San Marcos.

- "Percentage for art on all public works, even if small."
- "Tax incentives or breaks for [illegible] live music and performance spaces."
- "FUND the arts and culture."
- "Incubator funds for arts businesses? Also, for businesses who promote arts, allow murals, public arts, etc.?"

Facilities for the arts. One of the most prominent points of feedback across the activities was the desire for a performing arts center or multi-disciplinary arts venue. This is consistent with feedback that was provided for the 2012 Arts Master Plan, showing that it is still a priority for the community.

- “Stage for music/other performances on the courthouse square.”
- “Build a venue for music and dancing on the courthouse lawn.”
- “Performing arts center is badly needed; along Hopkins near library/activity center or east of 35? That’s an arts wasteland.”
- “Central public facility for downtown?”
- “Build a community arts center for visual/performing arts.”
- “Black box performing arts center.”
- “Shared maker space.”
- “Public performance event center [with a] stage, film, gallery, community center.”
- “Community maker space network.”
- “A multi-purpose arts center.”

City planning. Participants submitted ideas that could be considered in the planning of new city programs or development initiatives.

- “Develop a sense of culture and civic center on the east/south side of San Marcos across I-35, as it develops. Not just housing.”
- “Design walkable ‘trail’ square art district to the river- art connects the city areas.”
- “We need a boutique hotel downtown with arts focus to bring in art tourism (don’t make tourists stay in the burbs! (look at Conrad Hotel in NYC, great model).”
- “We have numerous craft fairs and a few arts-and-crafts venues but a city of this size with potential for growth needs and deserves a Laguna Gloria Museum and School (Austin), a Dougherty Center (Austin), a SAMFA (San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts), a Lost Pines Art Center (Bastrop), an Inspired Minds Art Center (Buda), OR a thriving Old Town Cultural District as in Lockhart, Johnson City or Fredericksburg.”

City management. Participants provided several ideas related to the management of city programs.

- “City should offer guided (paid) tours of murals and public art.”
- “Establish a full-time city-staffed arts funding department with grant writers to proposal large scale funding opportunities for the city. Six to seven figure proposals from the NEA and NEH.”
- “Build the creative network for families and entrepreneurs.”

Enhance current resources. Keen Independent presented the following initial recommendations for how to enhance current resources:

- Foster partnerships and encouraging collaboration;
- Develop training/mentoring programs;
- Establish arts and historic districts;
- Enhance existing venues for the arts;
- Activate underused spaces; and
- Foster growth of existing organizations and city programs.

Open House participants provided comments based on these recommendations, which were grouped into several categories as part of the analysis.

Events and promotion support. Several participants indicated that they would like to get more support from the City for the promotion of local events.

- “Get the Meadows Center to host art events and promote area wide.”
- “Help with TV and billboard advertising for current events like Mardi Gras.”
- An arts stakeholder stated that they would like the City to use her organization's promotional videos to help promote her organization's annual event and stated that they want the City to pay for a billboard to promote the annual event.
- “Challenges in city cooperation with independent events—Mardi Gras, mermaids, film fest and more.”
- “Support and value the Lost River Film Festival, keep it in San Marcos.”

City planning and resources. Some participants shared ideas for how the city can enhance existing resources in the community.

- “Downtown arts/historic identified walkways, public transportation, art walks to center of town.”
- “More pedestrian friendly transportation integration.”
- “Protect the river. Decrease waste. Balance use of resources. Decrease barriers to use.”
- “Community maker spaces are starting to take shape. We need to support the emerging network to leverage [illegible] mentorship.”
- “Communication and collaboration with ALL stakeholders.”
- “Continue to fund Walker’s Gallery to pay the curator a reasonable compensation for the work.”
- “Create incentive for landlords to have events/galleries/shops at a reasonable rent.”

Use of existing buildings and spaces. Several participants shared ideas for how buildings and areas could be utilized differently.

- “Save historic buildings for art presentations and use to preserve a ‘sense of place’ especially downtown area—many buildings are unused and prone to tear down development.”
- “TX. St. U ‘gallery of the common experience’ could be open to San Marcos Residents and local San Marcos art.”
- “Various outdoor stages and venues seem underutilized. Ivar’s Pub, campus venues and amphitheaters, Dunbar Park, Price Center.”
- “Too many empty storefronts (40 on my last count). Owners get a tax write-off and keep them unoccupied while they watch their property increase in value.”
- “University could open parking lots to public when not in use.”
- “The number of empty buildings in the downtown area is in the dozens—over 35 in my last walk through downtown. Can the city create a policy that punishes landlords who let buildings sit empty for years? There are lots of spaces that could be developed for small businesses, artist spaces, etc.”
- “While San Marcos has a number of small, diverse struggling independent and autonomous venues hosting artistic or cultural events; there needs to be a greater effort to nurture and support museum quality and high-end arts in the city of SMTX, which is not connected to the local university.”

Support the underserved. Keen Independent presented the following preliminary recommendations for how San Marcos can better support underserved communities in arts and culture:

- Speak with diverse community members about how to best serve them;
- Develop targeted programs; encourage arts and culture offerings in diverse neighborhoods;
- Develop and support offerings that serve families and K-12 youth; and
- Encourage/develop partnerships with schools and organizations focused on serving youth.

Open House participants provided comments based on these recommendations, which were grouped into several categories as part of the analysis.

Children and youth. Several participants noted ways that children could be better served with arts programming and education.

- “Program for children.”
- “Children are underserved in town, lets teach them music.”
- “Perhaps after school arts programming.”
- “Education needs more theatre for young audiences—more after school art programs.”
- “Partner with organizations that serve youth/homeless.”

Events and programming. The following comments were related to the types of events and programming participants would like to see, such as more music, opportunities for retirees, and a suggestion to celebrate a different Latin American holiday.

- “More music of all kinds.”
- “Increase opportunity for new community of retirees.”
- “Instead of celebrating Cinco de Mayo we could celebrate “day of the race”—look it up incorporates us all.”

Services and programs. Participants offered ideas for how underserved communities could be better included and represented in arts and cultural offerings in San Marcos.

- “Find ways to support local residents in need, without promoting policies that make homelessness attractive and welcoming to homeless outside San Marcos.”
- “Yes—bringing the underserved community into the arts through sponsored programs.”
- More support for facilities such as the Calaboose [African American History Museum], Centro Cultural [Hispano], etc., that exist in areas of town where people of color live, east of 35 is a total wasteland too.
- “Strengthen infrastructure at Centro & Calaboose among other SMTX community institutions.”
- “Must be free—that is a real barrier to services and programs.”
- “Art therapy—improve community mental health.”
- “Arts commission can do outreach with smaller organizations. Make that a priority.”
- “Health Alliance for Austin Musicians (HAAM) Center for San Marcos musicians [illegible] Hays County as well.”
- “Identify [the underserved]. Ask what they need. Follow through!”

Centralize City Resources. Keen Independent presented the following preliminary recommendation for how to centralize city resources:

- Promote a city-wide event calendar that serves the local community in addition to tourists;
- Promote and refine a central point of contact regarding arts and culture; and
- Foster communication and collaboration between local arts and culture groups.

Open House participants provided comments based on these recommendations, which were grouped into several categories as part of the analysis.

Promotion and communication. Participants offered ideas for centralized promotion and communication related to local events, with several people expressing interest in a shared events calendar that serves locals, tourists and the university. This is a recommendation that was presented in the 2012 Arts Master Plan and is still being requested by the community.

- “More centralized promotion of the arts—maps, signage, walking tours, etc., that help people find what already exists.”
- “Advertising budget for regional events, ad mockup by city for city sponsored events.”

- “Utilize newspaper, city website and other media to notify residents of event time and place. Valentines (old restaurant in town square) used to have great window space for advertising.”
- “Use 89.9 and 92.1 (stations) to announce city events not just university events.”
- “We need better advertisement and communication of events that are coming up (billboards/signs, websites, announcements on local radio).”
- “I would like better communication between the university and town for performing arts, music in the music department [and] for dance and art shows. This should be one central calendar for all residents to have the opportunity to enjoy the arts at the university—I think it would really help bridge the gap between the town and the university.”
- “Provide funding for community liaison to promote and maintain community calendar.”
- “City should post video of events in hotel rooms/everywhere in central Texas also on social media.”

City services. Several participants provided ideas related to city services and programs.

- “Move city hall downtown instead of remodeling where it is for millions of dollars then city hall can become a cultural center for downtown.”
- “Expand Visitor’s Bureau, more support, they do a great job.”
- “More volunteers to teach art at new library makerspace.”
- “A DEDICATED City Arts, Film and Culture Department!”



2. What's the Big Idea?

Participants wrote ideas for arts and culture amenities and events onto sticky notes and placed them on the wall. This activity offered a way for people to see the comments posted and build from one another's ideas.

Events and programs. Participants provided a variety of ideas related to specific events and programs they'd like to see in San Marcos, such as an Art Walk, music programs and juried art events.

- "Youth art activities."
- "Celebrate TX Independence Day more."
- "Juried city-wide art shows with awards."
- "Region wide juried art events."
- "Weekly mariachi needed! Please!!"
- "Performance art."
- "Add different cultural city-wide events—Jewish, Mexican, AA, etc."
- "Poetry readings."
- "Art Walk."
- "Make the arts matter."
- "A civic orchestra... do we have one?"
- "Theatre for all including youth."
- "Music programs for children."
- "Community theatre company... do we have one?"
- "Not Cinco De Mayo, Day of the Race ties in 14 Columbus Indigenous Tejas current."
- "Difficulties with city on various independent events! Film Fest, Mardi Gras and more!"
- "Use the sidewalk space on Hopkins by the library and activities center for artists to set up and sell their art. The artists could rent each spot."
- "More local art, something similar to east Austin studio tour."
- "Keep the Lost River Festival in San Marcos."

Infrastructure. Some ideas presented were related to the use of existing spaces (such as empty store fronts), the development of a new space (such as an arts center) and the coordination of arts events.

- "Find ways to support all of this with structure."
- "Coordinate arts events—city position?"
- "Galleries: Privately owned city/county vacant buildings."
- "Art on the east side of town."
- "Youth and family makerspace network."
- "Performing Arts Center."
- "Build a cultural arts center."
- "Performance venue, gallery studios."
- "How to get building owners to fill empty store fronts."
- "Temporary storefront galleries."

- “Partner with TX State to rent/use their performing arts center.”
- “More outside of downtown.”
- “Art judges from Texas State University and student involvement.”

Promotion. Several ideas posted were specific to the promotion and communication of cultural assets and events in San Marcos.

- “Pole Banners in the Historic District.”
- “Walking maps of murals and historical places.”
- “Incentives for patronage.”
- “Tie art, heritage and culture together to draw more tourism.”
- “Billboards and tv ads for local arts events.”

Historic preservation. Several ideas were focused on the historical heritage of San Marcos related to the designation of a historic district and the use of historic buildings.

- “Save Historic buildings for arts and ‘a sense of place.’”
- “Central arts and historic district combined in downtown with walking streets, offsite parking public transportation.”
- “Historical museums.”
- “Use Historic courthouse for visual arts backdrop a la the saga of San Antonio.”

3. Cultural Maps Review

Draft versions of the 2021 cultural maps were available for review and feedback. Three maps were presented to show San Marcos’ cultural inventory of public art, museums, galleries, historic sites, performance venues and event space. Participants were invited to provide feedback to note any cultural points they felt were missing.

Compared with the cultural map from the 2012 Arts Master Plan which had total 46 points noted for the same categories (minus public art), the new cultural maps comprise of 63 points of public art, 10 historic sites, 13 museums and galleries, and 40 performance venues and event spaces, representing an increase to 126 arts and cultural points of interest in San Marcos.



4. Vision San Marcos (Planning and Development Services Department)

The Planning and Development Services Department contributed a table with an activity to collect feedback related to the arts for the 2020 Comprehensive Plan, currently in progress. Participants wrote on sticky notes and added them to a board under different categories. The prompts on the boards read: Where do you see San Marcos in the next 10–20 years? What would you like to see accomplished for the topics that are most important to you?

Intergovernmental Coordination category. The following comments were received:

- “Eco-social-cultural partnerships.”
- “Link Mermaid Fest with Austin to [San Antonio].”

Arts and Culture category. The following comments were received:

- “Arts and culture south/eastside of San Marcos as it develops.”
- “Infrastructure of community centers, ex: Centro Calaboose, etc.”
- “There is already a San Marcos Arts Council which has been a 501C3 for 25 years—its mission is to be an umbrella org. with membership from other arts organizations—it has been inactive for more than 7 years but could be reactivated. It is community-based and not gov connected—there are guidelines for arts council and could serve as a central hub for all other diverse organizations.”
- “Organized studio tour. Think East Austin studio tour bike/art crawl.”
- Community performance art space, “black Box” and “multiuse.”
- “Free meeting room spaces for non-profits. Help organize new groups, community quality of life.”
- “Supporting engaging school district and university art teachers and students.”
- “More small storefront and warehouse space for artist studios/small businesses.”
- “More free public performance space.”
- “Need a performing arts center.”
- “Provide online calendar of local events (arts, performances, classes, club meetings, meet ups, city-only organizations) in one place to look.”



APPENDIX E.

Qualitative Analysis of Key Stakeholder Comments

This appendix presents qualitative information that Keen Independent collected and analyzed as part of its facilitation of in-depth interviews with 37 community stakeholders including arts organization representatives, city staff and community members. In-depth interviews covered many topics including perceptions of the San Marcos arts market, impacts of COVID-19, how San Marcos differs from other cities, successes and barriers for arts and culture and investment of City resources.

In this appendix, some comments are directly quoted, and others are summarized and condensed. Comments have been intentionally anonymized to maintain confidentiality. Comments are organized by subject matter as detailed below.

- A. Participation in San Marcos arts and culture offerings;
- B. Pre-pandemic and current perceptions of the San Marcos arts market;
- C. Unique differences of San Marcos;
- D. Artistic strength of San Marcos;
- E. Perceptions of success for arts and culture in San Marcos;
- F. Vibrancy of the San Marcos arts and culture scene;
- G. Barriers to participation in arts and culture in San Marcos;
- H. Suggestions for expanded arts and culture offerings;
- I. Recommendations for the City's investment of time, energy and funding; and
- J. Other input.

A. Participation in San Marcos Arts and Culture Offerings

Interviewees indicated that they participate in San Marcos arts and culture offerings in a variety of ways, including as a participant, practitioner or both. Examples are listed below.

- [Arts organization representative] creates surrealist painting and sculptures. Participates the arts in the square as a vendor.
- [City representative] does graffiti abatement.
- [Arts organization] has a studio with rental spaces to teach classes. Making connections is important part of the organization's mission as well as creating a safe, nonjudgmental environment to be creative.
- [Arts organization representative] helped develop original Arts Master Plan in 2012 and transformed public spaces into public art galleries and art shows.
- Art educator.
- [City representative] attends most community events. Supports art and artists.
- [City representative] indirectly supports arts events.
- [Former arts organization representative] was involved in the last plan.
- [University stakeholder] has been involved in illuminating the stories of the Dunbar community.
- [City representative] is involved with arts events that happen at parks.
- [Arts organization representative] comes from a family of artists, participates in the arts market and arts gallery, is a member of a local arts organization and sells art at a booth at the market.
- [Community member] teaches art in arts education program.
- [University stakeholder] is a curator/art advocate and teacher. Part of an artist collective and participates in other organizations' events to build collaborative relationships.
- [Arts and culture organization] focuses on promoting the arts and culture of the Indigenous population within the region.
- [Former City representative] involved with the permanent public arts program and the previous arts master plan.
- [Nonprofit organization] brings new companies to the region or work with existing companies to help them grow.
- [City stakeholder] organizes and supports events in San Marcos.
- [Arts organization representative] facilitates the monthly arts square and other programs, fine arts scholarships, etc.
- [Arts organization representative] has a vision of building an arts community.
- [Arts organization representative] focuses on preservation of architecture. Has been involved in Arts Squared, attends community events, etc.
- [City representative] volunteers with the summer in the park concert series.

B. Pre-Pandemic and Current Perceptions of the San Marcos Arts Market

Keen Independent asked interviewees about their perceptions of the arts market before the pandemic as well as the current state of the San Marcos arts market.

Pre-pandemic state of the San Marcos arts market. The following provides information on interviewees' observations regarding the state of the San Marcos arts market before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Steady activity. A few interviewees commented on the vibrancy and occurrence of events in San Marcos.

- A very vibrant arts community for generations that ebbs and flows depending on the year. People were figuring out how to give artists a place to show their art.
- "Pretty steady. Feels like there was always something going on Not exactly thriving compared to a larger city."
- Over the past few years, the arts have increased in some ways and decreased in others — possibly due to several places that used to be live venues have closed, but there are still some diehard arts locations in town.
- Passionate arts community. Seeing San Marcos through murals. Putting it more in a public space means a lot to San Marcos so it is accessible to everyone.
- Seemed like there were lots of different activities. There was some level of vibrancy but could be better.
- Intertwined with historic preservation.
- "We have a rich group of artists here."
- "This community is very appreciative of the arts."

Lacking support and awareness. Other interviewees expressed that there was a need for support and resources in order for the arts market to improve.

- Art initiatives were not well known and community was not well informed.
- Need a "safe place" for voices to be heard.
- People support each other, there's grassroots movement, but the galleries have a hard time making it.
- Diverse types of arts programs but seems like it was "hard to get your arms around" the overall management of it.
- Not a lot of performing arts venues (plays, dance, spoken word).
- There were arts organizations closing before the pandemic. With the cost of rent, vandalism, vomit on the sidewalk — a lot of businesses come and go.
- Arts programming (market) falls on private business owners.
- There is a lack of history and knowledge about succeeding in the arts.
"City government is keen to support the arts but doesn't know what it looks like."
- "A hard market for artists to be successful in On the music scene, we do not have a community here who are willing to pay."
- Events are organized by small nonprofits and community organizations, and we struggle. Why have a master plan if you aren't going to implement it and have to rely on volunteers and nonprofits? City needs a budget line item for arts, not just grants.

- There is a disconnect between the I-35 breaking up the Hispanic community from the rest of the town.
- “When people think of arts, they don’t think of music ... and vice versa.”
- Arts and culture are lacking if you exclude the university. The City piggybacks off the university, but the demographics are not all college attending clients.

Current state of the San Marcos arts market. The following provides information on interviewees’ perceptions of the state of the San Marcos arts market today.

Some progress towards normalcy. Several interviews indicated that the arts market is slowly picking up and events are returning.

- “Hesitantly waking up.”
- “There is a thirst for it now.”
- People might have more appreciation for artists based on work they did during the pandemic.
- Trying to engage more with hard-to-reach populations/areas/low-income areas.
- Visual artists seem to have been doing ok. Nonvisual artists have suffered more than the visual artists.
- Arts squared was well attended recently. Not as many people attending as pre-COVID. Population [is] either not comfortable yet or not interested.
- Arts/culture events are starting to come back now.
- We’ve got a lot going on. Very diverse. A lot of it is young people (20s and 30s).
- It’s hard to know because we haven’t been seeing the events happen yet. They are scheduled though. “From what I am hearing, people are desperate do to something.”
- It is the best it has ever been, even though we [arts organization] shut down for some time.
- Market is active. Events are happening and businesses are open. “... impressed with the efforts that have been made.”
- During the pandemic, some groups who applied for grants managed to have events online. They learned adjust to the change to bring art to even a farther-reaching audience. “They pushed through.”
- University has made significant progress. Not perfect, but have diversified student body and faculty.
- Outdoor events [are] where people want to be.
- Events are beginning to slowly pick up. Seen more opportunities and events lately.
- People get excited about festivals and annual events.
- Safe to say that we are pretty much coming out of the pandemic. “Starting to get back to some semblance of normalcy.”

Need for additional support. Many interviewees indicated that the arts market needs more support in various areas (e.g., awareness, outreach, business assistance, venues, funding).

- There needs to be a lot more support and awareness of the arts.

- “We really do not have a facility that is focused on arts and culture.”
- Arts from the Hispanic community are there, but not coming in. Seems like there should be a merging of those communities.
- Outside of San Marcos, the arts market has restored ... San Marcos is lacking.
- Nobody is doing particularly well. Maybe the student population has different priorities for expendable income.
- “I don’t think anybody is able to make any money at it.”
- “We are still not where we need to be with the audience.”
- “I don’t know that the market is there yet.”
- City hasn’t quite caught up in some ways. When it comes to arts planning, there needs to be more outreach and inclusion of more diverse groups.
- “The government is kind of standoffish. It’s not itself well integrated.” In terms of the arts, you hardly see city people at events, even some arts commissioners.
- Need support from the City, e.g., rental subsidy, infrastructure improvement.
- “I don’t think we are telling our story well and we need to be better at doing it.”
- We had to surrender the arts funding for the grants that people had been awarded. On a scale from 1-5, we are currently at a 1.

COVID-19 impacts on arts organizations. Interviewees made observations about how arts organizations are faring during the pandemic.

Struggling to survive. A number of interviewees reported that local arts organizations were struggling to survive during COVID-19.

- “It’s been tough.”
- “We [City] don’t go the extra mile to do something ... they [arts organizations] want everyone to do everything for them.”
- We [arts organization] came to a complete standstill. Closed everything except for private studios Gave us a chance to see what was profitable, what was fun, what is needed.
- Government did not offer much support or resources — money was asked to be returned and saved for next year.
- Suffering ... don’t know how they are surviving. Difficult year for the arts eco-system as a whole.
- [Discussing HOT tax] [City] is beholden to only fund things that have to do with tourism “Obnoxious hurdle.”
- “We’ve received letters from organizations who cannot afford rent.”

Staying afloat. Some interviewees reported that some organizations managed to adapt and stay open.

- [There was] 30–40k of disposable/reserve income that helped them [arts organization] through the pandemic.
- We [arts and culture organization] know how to be adaptable. Virtual encounters were well received.
- Arts organizations are still going strong. A co-op downtown just opened and is going strong.

- Most [City program] members are part time, which allowed them to keep their jobs through the pandemic.
- We [arts nonprofit] are still here because of the stewardship of our funding. We have a healthy bottom line, so we were able to pivot
- Most are surviving. Some of them have had a difficult time. Many service-oriented businesses include the arts, but that hasn't happened this last year. Yeah, there's a lot of struggle, but I think we will come through.
- There is a lot of online sharing of art. Some organizations have been able to do this more than others.

C. Unique Differences of San Marcos

Keen Independent discussed with interviewees what makes San Marcos different from other cities in the region.

Passion for arts and culture, history and conservation. Some interviewees expressed that there is a collective passion that sets San Marcos apart from other cities.

- "A lot of different passionate interest groups."
- People of similar interest gather ... sharing of ideas among generations.
- A lot of people who really care about arts and culture, environmental protection, protecting history.
- Attention to nature and conservation/environment. Finding the balance between conservation and business development.
- "Such a diverse population here."
- Historical society is pretty active.
- It has a longer history. Possesses a lot of cultural treasures.
- "We have a very passionate community" which can be both good and bad ... "polarizing."

University and youth population. Several interviewees reported that the university and youth population were unique facets of San Marcos. Comments are summarized below.

- The University ... and presence of youth and youth culture.
- University campus located adjacent to downtown.
- We have a university here, which has both good and bad It is hard to sell art to students who are not ready to invest or appreciate it yet.
- The college students bring a lot of energy and money to the town.
- University tries to have a presence in all things. Lots of activities for the residents. Could be better though.
- The young student population.
- Young "blue" (progressive) vibe in a "red" area.
- We have the university, so young demographic. They bring their own brand of crazy.

Geography. A few interviewees commented on San Marcos' geographic location.

- “It’s not Austin or San Antonio, but it’s a good distance from both [cities] to have its own identity. It’s a bigger town with a university.”
- Proximity to other cities.
- Sitting at the epicenter of growth, between the two busy metro areas. Fastest growing county is Hays.
- Largest city within the two-town region.
- Strategically in a great place between Austin and San Antonio.
- “So much ... it’s beautiful — right part of the hill country [and has] really wonderful natural formations “

River. Several interviewees indicated that the river is a special characteristic of San Marcos.

- “We have an incredible river that goes through the center of town.”
- “The river is our jewel.”
- We have the river. We love it and care for it. It’s a source for tourism, which we don’t always like.
- The river is a “backbone” of the town.
- We’ve got this great river and touchstone things involved with the river. Concerts and festivals about the river.
- “River is what makes it super unique. Surrounding towns have rivers, but I think the fact that we have springs from the ground ... is special.”
- The river culture is unique. Spring fed river and the benefits that has provided to ancient cultures.
- The river and water attraction. Huge advertising for their water parks.

Other differences. Interviewees provided examples of other distinguishing factors of San Marcos.

- Growth competing with environment, endangered species, existing neighborhoods founded around the river. “Art comes from those unique features of the community.”
- Low-mid income with a lot of poverty. Unified community, but it’s hard to sell art to people who struggle to put food on the table.
- Even though the city is growing, it still retains much of the hometown/small town feel where people know and support each other, particularly in the arts community.
- “Great venues, restaurants and employers.”
- So many opportunities to integrate art into infrastructure.

No major differences. One interviewee indicated that San Marcos wasn’t much different compared to other cities.

- “Not a whole lot.” Texas is a lot like one big community. Every town looks like same.

D. Artistic Strength of San Marcos

Keen Independent asked interviewees about San Marcos' artistic strengths.

Vibrancy and community. Many interviewees commented on the City's accepting and diverse communities.

- "There doesn't seem to be a lot of pigeonholing A lot of acceptance and love of alternative art, street art, performance art."
- Anytime we have a college town, it makes the city vibrant.
- Eclectic community and quality art.
- Not a lot of gatekeeping. Easy to become known. "If you want to make something happen it's pretty easy to do so."
- Liberal mindset. It's okay to be a bit weird and that's why we love it.
- The university has its strengths. It's ok to be weird here. More liberal-leaning demographic for Texas. The open-mindedness of having an educated populous.
- Vibrancy of the community. Recent period of growth that has brought in many people from different cultures. Diversity of people.
- A lot of young people, but also a great mix of older influential people that tell a rich history of art.
- Diversity is embraced a lot.

Murals. A few interviewees emphasized the murals as a particular strength.

- Murals and mini murals all around town.
- I think about the mural arts program.
- Mural arts program, traffic box program.
- Mural projects — Art woven into the community.
- Sponsored murals.
- Visual art murals.

Other input. Interviewees provided additional comments and feedback in regards to San Marcos' artistic strength.

- The "DIY" scene ... people make things out of what is here.
- The [mermaid] festival is the biggest in [San Marcos]. Morning glories is a big deal.
- Monthly arts market on courthouse lawn.
- Outdoor music events — not necessarily strength but it exists.
- Performing arts center at the university.
- The local people who really enjoy all these arts and culture events. We have so many venues and art available to freely go look at and participate in.
- Would be great to see the arts scene broaden its scope more.
- The towns people that do it because they love it.

E. Perceptions of Success for Arts and Culture in San Marcos

The following information provides interviewee perspectives on what success looks like for arts and culture in San Marcos and their recommendations for achieving success.

Views of success in arts and culture. Feedback from interviewees indicates that there are two key contributing factors for success for arts and culture: community participation and financial support.

Community participation. Some interviewees indicated that community involvement and an inclusive arts culture are leading factors for success.

- “Participation, how many eyes see it, how many people are going Pre-pandemic was successful ... Mermaid parade had a lot of attendance ... huge student population ... always looking for a reason to celebrate.
- Success is involvement and enthusiasm. Success should be measured if citizens and tourists are both involved in something.
- Community supporting the arts. Well-funded events [and] well received events with high turnout. Successful art events would be various types of arts being promoted. Events along the river and outdoor spaces.
- ... it’s about community engagement. Trying to generate the sort of art that will inspire both university and local community alike to want to make the extra drive or stay late after work to engage with what’s happening here.
- It hasn’t always been about monetary success, it’s about, ‘did you reach the audience that you were intending to reach, and did you do your best putting forward whatever project you were doing?’ It’s about the folks that did show up, were they reached, were they touched, will they come back again, will they want to see other parts of the city?

Opportunities to experience arts and culture. Others commented on the availability of opportunities to attend events as well as experience art throughout the city.

- Having the time and location and permission to explore and experiment.
- Ideal success is having a continuous opportunity for art to be seen, displayed, purchased, etc., to as many people as possible including people of different socio-economic backgrounds.
- Success means San Marcos is known as a go-to location at any weekend of the year. People can come here and something is always happening. Employing artists every weekend. “There is sustained, regular, consistent activity.”
- ... where people go specifically for the culture. They’re artist communities. A community that is really art-business centric. When I go to another town as a tourist, I expect to see art and culture.
- We [the City] help facilitate the expression of all forms of art and make that easily accessible to our public. We support them and provide platforms for the expression and consumption of art.
- It contributes to the quality of life for all groups. Everyone benefits from a strong arts culture. Not exclusive to the rich or the poor, the black or the white.
- “Getting out.”
- Having a packed show.

Financial assistance and other support. Interviewees reported on funding and infrastructure as components for success.

- Regular people would appreciate the arts and funding for the arts. Seen as a priority to have cultural centers that are vibrant. And activities that bring people to the town. “To have fun.”
- Having financial support for artists, helping promote artists even outside of town/state, having installations/events to bring in visitors who are willing to make day trips, and having more people touring the arts and getting them to shop around downtown.
- Increase occupancy downtown.
- Enhance infrastructure.
- More vibrant downtown with buildings occupied.
- Art galleries, clothing store, restaurants, small shops.
- The success of any art is it can survive and finances can support it economically.
- Not a lot of money in the town/college town so success is hard to come by.
- Put our money where our mouth is.

Suggestions to increase success for arts and culture. Interviewees also offered recommendations for ways to enhance the success of arts and culture in San Marcos.

- Build a better relationship between university and [the City].
- Try to figure out how to partner up with more organizations.
- The City should allocate a portion of the HOT tax annually to stabilize and enforce artistic programs.
- Arts and culture would have additional success in San Marcos if there was a center where Indigenous arts and culture could be taught and promoted.
- ... more drama and theatre — more opportunities for performance.
- New things (art, events, projects) would be accepted if [they were] promoted better.
- Display art in front of vacant stores.
- The venues that are available, they could be better, or they could be more.

F. Vibrancy of the San Marcos Arts and Culture Scene

Interviewees were asked whether San Marcos had a vibrant arts and culture scene.

Views of San Marcos’ arts and culture scene. Interviewees provided mixed observations on the vibrancy of arts and culture in San Marcos.

- “I feel like it’s got a lot of heart to it and a lot of people want to see it succeed.”
- Yes, a lot of creative people in San Marcos.
- Yes, but there are a lot of ways they can do better.
- It’s trying. Yes. It’s better if you live here and you know about it.
- Strong vibrant scene with not a lot of buyers, perhaps an emerging art community.
- Not yet, but in the early stages of it.
- The arts culture is small but vibrant.

- Arts — definitely. Culture in a historical sense — not really highlighted. Cultural mermaids/music — quirky but yes vibrant.
- No More funding would make it more vibrant Needs a performance venue Not sure why art is not highlighting the river.

Feedback for improving vibrancy. Interviewees also gave suggestions as to what would make the City’s arts and culture scene more vibrant.

- “Most things are centered downtown ... [interviewee] would like to see something outside of the 12-block radius ... utilize parks more ... pop up venues in different parts of the city.”
- “Growing and new communities springing up — that would make it more vibrant.”
- A public garden would be nice (i.e. sculpture garden).
- If the City could get behind the arts commission and underwrite things [that] are worthy. “Patronage completes the circle.”
- Better communication about events for people to participate in. It can grow and is growing. New exciting and creative ways to promote the arts programs.
- Outside of the university, I [interviewee] wish there was a larger theatre space. We have the Texas Musical Theatre, but maybe we just don’t have people in town who are interested in coordinating a production there.
- [There is a] lack of facilities to do the arts and maker spaces. The library opening helps.
- More cross pollination between university and community.
- There are a lot of “shoulds” listed without a proper plan or follow up. I would go back to the infrastructure. How does downtown look? Clean it up and get it functioning, ensure the cleanliness and safety of people walking around.
- Classic festivals, i.e., Lebanese festival, Korean festival.
- Could use another “just for fun” parade.

G. Barriers to Participation in Arts and Culture in San Marcos

Keen Independent asked interviewees to describe barriers that exist in San Marcos in regards to participation in arts and culture.

Funding, development and resources. The following provides information on interviewee perceptions of financial and developmental barriers.

Funding. Many interviewees reported funding as a particular challenge for participation in arts and culture offerings.

- Number 1 barrier is financial.
- Funding is very tight. The White people have the money.
- Gospel concert used to be funded, but the rules changed in a way that made them no longer qualify for funding. Not sure if it was because it was faith-based organization.
- Arts community is fractured/competitive for funds. None of them would be able to stand on their own without extra funding.
- No support/tax breaks/resources to make it easier for venues to survive.

- Funding for a public facility to help. We don't have a symphony because the university has it.
- [Discussing a cultural celebration event] It costs a lot of money. The City should support us so we don't have to pay for rentals.
- "We [City] can't afford to build everything we want."
- Budget constraints to improve accessibility, e.g., ASL interpreters, wheelchair access.

Development and resources. Others commented that lack of resources (e.g., venues) and inclusiveness were barriers to participation.

- Plans never get fully implemented but then a "new plan" begins. The plan sits on a shelf and is not prioritized to be executed.
- "No real artistic strength ... nothing that stands out ... no famous resident artist.
- "The challenge is, 'What are we doing?' There is no plan, no one vision, no one group ... there are silos made up of the same kind of people."
- Lack of collaboration to make San Marcos unique.
- Biased effort when we talk about arts in [San Marcos] (e.g., good ol' boy system).
- Arts commission and staffing is buried in parks and rec department.
- Not enough performing arts space. Artists are out of space to display their work. We don't have a theater at all in the city. "There is zero space for a theater." "Huge gap in performing arts space."
- I [interviewee] feel like there's a shortage of venues and all of the premium space goes to bars and restaurants for the college kids.
- [There is a] challenge for organizations to have equal time and opportunities to be involved.
- Not a lot of time/resources to improve.
- [There are] a lot of big egos that keep things from happening.
- Trying to find the right location to accommodate scale and scope.
- The lack of great facilities. The City doesn't have great venues owned by the city.
- Not much diversity (a lot of able-bodied middle aged white people).
- It's still a good ol' boy town with 85 percent Latino population The Latino culture is not into theatre. It's not on their priority list. Battling the culture both ways — it's a Latino city run by a white population.
- Systemic/cultural barriers and segregation in neighborhoods.

Communication, outreach and marketing. Many interviewees reported on specific challenges related to awareness, communication of events and availability of information.

- Getting the word out about the opportunities to receive funding or participate in different things. Need for more outreach to the community to reach some organizations.
- Lack of awareness. There is not a strong way to find out how events are happening.
- Sometimes groups doing events are not good at marketing and promotion.
- I have a problem with is our city website. They recently redid it and it didn't help. CVB [San Marcos Convention and Visitor Bureau] tries to help promote events on their page, but it's hard to get to.

- They [the public] don't know about them [arts offerings] or they feel unwelcomed.
- The barriers are communication and marketing getting the word out. "If people don't know what's happening, they won't go."
- Currently no central source for information.
- Artists are introverted not necessarily involved in socializing and marketing.
- Communication is a big one City is a pretty big facilitator for arts programs throughout the city, but they don't always talk to the university or county about collaboration.
- Outreach is poor, social media is great but not everyone has it.
- Could be better about letting people know what is going on.

Accessibility. Interviewees provided feedback regarding barriers to accessibility in various areas (e.g., financial, language, physical location).

- Things need to be free or really cheap.
- A lot of our events are English oriented and we have a lot of Spanish speaking population. Would be better if there was some attempt at a translator or be more intentional.
- Language barrier.
- [Make participation] more accessible and more welcoming to the general public.
- Lack of affordable hous[ing] drives people away. Majority of students live outside of city limit.
- "[There is] a lot of community resentment because there is not a lot of affordable [housing] ... it's structured more for the university."
- Transient community.
- Not enough availability, arts is funneled through college and universities, not truly publicly available or community serving.
- Harder for residents to purchase or engage in art.
- One of the challenges from the cultural side — which may impede passion — has to do with the more prevalent cultural groups, they are dealing with issues for basic needs. They are dealing with facility issues as well.
- The east side feels left out pretty often.
- Racial divide between east and west San Marcos. Need more arts on the east side.
- The area is limited to a small golf course and we are limited to one-quarter of the golf course. We should have more access to land.
- Physical access. Transportation to public spaces.
- Crossing the freeway is a barrier, it separates the community.
- People have a hard time getting to events.

Parking. Interviewees also expressed that parking was a significant barrier to participation in the arts.

- There is no parking. They could do a lot more to bring the town in.
- Parking is a huge one. People are going to give up if they have to circle five times to find a spot.

- “Parking could hinder people. Most things are centered downtown ... would like to see something outside of the 12-block radius.”
- Parking is limited, only street parking [is available] which can be spread out.
- Parking sucks.
- A paid parking garage is nearby but no one wants to pay or can’t afford to.

No observations of participation barriers. One interviewee commented, “No barriers to participation ... people just need to go to them.”

H. Suggestions for Expanded Arts and Culture Offerings

The following information provides feedback about what arts and culture offerings interviewees would like to see more of in San Marcos.

Events and opportunity space. Several interviewees reported that they would like to see more events as well as facility space that can be utilized.

- Biggest hope and dream is a performance space.
- We need a focused arts district downtown where we have galleries already. Once you form an arts district, you can get more grant money.
- Historically significant events and international culture.
- More City-sponsored events, more family friendly events and more venues.
- Artistic type seating areas that leads people from downtown to the river and back (like highline in NYC).
- Hays County is wonderful to work with and is supportive and they help with events. Would like to see better quality events, more successful events.
- Places for open mic.
- Travels throughout Texas for music events. More music events. More small event space. “Opportunity space is something that we lack.”
- A little bit like New Braunfels. Rooftop venues. Partnerships to solve parking issues — parking offered when it otherwise would have been empty.
- Live music that is not in a private business. In a place that is more family friendly, not in bars.
- Amphitheater near the river is underutilized, needs to be updated and expanded.
- More variety, more venues. “The performing arts has no footprint in the city at all.”
- More opportunity for folks to do things.
- Community space that could be used flexibly.
- More concerts, outdoor concerts, beautiful summer in the park concert series. They pull some great talent, but would be cool if they could pull some bigger talent.

Theater. A few interviewees commented that they would like to see more theater offerings.

- Theatre is number one. Poetry number two. And I'd really like for us to have an art park, number three.
- Need more theater and music. We can do theater at the park. We currently just have a few shows at the senior center and does not have much visibility.
- We have lots of live bands, we have several arts studios and museum type places to see art, lots of exhibit for various artistic media. Sometimes groups will do poetry, open mic. I would like to see theatrical performances.

Physical art. Interviewees also mentioned a desire for more physical art.

- Physical art — sculpting.
- Painting.
- More murals and sculptures.

Diverse and inclusive engagement. Some interviewees indicated a need for more inclusive offerings and outreach.

- More that highlights our Hispanic population. So much of what we do seems to be centered around the university students. Would like to see more directed towards residents. "Celebrate more diversity in public art."
- More welcoming to outsiders/new residents.
- Involve students and professors from the University.
- More offerings inclusive of all ages.
- Broad/diverse range of participating artists.
- Activities that are accessible for children.
- Engagement with different parts on the community.
- Always more public art where anyone can enjoy it regardless of economic status.
- Experimental artists.
- Artists residency for 55+.
- More arts education for adults.

Funds and City improvements. Interviewees also provided feedback regarding City funding and organization.

- Funding dedicated specifically to the arts.
- [Referring to the 1 percent tax break for the arts for new construction] there's been millions of dollars of new construction over the past five years, but the 1 percent tax was a missed opportunity that could have been put towards greater funding for the arts and performance space.
- "A physical facility dedicated to arts and culture" A facility to facilitate events and have it adequately staffed to tie in key players in the community (university, organizations, county, etc.) to create a regional draw rather than a community draw.
- Having a separate arts and culture department and having [dedicated staff].

- Improving infrastructure, e.g., buildings, parking.
- “A visually pleasing downtown is something I would like to see.”
- Maximizing what already exists in the community.

I. Recommendations for the City’s Investment of Time, Energy and Funding

Keen Independent asked interviewees where the City should invest its time, energy and funding to improve arts and culture.

General insights. A few interviewees provided general comments regarding the City’s approach to improving arts and culture in San Marcos.

- There should be a focus on “making things better than just okay.”
- “There are correct ways to do things and then there is the beautiful way.”
- Implementing the master plan when it’s done.
- [City representative] doesn’t feel the City should be the one doing that. Feels private institutions would do a better job.

Funding, grants and other City resources. Many Interviewees expressed a need for more financial resources.

- More funding would be helpful. Bigger commitment to funding to help expand the offerings. The City could do more to advertise and promote.
- We can’t get donations from the White community. We need additional funds.
- A dedicated budget for the arts would help us get the word out about our events and other cultural events.
- Upping the budget overall.
- There are a lot of cities who have a strong arts presence because they have a tax percentage that goes into a public art fund to invest in quality public art and pay artists well for it. One percent for new construction tax would help make it a priority.
- The chamber might be a great partner. Having the funds available. Maybe having a presentation to how they can take advantage of placemaking.
- Grant programs that incentivize things that are hard to find, like collaboration. A grant where collaborators are required.
- What the City is doing for arts and culture now needs to be reimaged. Our [City] budget hasn’t kept up.
- Incentives are needed to open up new spaces.
- If the City had an effective person to work with grants. Would prefer to see that go to individuals and business to put up murals.
- Utilizing other funding sources, like they do in other cities in Texas. Looking at other communities and how much they take from HOT tax. San Marcos has great architecture, promoting heritage through architecture and the architects.
- City should have a friendly process for creative businesses to get started, rather than expecting new business owners to learn the ropes on their own. City should then have a mentoring program to guide new businesses so that they do not go under so quickly.

- I [interviewee] know that they offer incentives for companies to come. A cool area doesn't look like every other area. Stand out and look unique and interesting.
- Grant money or incentives to maximize the music scene/venues.
- Put more resources into structural attention. Utilize the unused space downtown. Build the arts culture with the existing resources. "Part of the resources need to go towards thinking outside the box."

Communication, outreach and collaboration. Interviewees also reported that the City could do more to engage community members, collaborate with partners and close the communication gap.

- Collaboration between organizations.
- Downtown master plan — placemaking on all four sides of a building. Having business owners buy in to make a cohesive mural would be beneficial.
- The City is supportive of the arts in a lot of ways, but I think they could do with a little more promotion of the arts.
- A way to get arts groups together so they are not competing with each other for funding. Plans could be coordinated to target areas in town that don't have access to the arts, like the east side of I-35, Redwood community, etc.
- Encourage participation, be a champion that is at every event.
- Would like to see a calendar of events. That has been struck down because it would be too hard to maintain.
- Greater connection between the university and the arts. "It's like there is a wall there."
- Outreach to communities that feel disconnected from the arts.
- Better communication, more involvement, more creativity.
- Children — developing an arts appreciation at a young age will grow the community.
- Be sure that the local community is honored and that the areas that are being overlooked. How to enhance the arts in different areas geographically.
- School district and community could be great partners to engage with.
- Be inclusive, [don't] make [arts and culture] available only for the privileged.
- Enabling organizations to be successful. Not necessarily funding, but creating an environment to help foster that. Getting organizations together to form an arts league. Do something that brings together the community. Be the convenor.
- I do think it would be advantageous to actively collaborate with university departments on arts endeavors. The performing arts space doesn't have all the resources to do the things we would like to do, but we do have resources with equipment and staffing.

Venues and facilities. A few interviewees suggested that the City invest more resources towards increasing the amount of usable venues and facilities.

- Directly into a performance arts venue that can include all the arts.
- Museum district.
- Arts alliance (like Creative Waco).
- Music venues.
- [We] need more galleries.

- Maker space! We need one.
- [Discussing whether there is infrastructure or space within the city for a performance/arts center] I think space can always be found.
- A theatre venue and performance space.
- San Marcos doesn't have a performance venue that is a place where people can congregate or participate in art. The university has that, which fulfills some of the needs of our community.
- We should have an Indigenous cultures center.

Master plan. One City representative commented, "Implementing the master plan when it's done."

Public art. Interviewees recommended that the City focus on enhancing public art.

- Would like to see more public sculptures ... more temporary art installations. [There is] a lot of undecorated space that could be made prettier.
- Public art in all forms — performance, visual, statues, murals comedy, outdoor theater, etc. Once you get it in front of people for free, then you can build the mindset to support the arts.
- Arts can be woven into wayfinding, transportation.
- Having more art in infrastructure, i.e., bridges, walls.

J. Other Input

Keen Independent collected general comments from interviewees as well as insights for the arts master plan and any other recommendations for the City.

General comments. Some interviewees shared general comments about arts and culture in San Marcos.

- "If you have a vibrant arts community everything else just flows."
- We are at a point where we are starting to grow.
- Gatekeeping mentality that isn't aware of by those gatekeeping.
- From the outside looking in, it looks like the City is doing something, but the plan doesn't get implemented. They think they are doing a good job. "I don't think they are self-aware of this issue."
- "People have ideas, but they don't have a history of organizing events."
- Not a very strong music centered community or performance art. Primarily no infrastructure or (financial) support for it. Not a lot of university participation.
- "Lots of interest, but a lack of venues."
- [There are] so many things in our town, but we are micro-focused.
- "Always been that way" mentality versus new mentality of wanting to change without understanding history.
- Interesting friction between longtime residents and new residents. Seeing the community grow and a lot of people attribute that to the university.
- Compared to Cibola, San Marcos economy has been picking up. Things slowed but didn't stop — industrial developers are "on fire," multi-family developers are booming.

- “Develop and build a community cultural center” — we don’t have that. “Arts education” — not sure what the City is doing to support this. We get about half of what we should be able to get from the “arts taxes.”
- Arts is not just for the white community, it’s not pretentious.
- Small/medium businesses won’t benefit from the 1 percent tax break.
- The arts council is bringing in some new blood and active artists, rather than just caring community members. I like that we’re doing art, we’re just a bit limited in scope for a progressive college towns.

Insights for Arts Master Plan. Interviewees also provided feedback regarding the master plan.

- [Discussing potential challenges to the Arts Master Plan] The roadblocks are likely to be changed in political pendulum swings. It happened here and will happen again. No one knows how to be moderate in this town, it’s one extreme or the other. It’s a very visible funding request.
- [Discussing how politics might affect the Master Plan] Hopefully it’s acceptable enough on all sides that all sides would want to implement it. Which means it might be a blander plan. It’s hard when you can’t say yes to everything. We have so many needs.
- Maybe in the master plan Do we need to remind arts commission that we want to connect downtown to the river? Theater? Seeding? Etc. They might forget. The people judge the art itself.
- “Last master plan — calls for a multi-million-dollar arts center I would caution whether dumping a bunch of money into an arts center makes sense with other community investment.”
- “The Arts seem to be an afterthought in this town. It does no good to have a City Arts Master Plan if there is no City department/staff/funding to implement it.”
- The last arts master plan was great, but lacked follow through and a plan for implementation. Don’t rely on volunteerism and nonprofits to execute the master plan.

Additional recommendations. Interviewees provided feedback and recommendations for how arts and culture can be improved in San Marcos.

- Improve upon what works.
- Dollars could be spent more on experiencing art.
- Blanco Gardens might not fit within historic arts and culture but if there are decisions being made around the connection between historic and cultural preservation, looking at how to extend it across different areas that may have some historic resources that can be preserved through these cultural districts.
- There are some concerns from the African American community with the mermaids. Within Eddie Durham park, statue was moved. “Community would like to see symbols that represent the culture of that community.”
- “Having the City host trainings and things like that to show that everyone has a seat at the table to gain access to these funds.”
- “Need a unified policy for public art display in public facilities.” Also, clear agreements as to who curates public art in public buildings.

- “Centering Indigenous voices by decolonizing systems.” Do some research around how the nation is responding to Indigenous people. Land reclamation is not a rare thing anymore. There are creative ways to do that.
- The arts commission to be more like the “friends of the arts” as far as outreach, not just the governmental tasks. To get out and do more relationship work More of the outreach and to help with the culture.
- Think about how social media plays into this, how we get the word out about the arts.
- No organized arts group to champion all, but it is there as the undertones. “It is coming from all different directions Help us create that champion.”
- Maintain cleanliness.
- Control over after dark behavior downtown.
- Mentoring program.
- [Community member] hears a lot from others that “there’s a concept that when the City comes up with a plan, it becomes their plan” rather than strengthen what is already in the works. “If they would spend more time and focus on what is needed to keep these things going rather than coming up with a whole new plan”
- Biggest gift you can give us, tell us what we already know.
- Lack of a community theater. We really need one and want to build one and proper classrooms but we have to purchase the property.
- Measurable goals: Can we add one more music event that’s downtown where we close off the street at the courthouse lawn, per year. Theater performances at the rec hall, the stage. Increase annual shows by one per year.
- I think if the City can find a way to engage the commuters, to invite us to stick around or engage with the community more, I think there is potential for a huge market of people who could stay in town longer and avoid the traffic back to Austin, etc.
- We need to find a way to shore up our collaboration between the community and the university. The local grants are excellent, well received and utilized, but I think there are more/better ways to form relationships that are ongoing with recurrence or annual events. Something that helps us maintain our collaboration and to grow it.
- Know the history and invest in that. Don’t move aside the work of the people who have been living here.
- Looking at our assets and figure out where we can strategically place art and don’t just focus on downtown, but the east side could use more.
- If we could tap into the college programming/talent, it would be an excellent partnership.
- Not having been here long enough [City representative], I’m curious if there is an organization looking out for the local artists. Sometimes artists tend to avoid organizations, but if there were some organizing entities who can lend a voice, that’s terrific, I’m just not aware of them. I think that interest and support could be expressed as part of the master plan as part of the stakeholder participation.
- Free childcare, galleries and concerts so everyone can have the chance to attend.

APPENDIX F.

Virtual Workshop Analysis

Keen Independent conducted a virtual workshop to collect additional community feedback about arts and culture in San Marcos for the Arts Master Plan. This appendix summarizes the virtual workshop analysis conducted by Keen Independent. It includes:

- Questions included in the virtual workshop;
- Demographics of workshop participants;
- Comfort attending public events involving large crowds;
- Trends in current venue use;
- Quality of the arts and culture scene in San Marcos;
- Recommended cultural experiences for visiting friends or family;
- Community event gatherings;
- Suggestions for more arts and culture activities and public art; and
- Other input.

Questions Included in the Virtual Workshop

Workshop participants were asked to provide contact information, organization and position title (if applicable) and basic demographic information, including age, race, ethnicity and gender. Participants were also asked if they were an artist and whether the arts had made an impact on their life.

Workshop participants were asked when they foresaw being comfortable attending public events indoors and outdoors that may involve large crowds.

The virtual workshop then asked participants to provide an estimate of how many times per year they attend the following events:

- Indoor performing arts;
- Outdoor performing arts;
- Visual arts;
- Craft fairs or visual arts festivals; and
- Movies/films.

Participants were also asked what other events they prefer to attend, how often they attend annually and if they attend events outside of San Marcos.

The virtual workshop asked participants to rate the overall quality of arts and culture in San Marcos as well as:

- Estimate how much they pay to participate in each arts and culture activity (on average);
- Describe success for arts and culture offerings in San Marcos; and
- List any barriers that exist to participation in arts and cultural activities.

Finally, the virtual workshop included the following questions:

- Where would you take friends or family visiting San Marcos for a cultural experience?
- Where do people gather in San Marcos?
- What types of community event gatherings are most important to you?
- What arts and culture activities would you like to see more of in San Marcos?
- Would you like to see more public art in San Marcos?

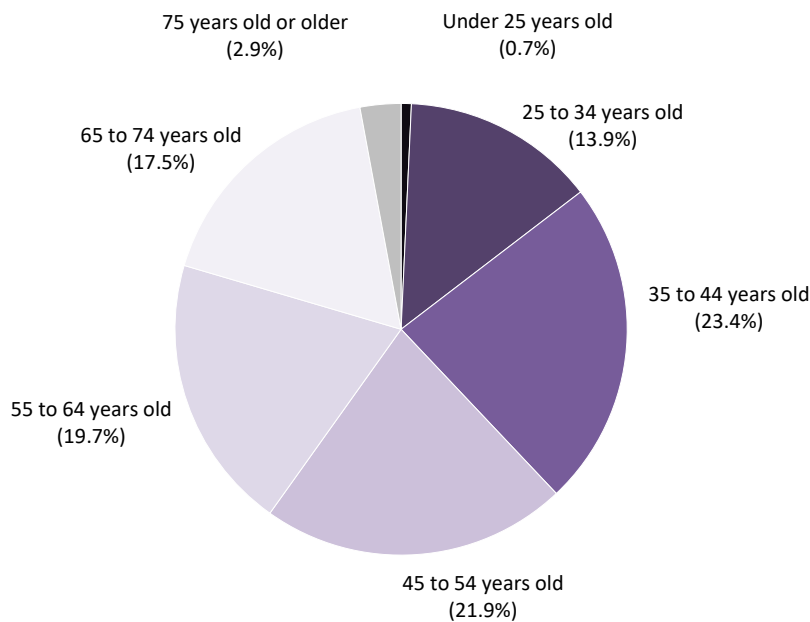
The virtual workshop was available for six weeks, from May 4 to June 14, 2021. Keen Independent received input from 140 participants.

Demographics of Workshop Participants

Keen Independent examined virtual workshop participants’ demographic characteristics, including age, race, ethnicity, gender and location.

Age of participants. More than 80 percent of respondents were in the age range from 35 to 74 years old, with respondents spread relatively evenly between each 10-year age group. In addition, some respondents were in the age range from 25 to 34 (13.9%), and a small percentage of participants were either 75 years or older (2.9%) or under 25 years old (0.7%).

Figure F-1.
Ages of virtual workshop participants



Source: Keen Independent Research from 2021 virtual workshop.

Race, ethnicity and gender of workshop participants. Figure F-2 presents participants’ race, ethnicity and gender. Most respondents identified themselves as White (79.9%) and about five percent preferred not to identify their race. The remaining participants reported being a member of a minority group, e.g., African American (1.4%) or Native American (2.9%) or were two or more races/ethnicities (5.0%).

About 22 percent of respondents identified their ethnicity as Hispanic.

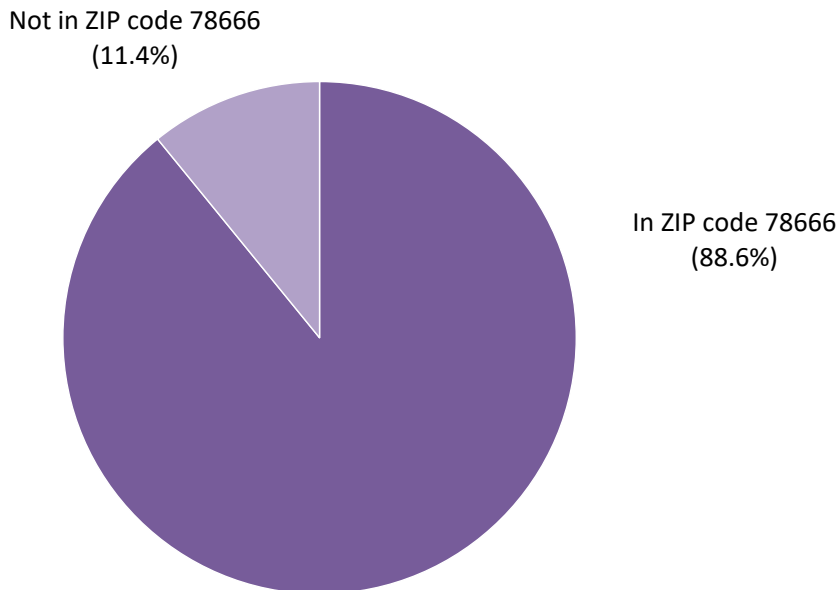
Figure F-2.
Race, ethnicity and gender of virtual workshop participants

	Percent of respondents
Race	
African American	1.44 %
Asian American	1.44
Native American	2.88
Other	6.47
Preferred not to say	5.04
White	79.86
Two or more races	2.88
Total	100.00 %
Hispanic	
Hispanic	21.58 %
Non-Hispanic	73.38
Preferred not to say	5.04
Total	100.00 %
Gender	
Female	66.19 %
Male	31.65
Preferred not to say	2.16
Total	100.00 %

Source: Keen Independent Research from 2021 virtual workshop.

Location of participants. Nearly 89 percent of workshop participants reported living in San Marcos, in ZIP code 78666, and the remaining 11 percent were located in other nearby ZIP codes. Figure F-3 below presents these results.

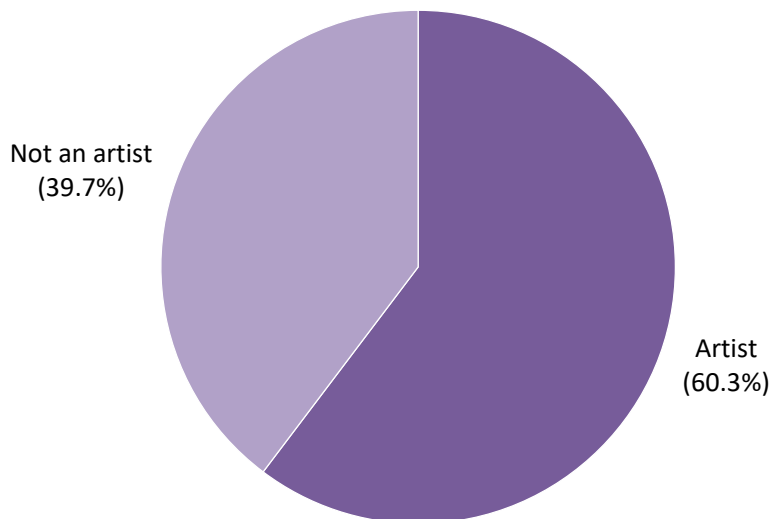
Figure F-3.
ZIP codes of virtual workshop participants



Source: Keen Independent Research from 2021 virtual workshop.

Relationship of participants. Figure F-4 below illustrates virtual workshop respondents' relationship to the arts — either as an artist or non-artist. About 60 percent of participants reported being an artist.

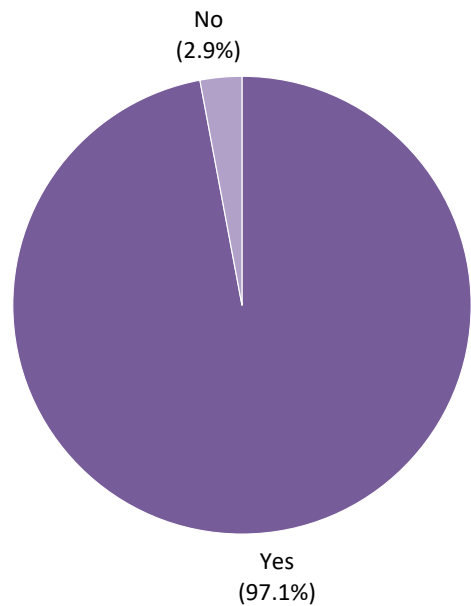
Figure F-4.
Virtual workshop participants reporting being an artist



Source: Keen Independent Research from 2021 virtual workshop.

Impact of the arts on workshop respondents’ lives. As shown in Figure F-5, the majority of participants indicated that the arts have had an impact on their lives in some way.

Figure F-5.
Arts impact on workshop participants



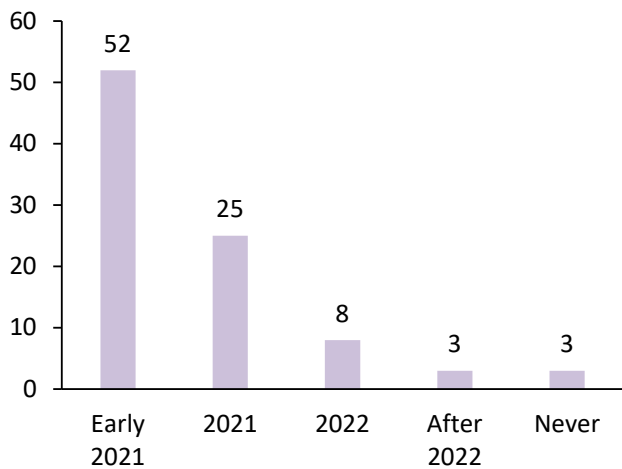
Source: Keen Independent Research from 2021 virtual workshop.

Comfort Attending Public Events Involving Large Crowds

Workshop participants were asked when they would foresee being comfortable attending public events indoors and outdoors that may involve large crowds.

Indoor public events. Figure F-6 shows the earliest responses for those that provided a specific year or time frame, with respect to attending indoor public events.

Figure F-6.
Earliest year workshop participants anticipated being comfortable attending public events that may involve large crowds indoors



Source: Keen Independent Research from 2021 virtual workshop.

Participants were asked why they responded the way they did. Concerns included:

- Trends in COVID-19 cases;
- Vaccination rate; and
- Virus mutations.

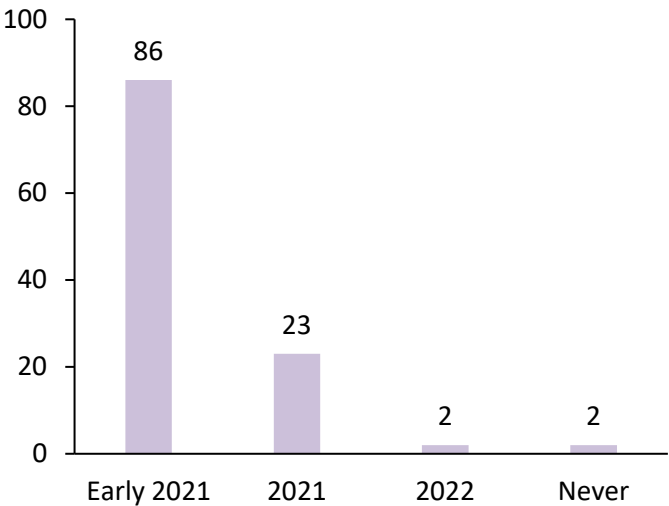
Some workshop participants did not provide a time frame, citing uncertainty, but instead said they would feel comfortable attending a crowded indoor event after some benchmark was reached. People reported they would be comfortable attending after:

- Being vaccinated;
- Friends and/or family are vaccinated;
- Certain populations (such as children or at-risk individuals) are vaccinated;
- Herd immunity is established;
- Safety protocols at the venue (including mask requirements and social distancing); and
- Trusted health officials (such as experts at the CDC) deem it safe.

A few workshop participants reported that they never attend indoor crowded events, even before the pandemic.

Outdoor public events. In contrast, when asked about the earliest time frame for attending crowded outdoor events, more respondents indicated that they compared to Figure F-6. Figure F-7 shows these results.

Figure F-7.
Earliest year workshop participants anticipated being comfortable attending public events that may involve large crowds outdoors



Source: Keen Independent Research from 2021 virtual workshop.

Arts Attendance

Keen Independent also examined workshop participants' reported attendance in various art and entertainment event settings. Participants were asked to provide an estimate of how many times per year they attend different types of events. These results are presented in Figure F-8. The most common response for each event type is highlighted in yellow.

Figure F-8.
Annual frequency of event attendance by type

	Less than once per year	1 to 2 times per year	3 to 5 times per year	More than 5 times per year
Performing arts (indoors)	9.38 %	34.38 %	29.69 %	26.56 %
Performing arts (outdoors)	12.70	26.98	28.57	31.75
Visual arts (i.e. museums, galleries)	5.47	32.03	23.44	39.06
Craft fairs or visual arts festivals	5.56	34.92	25.40	34.13
Movies/films	14.84	15.63	24.22	45.31

Source: Keen Independent Research from 2021 virtual workshop.

Virtual workshop participants were also asked what other events they attend and how often (per year). The most common types of events respondents noted included:

- Parades;
- Athletic events or activities;
- Farmers markets;
- Conventions (e.g., automotive shows, tattoo conventions);
- Live music/concerts/shows;
- Festivals (e.g. film, art);
- Visual art (e.g., art openings, conferences, workshops)

Respondents were asked whether they attend events outside of San Marcos. Participants noted a total of 30 locations that they visit. Locations that were mentioned five times or more are presented in Figure F-9.

Figure F-9.
Locations of events attended outside of San Marcos

	Number of mentions
Austin	62
San Antonio	46
Houston	20
New Braunfels	17
Dallas	8
Wimberley	7
Fort Worth	6

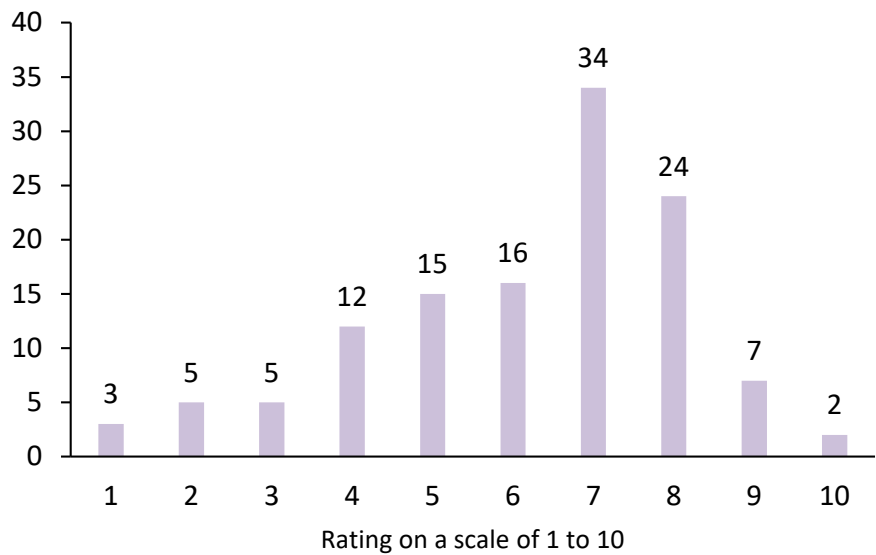
Source: Keen Independent Research from 2021 virtual workshop.

Quality of the Arts and Culture Scene in San Marcos

Keen Independent also examined workshop participants’ reported perceptions of the quality of arts and culture in San Marcos. Participants also provided information about the average price to participate in arts and culture offering as well as descriptions of success and barriers to participation in arts and cultural activities.

Overall quality. Workshop participants were asked “How would you rate the overall quality of arts and culture in San Marcos?” As shown in Figure F-10

Figure F-10.
Overall quality of arts and culture in San Marcos



Source: Keen Independent Research from 2021 virtual workshop.

Participants also provided comments explaining why they responded the way they did.

Arts and culture scene is good overall. Some participants reported that the quality of arts and culture in San Marcos is good, in general although there is room for improvement.

- “San Marcos has an active and engaging arts environment that is welcoming.”
- “There is certainly a much more active arts community then in the past”
- “... We are still growing, things are looking very well here!”
- “Art squared and all the murals around town are really great, but I think there is some room for improvement as well.”

Lack of funding or attendance. Several workshop participants reported there is a need for more financial support for the arts as well as advertising to increase community participation.

- “Very difficult to know what’s happening in this city”
- “Not much financial support. Sponsorships difficult because we are small and same businesses get hit up. Locals don’t want to pay cover or entrance fees.”
- “Advertising events helps as does event parking.”
- “We have a great, great community but could still do a better job of reaching those who aren’t already involved.”
- “Comparing to other communities arts is underfunded.”

Lack of venues and performance spaces. Some participants also mentioned that they would like to see more support for venues and performance spaces.

- “I would like to see more gallery events in the area that are easy to access.”
- “Lacking a quality venue/listening space for live music.”
- “It would be nice to have more museums or spaces dedicated to contemporary art or art festivals that focus on social/participatory art.”
- “Performance venues are sorely lacking, especially at the citywide level.”

Lack of inclusion. A few workshop participants reported that more diversity in the arts is needed.

- “Not inclusive enough. Favors mermaids too much to the detriment of other groups.”
- “Too much of one culture lately, that I don’t identify with.”
- “Need more Native American and Indigenous arts and culture in San Marcos that is accessible to working class people.”
- “It would be awesome if more artwork was centered around our Hispanic population.”

Lack of events or targeted offerings. Some workshop participants expressed that the City needs more events, in general and for different groups within the community.

- “Everything targets college kids, not families except parks dept.”
- “[San Marcos] lacks events that cater to the 40+ age group. We lack museums, galleries and public art in this town.”
- “Really lacking live music. Not great organized programming for how to get involved in the arts. Not many organized celebrations of culture.”
- “I think there could be more music, theater, or art installments/events outdoors.”
- “Too many Crafters.”

Average cost to participate in arts and culture activities. The virtual workshop asked participants how much they pay to participate in each arts and culture activity. As shown in Figure F-11, more than 40 percent of respondents indicated that they pay \$20–\$50 for each activity and 35.6 percent reported they pay less than \$20. About 20 percent of participants noted they pay more than \$50.

Figure F-11.
Average amount spent to participate in arts and culture activities

	Percent of respondents
Less than \$20	35.77 %
\$20 to \$50	42.28
\$50 to \$100	16.26
More than \$100	5.69
Total	100.00 %

Source: Keen Independent Research from 2021 virtual workshop.

Success for arts and culture offerings. Workshop participants were then asked how they would describe success for arts and culture offerings in San Marcos. The feedback Keen Independent received indicated that there are various factors that contribute to success.

Attendance, community involvement and accessibility. Many respondents commented on attendance and community awareness of events as contributing elements of success.

- “A successful arts and culture offering would involve the community, allow folks to have a role, and be accessible.”
- “Events that bring the general community together with the university community in a positive way”
- “Success is measured in attendance and the willingness of community individuals to financially support the effort.”
- “Access to events for all ages and socioeconomic status ...”

Variety of arts and culture offerings. Some participants indicated that they would like to see a broader range of offerings that resonate more with the community. Others reported that events and opportunities offered on a regular basis would be beneficial to the arts community.

- “I think diverse offerings that fit the character or enhances the areas they are in.”
- “Standing events and programs offered for children and adults.”
- “A greater emphasis by the city, university and private entities to offer a range of options.”
- “There is not enough variety of cultural events.”

Venues. Workshop participants also suggested that success in arts and culture would include more arts and culture facilities.

- “MORE visual and performing arts venues in downtown: theaters, art film theater, galleries, multipurpose art center.”
- “Larger venues for stage productions would be considered a success.”
- “I think there could be more space for arts besides the University, such as an Art Center, for dance, music, gallery space.”

Public funding. Some participants expressed that success includes financial support from the public.

- “Adequate public funding and better advertisements.”
- “I think ‘successful’ would be local patrons spending money on local art, shows and events so that it is sustainable to live in town and be an artist.”
- “A downtown with affordable rent for independent artists, designers and gallery owners and a population that was interested in and could afford art.”

Diversity and inclusion. A few workshop participants commented on the inclusiveness of arts and culture events.

- “[Would like to see more] events, specifically for gay men. The suppression in Texas is suffocating.”
- “... we have a lot of opportunity here to expand on our diversity and the university — we really need to collaborate.”

Barriers to participation in arts and cultural activities. The virtual workshop asked respondents to identify any barriers that exist to participating in arts and cultural activities.

Advertising and outreach. Many respondents reported that lack of marketing and awareness of events were barriers.

- “Not enough communication and events information about art openings, performances and all things art.”
- “Awareness is a huge barrier. There are many events I personally would have attended had I known about them in advance to plan — or known at all.”
- “Crappy advertising. [Facebook] is not the only place to advertise.”
- “... it’s sometimes very hard to find schedules and info about local events, or you only hear about it afterwards.”

Lack of financial support. Participants also expressed that financial barriers exist to participating in arts and culture events, including funding for the arts and socioeconomic issues (e.g., poverty).

- “A rather arbitrary distribution of grants by the Arts Commission No tax credits for historic homes.”
- “Silo-based thinking; lack of revenue and funding.”
- “Funding for supplies and space to represent local cultural art.”
- “Money. Covid. Poverty and lack of good paying jobs for local citizens.”
- “1. Poverty. 2. Non-local downtown property owners.”

Performance space and venue locations. Several workshop participants indicated that there is a need for more performance spaces and/or dedicated locations to display art.

- “Lack of dedicated spaces, curated exhibitions and coordinated informational campaigns.”
- “Parking limits attendance and a reputation for limited parking precludes consideration of an event.”
- “I don’t know of any place in San Marcos that is a proper venue for a variety of music.”

Diversity and inclusiveness. Several participants commented that the lack of diversity and inclusiveness in programming was a barrier to participating in the arts.

- “I’d like to see the cultural, language, and economic barriers really come down.”
- “More confluence between the University and in the community would be beneficial. Also, more exposure of and support for artists of color less on the map.”
- “It seems a little too self-contained. It is always the same participant/attendants keeping it alive. I don’t see much Hispanic public involvement.”
- “San Marcos is fairly notorious for not checking to see what it’s very diverse population wants, or checking to see what other groups are doing.”

Time. A few workshop respondents indicated that they simply do not have the time to attend arts events.

- “Time can be a restraint and then just simply ... am I interested.”
- “A lot of the art markets are during the day on the weekend and since I work during the day, am unable to participate.”

Recommended Cultural Experiences for Visiting Friends or Family

Workshop participants were asked where they would take friends or family visiting San Marcos for a cultural experience. Keen Independent categorized responses by location/type of location that received the highest number of mentions (10 or more). Figure F-12 below shows these results.

Figure F-12.
Locations participants would take friends
or family for a cultural experience

	Number of mentions
Texas State University venues	35
The river	34
Price Center	27
Downtown	19
Meadows Center	17
Parks	17
Restaurants/bars	17
Art Squared Market	15
San Marcos Art Center	15
Mermaid locations/events	11
Murals	11

Source: Keen Independent Research from 2021 virtual workshop.

Respondents were then asked, “What is the most memorable part about San Marcos arts and culture?” Most of the comments Keen Independent received indicated that the most memorable parts of San Marcos arts and culture fell under two categories: the community environment and events/locations.

Community environment. Several participants reported that they found the people and the diverse nature of the community were most memorable.

- “The artists themselves, the community or artists and supporters, the architecture, Summer in the Park.”
- “The people and their stories. There is a lot of diversity.”
- “For a small town, we have a robust civic mythos: the river and its history, ralph, mermaid.”
- “The community!”
- “The eclectic mix people and art styles.”

Locations and events. Virtual workshop respondents listed other memorable aspects of arts and culture, such as the different locations and types of events San Marcos has to offer. These include:

- Art Squared;
- Concerts in the park;
- Eye of the Dog;
- Festivals;
- Mermaid Ball;
- Murals;
- Parades;
- Price Center;
- Sculpture and statues;
- Spring Lake;
- Summer in the Park;
- The river; and
- University theatre performances.

Community Event Gatherings

Keen Independent asked workshop participants where community members gather in San Marcos. A total of 26 locations were mentioned. Presented in Figure F-13 are the locations that participants referenced 10 times or more.

Figure F-13.
Locations where people in San Marcos gather

	Number of mentions
The river	65
Parks	49
Downtown	41
Restaurants/bars	36
Art/music events	12
Library	10

Source: Keen Independent Research from 2021 virtual workshop.

Participants were then asked about the types of community event gatherings that were most important to them. Responses ranged from specific events to targeted offerings to event characteristics.

Specific events and ideas. Keen Independent received comments from respondents regarding the types of events they found most important. Examples are listed below.

- Art fairs and shows;
- Cultural events;
- Farmer's markets;
- Festivals (e.g., Eddy Durham Jazz Festival);
- Mermaid Ball;
- Parades;
- Park events (e.g., movies, live music).
- Performing arts and theatre;
- River clean up;
- Sights and Sounds; and
- Wine walk.

Target diverse audiences. Several participants indicated that the most important types of gathering were those that were inclusive to diverse audiences, including families.

- "Gatherings that bring diverse groups together and serve multiple purposes."
- "Those where all can enjoy because they are not expensive but offer lots of fun and socializing for family and the community."
- Events that are inclusive and diverse. Events that serve all visitors, both residents and tourists. Events and programs that inspire.
- "Anything to encourage our local residents to become involved in the community"

Event characteristics. Other respondents reported on the characteristics of gatherings that were most important to them.

- "Ones that support small businesses or celebrate the culture and heritage of San Marcos."
- "Experiences that focus on the environment, history, and prehistory."
- "Anything that promotes awareness of arts in San Marcos."
- "Ones with an educational component."
- "Events that affirm our values as a people."

Suggestions for More Arts and Culture Activities and Public Art

Keen Independent asked workshop participants about arts and culture activities they would like to see more of as well as where they would like to see more public art in San Marcos.

Arts and culture activities respondents would like to see more of in San Marcos. Respondents provided feedback about various activities that they would like San Marcos to offer as well as suggestions for changes.

Event offerings. Many participants indicated they would like to see a range of arts and culture events.

- "Everything."
- "MUSEUMS, hands down."

- “Art exhibits and artist lectures, music and dance performances.”
- “Live music.”
- “Cultural celebrations.”
- “Bring back Chilimpiad. More parades like the Mardi Gras parade.”
- “More 3D artists.”
- “Sculpture parks and walks.”

Quality of arts and culture activities. A few respondents commented on the quality of offerings.

- “I don’t want more in terms of quantity; I want more in terms of quality.”
- “Would like the museums to be more interesting with rotating exhibits.”
- “Ones with high quality, original artwork.”

Changes in approach to offerings. Some participants reported that they would like to see changes in what and/or how events and activities are offered.

- “Anything but mainly the events need to be well planned, organized, and advertised.”
- “We have great ones already, they just need thoughtful growth and community participation.”
- “I would like to see more activities directed towards our children.”

Where participants would like to see more public art in San Marcos. Most participants that responded provided feedback on the physical locations where they would like to see more public art. Others reported on other aspects of public art that they would like to see.

Location. Workshop respondents listed physical locations where they would like to see more public art in numerous locations throughout the city.

- “Along the river.”
- “Neighborhoods! Bring art and culture to where folks already are to celebrate the culture of their neighborhoods.”
- “Downtown.”
- “Literally everywhere.”
- “More murals and art in public and private places/locations.”
- “I would like to see installations outside of downtown and the square.”

Quality and type of art. Some participants provided input on the type of public art they would be interested in seeing.

- “Would like to see better public art.”
- “Would like to see more statues, fountains, sculptures, and architectural art in prominent places.”
- “... just more is not better. I’d rather see fewer good pieces than more ho-hum works.”

Other Input

Respondents provided additional thoughts and suggestions regarding arts and culture in San Marcos.

Funding and City involvement. Many participants provided feedback regarding more financial and City support for the arts.

- “Funding for Arts & Culture beyond HOT tax! A&C are economic engines on their own.”
- “SM Arts and Culture will struggle until SM establishes and budgets for an actual high-level Arts and Culture dept with non-tourism dependent funding.”
- “More grants should go to spotlight our Hill Country roots.”
- “Perhaps the city could take a stronger position in supporting the arts, as a way to build civic pride and help heal the political divides.”
- “The city needs to drive one central agenda or provide appropriate support for another organization to do so.”

Collaboration and advertising. Workshop participants remarked on the need for building relationships within the community and increasing awareness.

- “A big priority for me would be bringing together the college communities and the established older communities.”
- “Involve the high school in some way.”
- “Need to do more to get exposure to all age groups to promote interest.”
- “Advertise your events on social media in a week in advance!”

Diversity and inclusion. Respondents also submitted feedback in regards to wanting to see more cultural inclusiveness in arts and culture activities.

- “I would love to see music and dance from other cultures, similar to what they have at Esquina Tango in Austin.”
- “... I would love to see more spread throughout our community, especially our underrepresented populations.”
- “More black inclusion. Highlight the culture that has been buried.”
- “Highlight significant local artists and movements throughout San Marcos’ history.”

Venues and amenities. Participants also gave suggestions for venues that would benefit the City.

- “Need to seriously look at supplemental parking downtown.”
- “Austin is a disappointment in terms of the museum culture, would love to see San Marcos have a great museum that would bring Central Texas here.”
- “San Marcos would be a good place for an Art Space. Studios and low-cost living spaces for artist[s].”
- “A real Art center, regular classes, experienced/accomplished instructors, exhibit space and visiting artists.”

APPENDIX G.

Art in Public Places Policy Analysis

Keen Independent reviewed the San Marcos Art in Public Places Policy (AIPP) and developed recommendations for updating this policy based on community feedback and a review of similar city policies throughout the country including:

- Alexandria, LA Public Art Policy (2012) and Policy on Acquired Art (2008);
- Austin, TX Art in Public Places Ordinance (1985);
- Denton, TX Public Art Policy (2013);
- Golden, CO Art in Public Places Handbook (2017); and
- Tustin, CA Preferred Public Art Policy (2018).

Our recommendations are as follows:

- **For each permanent art request, the Arts Commission should consider forming a subcommittee that includes a resident representative from the affected neighborhood or area in which the art would be placed.** The bylaws for the Arts Commission allows for the formation of subcommittees as needed that include members of the public. Having an option to include a representative of the community in which the artwork is placed may help ensure that the artwork accurately reflects the culture of the community that it would be serving.

This would also fall in line with the AIPP Statement of Purpose (Section A) that states: “Representatives of other community boards, commissions and neighborhood associations may also participate in the review process as needed.”

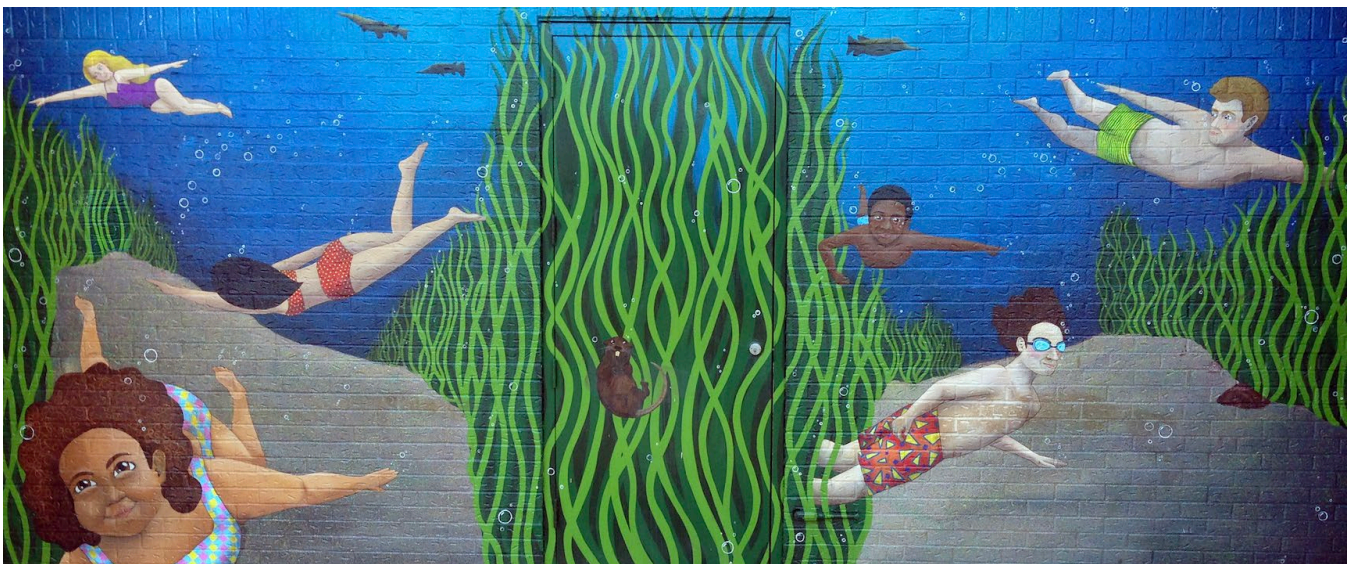
- **Consider a community review process for select artworks.** For artwork that is intended to serve a specific community, or if the proposed location is within a designated district, consider including a community review process to increase local buy-in and representation. This can include:
 - Requesting that the applicant create and/or implement a community outreach plan;
 - Notifying neighboring community or business associations that may be affected by the artwork;
 - Notifying the public in the local newspaper, on the city website and the arts commission website;
 - Implementing a community survey; or
 - Other methods of providing a means for community input.

The cities of Alexandria, Denton, Golden and Tustin have some form of community review process within their public art policies.

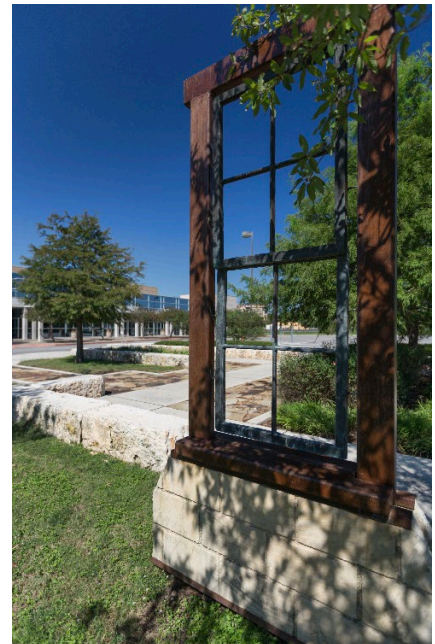
- **Streamline public art approval process.** Section H outlines the approval process for each application to go through the Arts Commission, to City Council for preliminary approval, then to the appropriate entity with jurisdiction over the proposed location for the art and then back to City Council for final approval. This means that the artwork has to go through four approval processes, two of which are by City Council. Consider removing the City Council's preliminary approval process, so the line of approval goes from the Arts Commission, to the to the appropriate entity with jurisdiction over the proposed location for the art and then to City Council for the final approval.

Other similar art in public places policies have their City Council or Commission provide only the final approval:

- **Alexandria, VA** Policy on Acquired Art states that a Public Art Committee shall advise the Commission for the Arts before the Commission gives a formal recommendation to the City Council.
- **Austin, TX** Art in Public Places Ordinance identifies an Art in Public Places Panel that makes recommendations to the Arts Commission for review before the recommendation goes to the City Manager or Council as appropriate.
- **Denton, TX** Public Art Policy states that the City Council shall establish and appoint a Public Art Committee that serves in an advisory capacity to the City Council.
- **Golden, CO** Art in Public Places Handbook indicates that artwork requires approval by the Public Art Commission prior to installation.
- **Tustin, CA** Preferred Public Art Policy states that the Public Arts Committee shall submit an initial recommendation to the Community Services Commission before being forwarded to the City Council for a final decision.



- **Require only one application process for each piece.** Section G states that an artwork representative must go through the application process twice if they have a concept in mind for which site approval is requested. Consider requiring only one application where the piece is conditional to the location to reduce the number of applications and approval processes needed to further streamline the art in public places process.
- **Consider adding details about how the City is funding public art.** All public art policies from other cities that Keen Independent reviewed for this project include details about public art funding. San Marcos could outline its public art funding policies within the Art in Public Places Policy. Below, we provide examples of how other cities have done this.
 - **Alexandria, LA** Public Art Policy outlines a public art funding goal of one percent of the annual capital improvement program budget.
 - **Austin, TX** Art in Public Places Ordinance mentions that at least two percent of the construction cost of a project shall be for selecting, acquiring and displaying art.
 - **Denton, TX** Public Art Policy outlines several means of public art funding sources including partial bond allocations, Hotel Occupancy Tax percent allocations, allocations from the City's operating budget and tax abatement incentives for developers.
 - **Golden, CO** Art in Public Places Handbook outlines an allocation of one percent of the cost of each new construction project that is greater than \$50,000 be placed in the City's Art in Public Places Reserve Account. The City also provides an alternative funding model involving the establishment of a policy where a fixed amount of funds would be deposited in the Art in Public Places Reserve Account.
 - **Tustin, CA** Preferred Public Art Policy identifies an annual fund allocation for public art.



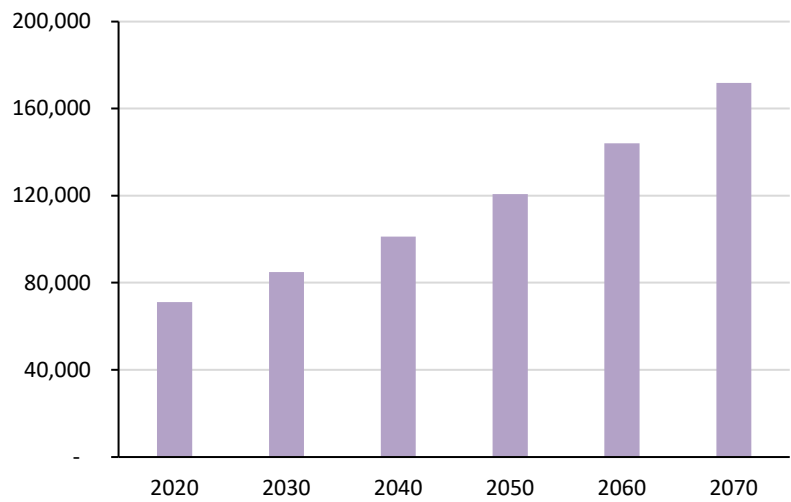
APPENDIX H.

San Marcos Population Projections

Keen Independent presents population projections provided by the Texas Water Development Board.

San Marcos population is projection to grow from about 71,000 residents in 2020 to about 172,000 in 2070, about a 142 percent increase in total residents. According to these data, the San Marcos population is expected to increase at a rate of about 1.8 percent annually. Figure H-1 illustrates these projections.

Figure H-1.
San Marcos population projections 2020–2070



Source: Texas Water Development Board, Keen Independent Research.



Arts Master Plan

2012

Prepared by
Grady Hillman

Our Vision for San Marcos is a city in which artistic excellence is celebrated, supported, and available to all.

— San Marcos Arts Commission

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HISTORY OF THE ARTS COMMISSION AND THE CITY'S ROLE OF SUPPORTING THE ARTS

The Arts Commission was established by the City Council in October of 1998. The role of the commission was to approve applications for Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) funds for artistic and cultural projects and events that would bring tourism to the community. Through the years, the Arts Commission has recognized the need to emphasize the quality of the arts as a criteria for funding, to develop accountability for the funds being distributed, and to become greater advocates for arts and culture in the community.

The Arts Commission has established the following Mission Statement and Goals.

MISSION

To support and contribute to the cultural vitality and economic prosperity of our city, to help differentiate it from other communities, and to promote tourism to San Marcos by supporting works of artistic excellence, advancing arts education, and expanding participation in cultural and artistic activities.

Goal: BROADEN PUBLIC AWARENESS

Objectives:

1. Broaden public awareness of the availability, excellence, and diversity of the arts.
2. Provide a variety of art forms for public enjoyment and participation.
3. Assist with available funding for artistic and cultural endeavors that increase public awareness for the value of the arts.
4. Encourage artists to participate in community events, share their talents with others, and serve as advocates for the arts.
5. Expand opportunities for artists to create and show/perform their works through the development of endeavors in San Marcos.
6. Create, establish, and implement a city plan for permanent art.

Goal: ARTS EDUCATION

Objectives:

1. Strengthen the role of the arts and encourage lifelong learning in the arts.
2. Promote continuing arts education programs.

Goal: PRESERVATION

Objectives:

1. Encourage preservation of the cultural heritage of San Marcos.
2. Develop a long-range plan for a permanent facility for the arts.

WHY AN ARTS MASTER PLAN?

The Arts Commission, along with members of the city staff, recognized the need to develop a master plan for arts and culture in our community. A plan would guide the future development and implementation of policies, infrastructure, advocacy, and funding for arts and cultural opportunities for our citizens and visitors. Policy makers, city staff, community businesses, and local artists could use the plan to fulfill the Commission's vision and in planning projects for San Marcos.

DEVELOPING THE PLAN

In 2009, the City Council appropriated \$10,000 for the development of the plan. Art Consultant, Grady Hillman was contracted to research and develop the plan. Mr. Hillman, along with city staff, commission members, stakeholders, and the public worked for many months to develop the plan.

In addition to reviewing existing plans (some dating back to 1996), meetings were held with city staff members and key stakeholders in the community, and two town meetings were held with citizens. The research and meetings resulted in the establishment of seven focus areas to be addressed.

1. Spaces: Create, develop, and maintain new and existing spaces for arts and cultural programming.
2. Accessibility: Improve the accessibility of arts and cultural programming for all community members.
3. Arts Education: Provide and maintain opportunities and programming.
4. Funding: Provide and generate funding to develop and continue arts and cultural programming.
5. City Involvement: Establish the role of the city in both arts development, and staffing.
6. Promotion and Advocacy: Distinguish San Marcos as an arts and cultural destination.
7. Events: Develop and continue new and current events.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Arts Commission reviewed all of the recommendations that were brought forth from the planning process and established these items as the top priorities to be addressed. These recommendations will have the greatest impact upon the establishment of San Marcos as an emerging art community.

Spaces

- Develop and build a community cultural and performing arts center.
- Develop sculptural walking trails along the river corridor and in the natural areas.
- Develop a central arts district.

Accessibility

- Facilitate parking and enhance safety near the Square.
- Transform city alleyways into cultural passageways with public art, murals, and illumination at night.

Arts Education

- Encourage and support K-12 arts program in the public schools with dedicated art teachers at each elementary and middle school.
- Strengthen partnerships with arts educators, arts resource providers and the University.
- Support and advance lifelong and intergenerational education in the arts.

Funding

- Implement a “Percent for the Arts” program to fund public art installations.
- Increase the appropriation of Hotel Occupancy Tax Funds for the arts.

City Involvement

- Promote a variety of cultural activities and attractions in the downtown area.
- Include the development of a central arts district, an Arts & Cultural Center, and Art in Public Places policy in the City’s Comprehensive Master Plan.
- Allocate funding for a Cultural Activities Coordinator to develop the strategy and model to implement a vibrant city cultural arts program.

Promotion and Advocacy

- Develop a cohesive cultural agenda and arts calendar.
- Develop an interactive and communicative arts website that allows for easy linkages to various arts and cultural venues and events.
- Create an affiliate multi-disciplinary arts organization in San Marcos that serves as an advocacy organization for the arts.
- Develop a strategy for using the arts to define San Marcos as an arts destination to promote tourism.

Events

- Hold a fine arts festival involving everyone in the arts community (visual, performing, etc.).
- Expand the incorporation of the arts into the Farmers Market with music, crafts, and publicity.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN – WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

The Arts Commission recommends that the following steps must be taken if the master plan is to become a working document.

1. The Community Services Parks and Recreation Division needs additional staff support for the coordination and promotion of the arts. Employ a Cultural Arts Coordinator to assist with the development of youth and adult arts programs, organization of special art events, promotion of community art assets, and advocacy of the arts master plan. The estimated cost for this position is \$50,000 per year including salary and benefits.
2. Establish a general fund budget line item specifically for the implementation of the arts master plan. These funds would be used to implement programs, events, promotional materials, etc.
3. Implement a “Percent for the Arts” policy. This policy would apply to all publically funded capital improvement projects. Suggest that privately funded development projects include public art as part of the Land Development Code and/or PDD Agreements.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Arts Master Plan is to develop a five-year strategic plan that defines the role of the City of San Marcos in supporting the arts, and the role of the arts community in accomplishing the City's broader goals of quality of life and economic development.

APPROACH

The planning process engaged the participation of key stakeholders, artists, and community members in the Arts Master Plan, establishing goals and objectives to provide the framework for orderly and consistent planning and development of arts and culture in San Marcos. In addition, the Arts Master Plan includes an asset inventory of San Marcos, identifying cultural assets in a Schematic Layout Map.

Arts planner Grady Hillman has utilized a synergistic approach in developing the San Marcos Arts Master Plan, building upon existent culturally relevant plans and processes. The initial phase of the planning process involved identifying community-engaged cultural planning documents, which focused wholly or in part on the role of the arts. These existent arts-related needs assessments and recommendations have been organized in historical summaries with recommendations culled from the available documentation.

Having completed the research, Hillman conducted interviews with key stakeholders identified by the San Marcos Arts Commission to develop an informed set of recommendations which was organized for community input. In addition, Hillman and his staff produced an inventory of San Marcos arts assets based on input from the Arts Commission, the Parks and Recreation department, stakeholder interviews and independent research.

The next phase of the planning process involved public presentations of the preliminary plan and arts inventory to survey community support for the recommendations presented and elicit new recommendations and community arts assets to be included in the arts inventory.

The final component of the Arts Master Plan contains the combined recommendations from both sources of community input, which are intended for use in prioritizing the needs of future cultural development.

SAN MARCOS ARTS PLANNING HISTORY

Summary of Community Planning and Recommendations

This section outlines existing plans the City of San Marcos has adopted and recommendations from community meetings/planning sessions in which arts and culture are included. The purpose of this review is to establish a historical perspective of community planning in San Marcos that has included the arts and to establish a base for the stakeholder interviews and the community input survey.

Included are the most relevant excerpts from the plans as they relate to the arts.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY—SERVING UP THE ARTS

Arts Planning Forum, November 4, 1996

Public meeting hosted by the San Marcos Performing Arts Association and the Heart of Texas Arts Alliance attended by 70 San Marcos area residents.

Top Five Suggestions as ranked by attendees:

- *Build support for existing programs with emphasis on multiculturalism and multicultural events.* This would be accomplished through more cooperation, a cohesive agenda/calendar, and combined events to create bigger and more diverse audiences.
- *Art along the river and on the Square.* This encompasses both live and visual arts presentations.
- *Develop a San Marcos historical docudrama to be performed on a regular basis in an outdoor theater.*
- *Have a well-supported K-12 art program in public schools.*
- *Develop a map showing artist studio locations and contact information.* This would develop into an “Artist’s Studio Tour.”



Suggestions for facility use or new facilities:

- Creation of a river amphitheater
- Refurbishment of Lamar Auditorium for community theater
- Greater utilization of the Glade Theater
- Greater use of Aquarena Springs as a performance venue
- Creation of a San Marcos Arts Center

FINAL REPORT: Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on Tourism Development March 1997

This report generated a number of strategies and concepts for increasing tourism to San Marcos including heritage tourism and eco-tourism. Those recommendations with an arts-related component are the following:

- Texas State should develop a presence in the Central Business District accessible to visitors that displays some pieces from the Southwest Writers Collection and artwork from Texas State. A university employee would be able to direct visitors on how to access the collections, artwork and arts venues on campus.
- Develop a plaza and park in commemoration of St. Mark. Park development will be enhanced by a statue and park design competition open only to Texas artists.
- Hollywood, Texas. Signage should be developed which identifies the many movie set sites in San Marcos for self-guided and assisted tours.
- The Old Baptist Church should be restored and utilized as a community venue. The Calaboose should be developed into a museum. The Jail at 170 Fredericksburg St. could be restored.

SAN MARCOS HORIZONS Adopted February 1996

This is the Master Plan of the City of San Marcos. Elements of it, particularly in relation to facility use, were integrated into the City of San Marcos--Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, Adopted 06/14/02. However, it is important to note policies and recommendations adopted into the San Marcos Master Plan.

All items below are taken from the Horizons' Executive Summary:

Economic Development:

- Goal 4 - Community Gateways
 - Create attractive "gateways" into San Marcos which provide aesthetically pleasing and informative entrances into the community.

Town Center:

- Goal 4 - Aesthetics/Visual Appearance
 - Improve the aesthetics/visual appearance of the downtown area.
- Goal 6 - Downtown Activities
 - Promote a variety of cultural activities and attractions in the downtown area.

Downtown Plan Contents:

- An outdoor amphitheater and arts complex are proposed to be located along the banks of the San Marcos River, north of Children's Park and east of C.M. Allen Parkway.

CITY OF SAN MARCOS PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN Adopted June 14, 2002

Introduction

This Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan is [. . .] designed to be a comprehensive, long-range plan for the development, expansion and acquisition of parks, open space, and greenspace and recreational areas within the incorporated limits of the City of San Marcos. This Plan is the result of a community effort with work having been done on the part of many. This included the gathering of information from citizen comments through the public process, city and school district personnel, and from various community organizations. Before final adoption, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the City Council of the City of San Marcos held public hearings on this plan. This Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan is intended to guide and satisfy all of the related needs of the City of San Marcos over the next decade.

Elements of this plan directly relevant to arts planning in San Marcos include the following:

Master Plan:

Policy CF-1.13: (and CF-6.3) The City shall encourage, promote, and facilitate art and related types of festivals throughout the park system.

Policy CF-6.6: The City shall establish an education program for cultural resources at all levels.

Objectives:

Other high priority requests made at the various public hearings for incorporation into this Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan include a BMX track, skateboard and roller blade parks, regional and neighborhood pools, *neighborhood recreation centers with neighborhood recreation programs, and a regional arts / cultural center.* (Italics added for emphasis.)

Prioritization of Needs:

This Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan recommends a 10-year action plan with ordered priorities, time line for accomplishment and funding sources as follows:

Ranked as 4th and 5th respectively out of 8 are two arts related priorities:

- Cultural Arts Center-- Ongoing from year one to year 10—Grants, Donations, Bonds, In-kind Services
- Neighborhood Recreation Centers--Ongoing from year one to year 10—Grants, Bonds, In-kind Services

ART IN PUBLIC PLACES Policy and Procedural Guidelines
 City of San Marcos Arts Commission; Adopted April 5, 2005

This document provides a process for the placement of permanent and temporary artwork, monuments, and structures on city property. It does not apply to privately owned properties. It is relevant to some of the citizen recommendations that appear later, such as creating temporary sculpture exhibits on waterway trails or youth-interactive art in public parks. It will be included as an Appendix to the final San Marcos Arts Master Plan.



DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

City of San Marcos; Adopted October 2008

The following excerpts are taken from the Downtown Master Plan, which was adopted by the City of San Marcos in 2009. It envisions a San Marcos that appeals to a “creative class” drawn by the articulation of historic and cultural assets. **Bold areas** represent arts related mentions highlighted for emphasis or commentary by this consultant.

The City of San Marcos Downtown Master Plan is a part of a decade-long process that began with San Marcos’ Horizons efforts in 1996, and stems from even earlier city master planning efforts. In light of extraordinary growth along the Interstate-Highway 35 corridor, the City’s Horizons planning document has directed development for positive community growth. The original Horizons document has been expanded into several sector plans and other special area plans for City projects.

The Downtown Master Planning process engaged a diverse group of residents, business owners, and citizen interest groups. Community forums and open-houses, walking tours, meetings with key city staff and stakeholders, and surveys were conducted over the course of a year in order to form a representative foundation upon which to build the Downtown Vision. Over 1600 respondents

completed the Downtown Master Plan Survey, and more than 400 community members participated and collaborated in person with city staff and consultants.

Vision Plan

- **Benchmarking & Planning Principles:**

The economic model utilized for the Downtown Master Plan focuses on the factors that play important roles in stimulating economic vitality in a community. In contrast to traditional economic development models that employ mostly industrial recruitment strategies, this model acknowledges that employers are increasingly locating where talented employees are, and this “creative class” is moving to places where they want to live.

In other words, today’s talented employees decide where they want to live first and then find work in those places, rather than the other way around. For this reason, employers are locating in communities that have the quality of place that will attract or have already attracted the talent that they need. As a result, quality of place and “sense of place” issues are central to a community’s success in economic development.

- **Encourage Third Places:**

San Marcos should encourage the establishment of “third places” distinct from home and work, such as coffee shops, internet cafes, alfresco dining areas, pubs, bookstores, and the like, that foster a culture of informal gathering, socializing, conversing and exchanging ideas. The best third places are adjacent to sidewalks and public spaces; each benefits greatly through association with the other.

- **Mind the Details:**

Great downtown environments engage both the sense and intellect with diverse and detailed architectural facades, preservation of key views, engaging signage, attractive furnishings, colorful planting, sidewalk commerce, **public art**, and many other points of detail. The city’s regulatory framework should be flexible enough to allow the unfolding of a diverse and stimulus-rich environment over time.

Vision Plan--The Big Ideas

This “visioning” element of the Downtown Master Plan presents a multiple “village” articulation of San Marcos generally running from the southern boundary of Texas State adjacent to Downtown through Downtown on a corridor to I-35. A critical design element that contributes to this model is the development of a commuter rail between San Antonio and Austin with a Transportation Hub constructed in downtown San Marcos. The Transportation Hub is projected to be located at the end of Edward Gary Street. (Hillman)

Finally, the Big Ideas plan attempts to promote and preserve the cultural and historical heritage of San Marcos. Each neighborhood is envisioned in the Downtown Master Plan as being distinct in terms of identity, yet as also working in concert to form a rich character that is uniquely San Marcos. The Big Ideas diagram identifies these neighborhoods as a series of “villages” that compose the Downtown.

- **The Downtown Village:**
This village coincides with the existing Downtown neighborhood that is identified in the Observations and Analysis chapter. This neighborhood is essentially comprised of the Courthouse Square and the blocks that immediately surround it. The Downtown Village should seek to preserve its historic character while encouraging appropriate infill development in underdeveloped properties. The Downtown Village should be a mix of housing, employment, **entertainment**, and retail usages that support the unique flavor of San Marcos. It should be the heart of the entire community, and it should hold together all of the other Downtown neighborhoods.
- **The University Village:**
Following along with ideas that were articulated in the City’s 2007 campus Edge Strategic Plan, the University Village is identified as the area between the central Courthouse Square and Texas State University. The neighborhood should be comprised of a mix of housing and **entertainment** options that successfully engages the student population to the north. This village will help to maximize Downtown’s connections to the University and will serve as a transition zone for town-gown relations. It should be a place for interaction between students, nonstudents, and out-of-towners.
- **Entertainment Village & Transportation Hub:**
The southern half of the Downtown neighborhood currently consists of loft-style residential units, a number of warehouses, some of which are historical, and a mixed assortment of businesses. The Downtown Master Plan envisages this area as the location for a future transportation hub for the proposed commuter rail stop; this district could offer a combination of uses ranging from housing to retail to **entertainment and arts**.
- **Arts Village:**
Adjacent to the transportation hub lies a second warehouse zone. This neighborhood, identified as the arts village in the Big Ideas diagram, offers a transitional space with structures large enough to serve as artist’s studios, music centers or other cultural development venues.
- **East Guadalupe & Victory Gardens:**
The East Guadalupe and Victory Gardens neighborhoods comprise another of the Downtown Master Plans’ villages. These residential communities, with their unique heritage, are envisioned as having a neighborhood market and community gathering spaces just east of Guadalupe Street.

- **Cultural & Historic Village:**
This village, located to the southwest of the Courthouse Square, is viewed as an extension of the cultural amenities located Downtown. The Calaboose African American History museum is located within the Dunbar neighborhood. Also proposed are the Eddie Durham Jazz Park and the Cephus House.
- **Civic Neighborhood:**
East of the Downtown, between the San Marcos River and the interstate, there exists a neighborhood of Civic and Community Services. These community services are located adjacent to the community park, and create a hub of city government and amenities, including city hall, the activity center, and the library. The City of San Marcos should seek to actively direct positive growth Downtown in a manner consistent with the Planning Principles and Vision Plan. By building upon the already-established framework resident to Downtown San Marcos, and by realigning economic development principles to value quality of place, San Marcos will be well poised to realize the vision for an active, vibrant, and revitalized Downtown.

San Marcos' Identity & Placemaking

- **Marketing for Success - making the Downtown a unique destination:**
Vehicular signage on IH-35 that directs people to the Downtown should be coupled with entry gateway markers at five key locations, which correspond with the main access corridors of Aquarena Springs, Hopkins Street/County Road 12, CM Allen Boulevard, Guadalupe Street, and Wonder World Drive. The City will need to work with the Texas Department of Transportation to establish better signage for Downtown exits along IH-35. The Texas Department of Transportation will also need to be consulted as landscaping and median plans are developed for areas surrounding interstate entry and off-ramps. **The gateway markers at these locations should be representative of Downtown or San Marcos and standardized or themed motifs could register on street signs and directional signage throughout the city. Several motif ideas were offered during conversations with residents of San Marcos, including Texas stars, San Marcos salamanders, and Aquarena Springs mermaid icons. As a way to garner community support, San Marcos could conduct a public campaign to generate a new city icon.**
- **Promotion of Cultural Events:**
The City of San Marcos could also enhance its identity by promoting cultural events in the Downtown area. These events, when properly marketed, draw visitors and community members to the City and into the Downtown. As an example, San Marcos could reinstate its chili festival, sponsor performances in conjunction with Texas State University, or promote farmers or artists markets Downtown. Events such as these could also take place at key nodes of activity

in the residential neighborhood Downtown or could be located along the banks of the beautiful San Marcos River.

- Edward Gary Street at the PROPOSED Commuter Rail Stop:
Here, the idea of a market plaza is incorporated into the rail station development, which could be a unique element that is utilized for farmer or artist's markets, gathering spaces for performances or any variety of events.

Recommendations:

Enhance Downtown's Unique Characteristics

- Continue to increase the promotion of cultural events that draw people Downtown.
- Establish and enhance centers of activity within each neighborhood.

SAN MARCOS CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU STAKEHOLDER FORUMS

(Notes compiled by the SMCVB): *Cultural Tourism and Heritage Tourism*, June 9, 2009

The San Marcos Convention and Visitors Bureau convened two key stakeholder forums to discuss Cultural Tourism and Heritage Tourism assets, opportunities and obstacles. The notes from both meetings were provided to this consultant, and the Cultural Tourism group definitely provides several recommendations that have been integrated into the Community Recommendations that follow. The Heritage Tourism group identified many cultural assets that have been integrated into the Arts Asset Inventory. Given that, these discussions were informational for the CVB and did not take place in public meetings or hearings, their recommendations represent the ideas of the individuals who proffered them and were shared with the community in the Arts Master Plan process.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE I-35 REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

June 29, 2010

Overview

The I-35 Redevelopment Committee was convened by Mayor Narvaiz to explore both short term and long term aesthetic improvements to the I-35 corridor and recommend actions through which the City of San Marcos can visually improve the gateway into our community.

General Recommendations

- Establish a small grant program for façade improvements to buildings along the interstate.
- Establish a Gateway Overlay district to address signage, landscaping, and façade materials.
- Improve the appearance of the overpasses through a partnership with Texas State University (i.e. collaborate with Texas State art/design students for mural

ideas and the City will incur the expense of materials or include the City branding logo along highway overpasses)

Specific Recommendations

The I-35 redevelopment committee selected the following six underutilized/ empty buildings that could benefit from public/private revitalization efforts:

- The former Taste of China (904 Bugg Lane)
- Stokes Construction Building (1920 S. IH-35)
- Electrosorce Building (2809 S. IH-35)
- The former McCoy's Headquarters (1200 N. IH-35)
- Widelite (126 Texas Avenue)
- Springtown Mall (The area bounded by I-35, Springtown Way, Thorpe Lane and the Railroad tracks)

Springtown Mall:

The committee identified the entire site as needing redevelopment; this would include the area bounded by Thorpe Lane, Springtown Way, I-35, and the railroad tracks. The most appropriate use of the property was identified as being mixed use. **It was important to the committee that the use of this property accommodates for the needs of the surrounding residential areas and provides some neighborhood services. Other possible uses include an entertainment venue with a residential component and urban setting that supports a shop, work, and live lifestyle. (Emphasis added by Consultant.)** Additionally, this site may be good place for a business incubator program. Site Development Requirements include providing screening of parking through the use of liner buildings along Springtown Way and I-35. For this site to receive assistance from the City, the committee identified the following conditions that must be present:

- LEED Certification (silver)
- The City must set required performance measures for the developer
- Office space should be incorporated with an incentive to keep existing business through the help of possible temporary relocation and the choice of office space in the redevelopment.
- Access issues on Thorpe Lane need to be addressed

Potential Incentives the City may consider for assisting the development of this property include the following:

- The City could help by paying for the demolition of the buildings
- Tax abatement for reconstruction of buildings

CITY OF SAN MARCOS PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN Adopted December 7, 2010

This Plan updates the 2002 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan and is much more comprehensive and informative in nature. Upon completion, the San Marcos Arts Master Plan will be integrated as an Appendix into Open Space Master Plan.

The following are excerpts from the new Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan relevant to the arts and cultural programming. Where arts related information policy or information is imbedded in other information it has been highlighted for emphasis:

Within the limits of this plan, we address park land, park facilities, programming, parkland dedication, maintenance, and funding. Each of these individual items and ideas make up the whole of the city-wide plan. Care was taken over the course of several months to understand the needs and desires of the policy makers and residents alike. While this document provides the necessary technical data and standards for development, it is heavily weighted in the public process that results in meeting the local needs of the citizens.

Local park experts and City staff were also asked to identify priorities for the parks system. The highest priorities listed were to:

- Expand the existing park system through the acquisition of additional park land and natural areas.
- Revise/update the current Parkland Dedication ordinance to reflect changing trends in San Marcos development/expansion.
- Develop the newly acquired city park facilities.
- Provide more efficient maintenance and security in existing park facilities.
- **Develop comprehensive recreational and cultural arts activity programming.**



Vision:

Create a unified parks and recreation system that serves the entire San Marcos community, supports tourism efforts and remains a good steward to the River and surrounding environment.

Goals:

- Funding: allocate adequate funding for the long-term benefit of the park system.
- Maintenance: establish a set of department standards by which maintenance practices adhere to.
- Safety: maintain parks for the health, safety, and welfare of the public.
- Programming: offer a variety of recreational and cultural City programs for public use.
- Sustainability: plan for the long-term health of the park and recreation system.
- Environmental: sensitivity to natural areas, waterways, habitat and the aquifer recharge zone.
- Tourism: promote recreational and cultural tourism through the development of regional facilities.
- Connectivity: interconnected system of parks, trails and greenbelts throughout the San Marcos ETJ.
- Parkland Dedication: revise/update the current Parkland Dedication ordinance to reflect changing trends in San Marcos development/expansion.
- University: create a plan that can be implemented over time with the coordination/cooperation of Texas State University.

Stakeholder Interviews:

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with City of San Marcos officials, University officials and associated agency directors and staff to gauge the current state of the San Marcos Parks, as well as understand their goals for the future. Responses within each of the following five categories are listed in priority order.

From a cultural programming (art, music, theater, etc.) standpoint, the most common needs are:

- Citizen Involvement and Promotion of the Arts
- Facilities
- Funding
- Staffing

Action Plan:

One activity center is currently operated by the city at the level of 1 per 50,000 people. The national guideline suggests 1 per 25,000 people. Based on community feedback, and to meet the needs of the expanding population, this plan recommends that all future activity centers be smaller in scale and located throughout the City. Similar to neighborhood parks, these facilities would serve more localized populations (rather than city-wide), and could be tailored to the needs of the area it served (i.e. seniors, youth, etc.) Although this arrangement may spread the department resources, it will better serve the population by providing accessible recreation/programs.

Related to recreational activity centers, the City is also in need of a facility for cultural programming, including the arts. This center could serve the dual role of servicing a specific locale within San Marcos, but also act as an anchor for cultural programming throughout the City.

2010 Prioritization of Needs:

- Trails (connections to existing trails and rivers/creeks)
- Acquisition of Parkland and development of facilities in the southwest quadrant of the ETJ
- Acquisition of Parkland and development of facilities East of I-35
- Athletic Fields west of I-35
- Community Park development west of I-35 and near downtown
- Passive Park development along San Marcos River and Blanco River
- Increased Staffing and budget for increased facilities
- **Development of recreational/activity centers (small) and cultural arts center**

Activities and Programming:

City-sponsored programs and activities are being utilized to a degree, but there appears to be strong support to increase the frequency and availability of those programs; especially for cultural programming, outdoor recreation and activity center.

The City is in need of a cultural activities coordinator who can begin to develop the strategy and model needed to implement a successful program. Availability of space seems to be a barrier to keeping people involved. It was suggested that several, smaller centers be developed (similar to recreation) so that individuals of any age have easy access within their neighborhood and not across town. **Certain activities such as music and theater would benefit from their own, larger facility, so a long-range goal is to identify where and how that happens.**

Park Development

0-5 years Need Cost (in 2009 \$\$)

Cultural Center Arts, music \$500,000 (location TBD)

5-10 years

Activity Center TBD \$450,000
(East)

Activity Center TBD \$450,000
(North)

Activity Center TBD \$450,000
(West)

Activity Center TBD \$450,000
(South)

TOTAL \$2,300,000

DREAM SAN MARCOS INITIATIVE

Launched August 16, 2011

San Marcos unveiled the Dream San Marcos Initiative on August 16, 2011. The Initiative asked residents to contribute ideas regarding the city's development as part of a process to update the city's 1996 comprehensive plan. The city collected ideas from residents using IdeaScale online software, email, comment cards, activities and public events.

The following are the most popular ideas listed on the IdeaScale website that relate to community arts. The numbers represent an average of people who supported the idea through online votes.

- Centralized Event Listing (81)
- Create a Central Arts District (70)
- More public music events (45)
- Museums and an Arboretum (32)
- Organize a designated legal art wall (28)
- Creative Community; improve culture, education and entertainment and provide a community that encourages creativity and innovation (26)
- Gateways; make all gateways nice to let people know that they are welcome to our town (22)
- Make San Marcos a Public Art Destination (21)
- San Marcos Public Radio Station (15)
- Farmer's Market; expand its schedule and improve upon it to make the market more attractive to young people (8)
- Drive-in Movie theater (7)
- San Marcos Public Access video channel (6)



ARTS MASTER PLAN - COMMUNITY INPUT PROCESS

Stakeholder Interviews

As stated above, part of the process of generating recommendations from the community included interviewing community stakeholders as identified by the San Marcos Arts Commission. These interviews took place between January 2011 and May 2011. The recommendations which these community members provided were then compiled by Hillman into a comprehensive survey.

List of Community Stakeholders

- Lisa Morris, Recreation Manager, City of San Marcos Community Services-Parks and Recreation
- Rick Bowen, President, San Marcos Performing Arts Association
- Kelly Franks, Program Director, Main Street Program
- Scott Gregson, Texas Music Theater
- Beverley Mangham, Owner and Instructor, Eye of the Dog Art Center
- Lisa Jasek, President, San Marcos Art League and 12 League Members
- Linda Kelsey-Jones, San Marcos Area Arts Council
- Ofelia Vasquez-Philo, President, Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos
- Chris Cooper, teacher
- Diann McCabe, San Marcos Arts Commission
- Sofia Nelson, Senior Planner, City of San Marcos
- Arlis Hiebert, San Marcos Arts Commission
- Joan Nagel, Art Teacher
- Kevin Huffaker, San Marcos Arts Commission
- Michael Niblett, Director, Art and Design, Texas State University

Public Involvement Process

The Stakeholder Recommendations Survey (Appendix A) generated from the Stakeholder interviews was presented at a town meeting in June 2011, with 50 San Marcos citizens in attendance. Community members were asked to rate each recommendation on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “highly disapprove” and 5 being “highly approve.” The scores were then calculated to determine the average ranking for each item. All recommendations with a score of 3.9 or above (indicating that on average, the recommendation was met with approval) were then compiled to provide a list of action items for the Arts Master Plan. Twenty-three surveys were completed.

Lisa Morris, Diann McCabe, and Clay DeStefano conducted a second town meeting in July 2011, with 25 people in attendance. Community members were asked to brainstorm a set of their own recommendations and ideas. The full set of recommendations generated is included in table F-1.

Table F-1

Arts Town Meeting Planning: July 9, 2011				
<p>Participants were asked the following question: When you think of the next 3-5 years, from your perspective and experiences, what is a strategy or action that the City of San Marcos could put into place to support and facilitate a diverse representation of art and culture in San Marcos?</p> <p>From the responses, the ideas were sorted into five main areas of need with specific objectives identified below.</p>				
Consolidate efforts to create a central arts district	City arts commitment and collaboration	Develop infrastructure to support the arts	Develop arts publicity/marketing/communication initiative	Hold community-wide arts festivals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a central cultural center • Make downtown an art and musical destination! • Support artists' basic needs living in a community • Foster multicultural collaboration • Develop a sculpture trail along the river • Provide studio/art space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central application PDF file for artists/vendors for festival on City website • Support existing arts programs • Initiate a city-wide arts coalition • Support youth art programs • Make the arts a part of development policies • Enhance city council leadership to create an awareness of the role the arts play in San Marcos • Recruit competent arts leaders and administrators • Ensure that key art staff are in place at the City level • Have a "chamber of arts and culture" • Involve businesses • Seek new and sustainable funding sources • Initiate major fund rotation • Intergenerational arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a plan to restore empty building(s) • Look at existing surveys of available vacant buildings • Plan for a parking garage downtown • Research and develop facilities and space for artists • Increase available facilities for arts events and limit costs charged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop signage for San Marcos arts • Develop and arts webpage for SM • Develop a Facebook site for the arts (done!) • Involve local businesses • Sub-branding positioning San Marcos as an Art Town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a fine arts festival involving everyone • Have arts festivals for artists for networking • Have arts festivals/fairs for galleries • Insure intergenerational participation in the arts

RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

As the two town meetings produced different sets of recommendations, we have made an effort to combine both sets of results in order to present a cohesive picture of the community's desires, with the end result being a list of actionable items.

After reviewing both sets of data, we have generated the following list of **seven focus areas**, which include all of the primary areas of concern and/or action. These seven focus areas cover all recommendations of both sources in a comprehensive manner.

Focus Areas

Focus 1: Spaces

The creation, development, and maintenance of new and existing spaces for arts and cultural programming. This includes five subcategories:

- Collaborative Arts and Cultural Centers
- Performing Arts Spaces
- Public Arts Spaces
- Gallery Spaces and Museums
- Available Spaces

Focus 2: Accessibility

The improvement of the accessibility of arts and cultural programming for all community members.

Focus 3: Arts Education

Providing and maintaining opportunities and programming.

Focus 4: Funding

Providing and generating funding for the development and continuation of arts and cultural programming.

Focus 5: City Involvement

Establishing the role of the city in two areas:

- Development, Facilitation, and Promotion of the Arts
- Staffing

Focus 6: Promotion and Advocacy

Promoting and advocating of and for arts and cultural programming, to include:

- Promote community awareness of programming
- Promote community support of the arts
- Distinguish San Marcos as an arts and culture destination

Focus 7: Events

The development and continuation of new and current events.

List of Recommendations

SPACES:

Collaborative Arts and Cultural Centers

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- Build a San Marcos Arts Center dedicated to cultural programming. This center could serve the dual role of servicing a specific locale within San Marcos, but also act as an anchor for cultural programming throughout the City. (4.5)
- Create an art center that provides after-school programs, houses a museum, gallery/performance space, and hosts art classes (similar to the Carver in Austin). (4.4)
- The Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos provides youth arts and music classes, cultural events, and programs to the Georgia Street Senior Center and should become a community arts center. (4.2)
- The Dunbar Recreational Center should expand its arts services and become a community arts center. (4)

Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Develop a central cultural center.

Performing Arts Spaces

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- The performing arts such as music and theater shall have a dedicated performing arts facility. (4.5)
- Create a 100-person minimum community performing arts theater that can serve as a home to the community theater, the community chorus, the community orchestra, and multi-cultural performing arts. (4.1)
- The San Marcos High School auditorium is a quality performance space that should be utilized for major performing arts events. (4)

Public Arts Spaces

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- The pedestrian trails along the rivers and waterways along with the re-development of Aquarena Springs should become an eco-tourism zone with opportunities to become a center for eco-art. (4.7)
- Create inspirational walking paths which incorporate community art-making such as murals and mosaics generating more public art. (4.4)
- Provide live and visual art offerings along the river and on the Square. (4.3)
- The Sculpture Garden at the Activity Center/ Library should become a stepping off point for a pedestrian art trail with the shows at the Walker Gallery as an anchor. (3.9)
- The Rio Vista area should have functional art park benches and semi-permanent or permanent art that kids can interact with and climb on. (3.9)

Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Develop a sculpture trail along the river.

Gallery Spaces and Museums

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- Create a Downtown gallery/museum venue for rotating art exhibits from Texas State– (Wittliff Collection, Mitte, etc.) – that would be a Downtown attraction and promote the arts resources of Texas State. (4.3)
- Create a dedicated gallery space Downtown for San Marcos youth work. (3.9)

Available Spaces

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- Develop a downtown art center in a vacant (or vacating) building such as the Justice Center transforming it into artist studios and gallery space, creating a downtown arts incubator. (4.2)
- Springtown Mall should have/become a major entertainment/performance venue. (4)

Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Survey available vacant buildings; build plan to restore empty buildings in order to provide studio/art space for artists.
- Increase available facilities for arts events and limit costs charged.



ACCESSIBILITY:

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- To facilitate parking and enhance safety near the Square, alleyways should become cultural passageways with public art, murals, and illumination at night. (4.2)
- Expand CARTS services to provide transportation from senior centers to cultural events and centers. (4)

- Texas State should create a way-finding system in town for its arts venues and assets and should be more accessible to the City. (3.9)

Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Plan for the construction of a parking garage downtown.

ARTS EDUCATION:

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- Have a well-supported K-12 arts program in schools. (4.7)
- Every elementary and middle school should have a dedicated art teacher. (4.7)
- Create greater arts programming for family and children, especially after school programs, which are free and not tuition-based. (4.5)
- Establish an education program for cultural resources at all levels (4.3)
- Create a clearinghouse for community opportunities in the arts so that students can engage in service learning opportunities and internships, which are vital for the forthcoming Fine Arts and Communications Academy. (4.3)
- The schools should loan or rent space for after-school and summer arts programs, both youth and adult. (4.3)
- San Marcos needs a youth arts incubator program that works intensively with artists in residence programming, providing opportunities for youth to exhibit and sell their work. (3.9)



Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Support existing arts programs.
- Support youth art programs
- Recruit competent arts leaders and administrators.

FUNDING:

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- The City should have a “Penny for the Arts” public art program where 1% of every dollar spent on public construction goes to the commission of a public art installation. (4.4)

- Increase the appropriation from the Hotel Occupancy Tax for the San Marcos Arts Commission. (4.3)
- Fund after-school arts programs that run until 6pm at every campus utilizing Title 1 funds, which can be allocated to support arts programming. (4.1)

Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Seek new and sustainable funding sources.
- Initiate major fund rotation.

CITY INVOLVEMENT:

Development, Facilitation, and Promotion of the Arts

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- The City shall promote a variety of cultural activities and attractions in the downtown area. (4.3)
- The City shall commission or develop more public art. (4.2)
- There should be an Art in Public Places policy included in the City-wide comprehensive master plan when it comes up for revision in 18 months as part of public development. (4.2)
- The City shall encourage, promote, and facilitate art and related types of festivals throughout the park system. (4.1)
- Arts events and exhibits should be attached to regular city events attended by the public including City Council meetings, Chamber of Commerce meetings, etc. to create a greater awareness of San Marcos arts. (4)
- The Arts Commission should become more proactive in developing arts organizations like River City Ballet to create a cadre of independent, quality arts organizations in the community. (3.9)

Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Make the Arts a part of development policies.
- Enhance city council leadership to create an awareness of the role the arts play in San Marcos.
- Have a "Chamber of Arts and Culture."

Staffing

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- The City shall have a cultural activities coordinator who can develop the strategy and model needed to implement a successful civic cultural program. (4.3)
- San Marcos should have staff dedicated to arts programming and not continue to rely on volunteerism. (4.2)

Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Ensure that key art staff members are in place at the City level.

PROMOTION AND ADVOCACY:

Increase Community Awareness of Programming

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- Develop a cohesive cultural agenda and arts calendar. (4.8)
- San Marcos needs an interactive, communicative arts website that allows for easy linkages. (4.7) (Done: Facebook page)
- San Marcos currently has no centralized hub of arts info, and the website for arts needs to be redeveloped and updates with arts email-blasts going out to interested community member announcing events. (4.7)
- Create a mechanism for getting the word out about arts events other than a website such as a monthly calendar posted at the coffee shops. (4.5)

Second Town Meeting

Recommendations:

- Create a central application (PDF) for artists/vendors for festivals, available on city website.

Increase Community Support of the Arts

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- Create an affiliate multi-disciplinary arts organization in San Marcos that serves as an advocacy organization for the arts. (4.2)



Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Initiate a city-wide arts coalition.
- Support artists' basic needs living in a community.
- Involve local businesses.

Efforts to Distinguish San Marcos as an Arts and Culture Destination

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- The San Marcos music scene should be promoted as a Texas Music hub given the popularity of Cheatham Street Warehouse and the new Texas Music Theater. (4)

- San Marcos could pursue Cultural District designation from the Texas Commission on the Arts and encourage greater density of the arts Downtown. (3.9)

Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Develop signage for San Marcos arts.
- Develop sub-branding positioning San Marcos as an “art town.”
- Make downtown an arts and musical destination.

EVENTS:

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- Incorporate the arts into Famer’s Market with music and crafts. (4.4)
- The Eddie Durham Jazz Festival should be revived, tied into the Texas State Jazz Festival, and take place in his community as well as on campus. (4.2)
- Summer in the Park should become a mainstay annual event marked as a significant San Marcos attraction. (4.2)
- Create an Art and Eco Event that showcases both San Marcos’ art and its identity as a steward of natural resources. (4.1)
- Create a monthly Noche de Cultura (Cultural Night) at the Centro Cultural Hispano in addition to cultural celebrations on Cinco de Mayo, 16 de Septiembre, and Dia de Los Muertos. (4.1)

Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Hold a fine arts festival involving everyone in the arts community.
- Have an artist festival for networking purposes. (Done: Art 2 Art Network)
- Have arts festivals/fairs for galleries.

Additional Comments

The following comments, grouped according to focus area, are additional input gathered from the June 2011 town meeting attendees who completed the Stakeholder Surveys. They are included here as a reference point and/or idea generating tool for further development of arts and cultural programming in San Marcos.

SPACES

- *AIPP – Art in Public Places (as seen in Austin: <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/aipp/>) – for San Marcos.*
- *Community Art Center – classes for all ages; we need a visual arts facility/museum (where classes can be taught); art center for gatherings, lessons, and art shows using TSU artists and local artists.*
- *We need a performing arts facility with production/recording abilities. Does not need to be new – can renovate an existing building.*
- *Utilize local real estate to establish a community performing arts center that is easily accessible financially and geographically.*

- *Venues for theater/music/performance – 300-500 seats, 100-seat black box.*
- *Civic center with 800-1000 seat multipurpose hall (as Dallas Theater Center) for music, theater, dance, etc.*
- *Public theater – a community theater could have so many opportunities for public/community involvement – set design, etc.*
- *City should negotiate with high school to open up the HS auditorium for public art events beyond the HS own efforts.*
- *Art/Sculptural garden or Art museum with a locals gallery.*
- *I would like to see a specific area of town dedicated to the arts – like San Antonio Street (the old Century Tel. Bldg. etc.) to dovetail with restaurants downtown.*
- *Support public art throughout the city: a sculpture walk that incorporates the river and other natural areas, also along downtown alleys and sidewalks; rotating sculpture display in a prominent area in town (Activity Center?); public sculpture depicting the natural resources of Hays County. Focus on permanent art in a way that promotes local artistic development, enhances the reputation of the city, and promotes tourism; provide walking tours; support public sculptures and develop a sculpture walk/river walk with historical markers.*
- *Sidewalks! Create community walkability around San Marcos for things like art walks and festivals.*
- *Art in public places – like San Antonio Riverwalk extension – Include art in sidewalks, bridges, fire hydrants, sign posts, any structure the public sees.*
- *Have public art in city buildings.*
- *Clean up the city! Trash along roadsides everywhere distracts from our beautiful city.*
- *Develop a Mercado with Latino community.*
- *Possible restoration of old advertising on buildings.*

ACCESSIBILITY

- *We need to increase transportation options to and from community arts activities.*

ARTS EDUCATION

- *Provide crafts lessons for children and adults.*
- *Support for SMART Orchestra (San Marcos Artists' Retention and Training Orchestra) and other initiatives for community based and supported arts.*
- *Have programs for the arts that dovetail with public school programs (including dealing with transportation issues).*
- *Art Center and Education program for summer, spring, and winter break.*

FUNDING

- *Provide funding for arts through a building/construction percentage fee.*
- *Set aside a percentage of funding for cultural arts; set aside a percentage of funding for kid's arts.*
- *Provide separate funding for arts programs for the local schools and communities, not tied to tax funding.*
- *Develop a successful bond funding for a Hispanic cultural center, using the help of the community gathered around the Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos.*

CITY INVOLVEMENT

- *Facilitate town relationships in terms of Texas State resources and events; find ways to connect with the University.*
- *Support the formation of grant writing groups.*
- *Provide summer art lessons, led by Texas State education major interns, for local children and adults.*
- *We need an arts coordinator for the city; possibly connected with Parks and Recreation.*

PROMOTION AND ADVOCACY

- *40% or so of the population in this community is Hispanic. San Marcos needs a plan that engages that community; promotes cultural diversity appreciation.*
- *Preserve and protect existing artwork on display in San Marcos; make an assessment of existing works, obviously “public art,” but perhaps more – such that San Marcos can plan to maintain these works for the future through protection, preservation, even interpretation (i.e.: Parks/tours of San Marcos).*
- *Devise economic impact statement to support arts development.*
- *Establish a social network to support local arts events. It should be FREE and preferably interactive to allow a wide variety of artists/musicians and performers the opportunity to advertise and promote their work and events.*
- *Coordinate publicity for various artistic events in town through a centrally located calendar. Host a city operated website with a calendar of events and links to all arts organizations in San Marcos.*
- *Provide an online calendar submission form on website for people to upload info of their own event.*
- *Community list of events in town – available also off line for folks who don’t use computers.*
- *Encourage interaction among arts groups.*
- *Improve connection of the city to the arts through Texas State.*
- *Generate a comprehensive list of resources, venues, funding, advertising, etc. for local artists and arts organizations.*
- *Have an intentional promotional campaign.*

EVENTS

- *Focus on the river as unique setting/backdrop for arts events.*
- *Annual Arts Festival of quality that is unique to San Marcos and draws tourism.*
- *Host a major art show that draws major artists from around the country to sell and also enter to win monetary gift – “Lagoona Gloria,” Ann Arbor Arts Festival, etc.; a juried art show.*
- *Encourage live public music events. Street musicians and music in the parks and on the square should be encouraged and organized on a weekly basis.*
- *Hold art competitions with cool prizes for children’s art developed from age 2 and above.*
- *Support development of a Native American festival/event along the San Marcos springs.*
- *Too many festivals (especially of low quality “kitschy art” art/events) wear the community out and they become uninterested.*

- *San Marcos Music and Art Fest – Annual show, two days of music and local artists! Ex: Gruene Day Festival!*
- *Hold an art festival downtown.*
- *Host 3rd Fridays; downtown businesses give wall space to art hangings; have different bands on four corners of square; downtown dinner theater performers.*
- *Support public performance of classical or folk music; attract opera companies to San Marcos to perform once a quarter at Texas Music Theatre.*
- *Partnership between city and cultural arts groups focused on projects and events.*

GENERAL COMMENTS

- *The bulk of this survey is not applicable – city should not fund many of these things or determine activities in schools, churches, or university.*
- *Way too much information on this survey; I understand these are items that have been previously discussed, but many items are far too detailed and many are duplicative. Must be edited/shortened/focused.*
- *Very much like the notion of involving businesses and helping them understand the value of arts in the community; conversely, also appreciated the ‘let’s do it!’ attitude of many participants. There is room for both of these types of people.*
- *Involve businesses in these programs – they are half of the equation.*

ASSET INVENTORY AND SCHEMATIC

The *Cultural Map of San Marcos* was created to highlight points of interest in the San Marcos Arts and Culture community. In order to develop an all-inclusive map, we surveyed the existing establishments in San Marcos, compiled them into an Asset Inventory, and grouped them according to type. The groups include Museums, Galleries, Historic Venues, Organizations, Music Venues, Event Venues, and Hike and Bike Trails. An additional group for Public Art may be added in the future. Some establishments are listed twice; The Coffee Pot, for example, offers both live music and gallery shows.

Michelle Hays, a faculty member at Texas State University’s School of Art and Design, designed and created the *Cultural Map* as seen below. The map will serve as a valuable tool for arts and culture tourism, and can be made available on the internet in various forms. It will be accompanied by a list of arts and culture organizations in San Marcos with additional contact information. The schematic is included as Appendix B.

APPENDIX A

San Marcos Arts Master Plan Survey Tool



San Marcos Arts Commission

CHAIR
Diann McCabe

VICE CHAIR
Kevin Huffaker

MEMBERS
Clay DeStefano
Eva Doty
Kelvon Hansen
Arlis Hiebert
Charlotte Wattigny

CITY STAFF LIAISON
Lisa Morris



SAN MARCOS ARTS MASTER PLAN SURVEY

PURPOSE: The purpose of the San Marcos Arts Master Plan will be to develop a five-year strategic plan that defines the role of the City of San Marcos in supporting the arts, and the role of the arts in accomplishing the City's broader goals of quality of life and economic development.

APPROACH: The planning process will engage the participation of key stakeholders, artists, and community members in the Arts Master Plan, and establish goals and objectives to provide the framework for orderly and consistent planning and development of arts and culture in San Marcos. In addition, the Arts Master Plan will include an asset inventory of San Marcos, identifying cultural assets in a Schematic Layout Map.

Arts planner Grady Hillman has utilized a synergistic approach in developing the San Marcos Arts Master Plan building upon existent culturally relevant plans and processes. The initial phase of the planning process involved identifying community-engaged cultural planning documents, which focused wholly or in part on the role of the arts. These existent arts-related needs assessments and recommendations have been organized in historical summaries with recommendations culled from the available documentation.

Having completed the research, Hillman conducted interviews with key stakeholders identified by the San Marcos Arts Commission to develop an informed set of recommendations, which have been organized for community input. In addition, Hillman and his staff have produced a preliminary inventory of San Marcos arts assets based on input from the Arts Commission, the Parks and Recreation department, stakeholder interviews and independent research.

The next phase of the planning process will involve public presentations of the recommendations to survey community support and elicit new recommendations to be included in the preliminary Arts Master Plan.

This survey is divided into two sections. Section One seeks input on existing plans and Section Two seeks input on the recommendations of current community stakeholders.

SAN MARCOS ARTS PLANNING HISTORY

Throughout the years, the arts have been minimally addressed in several planning documents. The following plans provided community or key stakeholder approved recommendations. The recommendations will be integrated into the Arts Master Plan.

Executive Summary—Serving Up The Arts: Arts Planning Forum, November 4, 1996

San Marcos Horizons Plan: adopted February 1996

Final Report: Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on Tourism Development, March 1997

City of San Marcos Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan: adopted June 14, 2002

City of San Marcos Arts Commission: Art in Public Places Policy and Procedural Guidelines, adopted April 5, 2005

City of San Marcos Downtown Master Plan: October 2008

Recommendations of The I-35 Redevelopment Committee: June 29, 2010

City of San Marcos Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan: adopted December 7, 2010

San Marcos Convention and Visitors Bureau Stakeholder Forums (Notes compiled by the SMCVB): *Cultural Tourism* and *Heritage Tourism*, June 9, 2009

PART 1: REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION OF EXISTING PLANS

The following recommendations were discussed and/or approved in one or more of the plans listed above. The following survey is asking you to review these recommendations.

Please evaluate each recommendation using the following scale, entering your response in the box next to each listed item. Evaluations will be compiled to determine recommendation priorities to be integrated into the Arts Master Plan.

5 = Highly Recommend

4 = Recommend

3 = No Opinion

2 = Disapprove

1 = Highly Disapprove

A. Facilities

Build a San Marcos Arts Center dedicated to cultural programming. This center could act as an anchor for cultural programming throughout the City.	
Develop four smaller recreational/activity centers at north, south, east, west locales in San Marcos, which will provide arts programming.	
The Old Baptist Church on MLK Street should be restored and utilized as a community venue.	
The performing arts should have a dedicated performing arts facility.	
Develop a plaza and park in commemoration of St. Mark, complete with a statue and park design competition open to Texas artists.	

B. Citizen Involvement and Promotion of the Arts

Develop a cohesive cultural agenda and arts calendar.	
Develop a map showing artist studio locations that aid in the development of a "Artist's Studio Tour."	
Provide live and visual art offerings along the river and on the Square.	
Develop a San Marcos historical docudrama to be performed on a regular basis in an outdoor theater venue.	
Have a well-supported K-12 art program in public schools.	
Establish an education program for cultural resources at all levels.	
Texas State should develop a venue in the Central Business District accessible to visitors that displays pieces from the Southwest Writers Collection and artwork from Texas State.	

5 = Highly Recommend

4 = Recommend

3 = No Opinion

2 = Disapprove

1 = Highly Disapprove

<i>Hollywood, Texas</i> signage should be developed which identifies the movie set sites in San Marcos for self-guided and assisted tours.	
Create attractive "gateways" into San Marcos, which provide aesthetically pleasing and informative entrances into the community.	
Improve the appearance of the overpasses by having Texas State art/design students develop mural ideas. The City will incur the expense of mural materials.	
An outdoor amphitheater and arts complex shall be located along the banks of the San Marcos River, north of Children's Park and east of C.M. Allen Parkway.	
The City shall encourage, promote, and facilitate art and related types of festivals throughout the park system.	
The City shall commission or develop more public art.	
The City shall promote a variety of cultural activities and attractions in the downtown area.	

C. Staffing

The City shall have a cultural activities coordinator who can develop the strategy and model needed to implement a successful civic cultural program.	
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PART 2: CURRENT STAKEHOLDER NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following general arts needs and recommendations were put forth by **community stakeholders**. These stakeholders included members of the Arts Commission, San Marcos Art League, San Marcos Performing Arts Association, Downtown Association, Main Street, Arts Educators, etc. This evaluation will prioritize these items for inclusion into the Arts Master Plan. **Please evaluate each recommendation using the following scale, entering your response in the box next to each listed item. Evaluations will be compiled to determine recommendation priorities to be integrated into the Arts Master Plan.**

- 5 = Highly Recommend**
4 = Recommend
3 = No Opinion
2 = Disapprove
1 = Highly Disapprove

FACILITIES

A. San Marcos Arts Center

Develop a downtown art center in a vacant (or vacating) building such as the Justice Center transforming it into artist studio and gallery space and create a downtown arts incubator.	
Create a 100-person minimum community performing arts theater that can serve as a home to the community theater, the community chorus, the community orchestra and multi-cultural performing arts.	
Create an art center that provides after-school programs, a museum, gallery/performance space, and art classes (similar to the Carver in Austin).	
Eye of the Dog Art Center, on the outskirts of San Marcos, now hosts a number of artist studios, a gallery and occasional performances. The center should become a satellite site for arts events and a gathering place for regional arts organizations.	
The San Marcos Arts League should have a facility with studio space and a public gallery.	

- 5 = Highly Recommend**
4 = Recommend
3 = No Opinion
2 = Disapprove
1 = Highly Disapprove

B. Other visual art facility recommendations

Create an arts incubator for artists with studio and living space supported either by tax incentives or City support.	
If the current Justice Center becomes a parking garage, the first floor level should be dedicated to artist studios.	
Economic development and gentrification should be supported through the provision of subsidized or free space in vacant buildings.	
The City should develop in-town studio space for artists with sculpting tools.	
In reference to above, this studio should host national and foreign artists in residencies to create public art for San Marcos	
Develop an art gallery at the outlet mall, which presents San Marcos artists and provides guides to City arts venues.	
Create a dedicated gallery space Downtown for San Marcos youth work.	
The schools should loan or rent space for after-school and summer arts programs, both youth and adult.	

C. Other performing art facility recommendations

The San Marcos Academy and its theater should be utilized for more public performances.	
The San Marcos High School auditorium is a quality performance space that should be utilized for major performing arts events.	
Area churches have served as performing arts venues-- St. Mark's Episcopal, First Baptist and First Christian—and a cooperative scheduling program should be created.	
The Glade Theater should become a tourist theater destination.	
Springtown Mall should have/become a major entertainment and performance venue.	
San Marcos should find a host site for the Mid-Texas Symphony.	

- 5 = Highly Recommend**
4 = Recommend
3 = No Opinion
2 = Disapprove
1 = Highly Disapprove

D. Neighborhood Community Arts Centers

The Price Senior Center is a formative place in the development of San Marcos arts with a theater and art classes. The center should be supported as a neighborhood art center.	
The Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos provides youth arts, music classes, cultural events, and programs to the Georgia Street Senior Center and should become a community arts center.	
The Dunbar recreational center should expand arts services and become a community arts center.	

MUSEUMS

Create a downtown Texas Swing Museum/Texas Music Museum that hosts the Texas Swing Music Hall of Fame.	
Create a Downtown gallery/museum venue for rotating art exhibits from Texas State (Witliff Collection, Mitte, etc.). This will be a downtown attraction and promote the arts resources of Texas State.	
Create a San Marcos Children's Museum.	
Create a program that transforms abandoned buildings into boutique museums.	
Create a boutique hotel downtown to increase cultural tourism traffic.	
The Cephas House should become an Eddie Durham Museum.	
If the Cephas does not become an Eddie Durham Museum, create an exhibit about him near the Eddie Durham Park.	

PUBLIC SPACE

To facilitate parking and enhance safety near the Square, alleyways should become cultural passageways with public art, murals and illumination at night.	
The pedestrian trails along the rivers and waterways and Aquarena Springs should become an eco-tourism zone with opportunities to become a center for eco-art.	
Create inspirational walking paths which incorporate community art-making such as murals and mosaics.	
Create walking tours of the City oriented around cultural venues and art such as the Centro Cultural, LBJ Museum, Calaboose, and Cephas House.	
The Sculpture Garden at the Activity center/Library should become the start of a pedestrian art trail with the Walker shows as an anchor.	

- 5 = Highly Recommend**
4 = Recommend
3 = No Opinion
2 = Disapprove
1 = Highly Disapprove

Texas State should create a way-finding system in town for its arts venues and should be more accessible to the City.	
Public art should be part of the I-35 gateways.	
Create space and a program for temporary art installations at the Sculpture Garden.	
The River Walk and River Corridor should have sculptural bases built. These sculptures should be rotated out on an annual basis.	
Create 20 receptacles for art throughout the City and on pedestrian/park corridors to lay the groundwork for later sculpture exhibits.	
The Rio Vista area should have functional art park benches and semi-permanent or permanent art with which children can interact.	
Create a Texas Swing Hall of Fame sidewalk for inductees where their names are inscribed.	
Create sanctioned spaces for semi-permanent art and rotating sculptures on the Square.	
Create a mural arts tour of Tex-Mex restaurants as examples of San Marcos public art.	
Create a coffee house gallery tour.	

PROGRAMS

A. Youth Programs

Create greater arts programming, especially after school programs, which are free and not tuition-based.	
Create a civic arts program for youth using materials from re-cycling centers and refuse from river clean ups to create recycled eco-art that teaches recycling and sustainability.	
Every elementary school should have a dedicated art teacher.	
Every middle school should have a dedicated art teacher.	
Create a clearinghouse for community opportunities in the arts so that students can engage in service learning opportunities and internships, which are vital for the forthcoming Fine Arts and Communications Academy.	

- 5 = Highly Recommend**
4 = Recommend
3 = No Opinion
2 = Disapprove
1 = Highly Disapprove

San Marcos needs a youth arts incubator program that works heavily with artists in residence programming, providing opportunities for youth to exhibit and sell their work.	
Create a poetry series in the community for youth to read their work.	
Create a "Re-Creation" program for teens that teaches basic sewing and business skills with an outlet to sell fabric collage objects.	

B. General Community Programs

Cephas House should have an artist-in-residence as part of its programming.	
Develop community transportation to campus for the Eddie Durham Jazz Festival. This system should be employed for other performing events on campus.	
Expand CARTS services to provide transportation from senior centers to cultural outlets.	
Enhance creative writing programs in the community by taking Texas State MFA program students and guests off campus for readings in the community.	
The Firehouse Recording Studio should develop community programs for beginning musicians.	
Continuing Education at Texas State should provide opportunities for artists to take art classes for professional development.	
Create a community-wide incubator for artists, an Adopt an Artist model where businesses provide space and / or materials for an artist studio (possibly recycled materials) resulting in a studio tour and installation of some of the art in the community on a semi-permanent or permanent basis.	
Create a monthly Noche de Cultura (Culture Night) at the Centro Cultural Hispano in addition to cultural celebrations on 5 de Mayo, 16 de Septiembre, and Dia de Los Muertos.	

EVENTS

The Eddie Durham Jazz Festival should be revived, tied into the Texas State Jazz Festival, and take place in the community as well as on campus.	
Provide arts and crafts tents at regular San Marcos events and gatherings such as the Earth Day Celebration, Summer Concert Series and the Farmers Market.	
Summer in the Park should become a mainstay annual event marketed as a significant San Marcos attraction.	

- 5 = Highly Recommend**
4 = Recommend
3 = No Opinion
2 = Disapprove
1 = Highly Disapprove

Create an Art and Eco Event that showcase both San Marcos' arts and its identity as a steward of natural resources.	
The public art program—sculpture/art installations along trails and Downtown—should culminate into a major outdoor festival (music, dance, theater) with the unveiling of the artwork synced to a significant major community art event.	
Art on the Square should be revived, advertised and work in concert with other events such as Earth Day.	
Hold major arts events when Texas State is not in session to help local businesses in down times.	
Create an Italian-style Chalk Art Festival on the Square, which will occur over a day and night with projected art and laser art projections at night.	
Create an annual Gospel Fest to feature gospel recording artists and local community artists.	
Host a San Marcos Pow Wow celebrating Native American performance and art, the springs as a significant element of Native American culture, and the Chief Placedo monument as the only sculpture in the area dedicated to Native Americans.	
Revive the Wine Stroll in conjunction with a Downtown art studio tour.	

PROMOTING THE ARTS

The San Marcos music scene should be promoted as a Texas Music hub given the popularity of the Cheatham Street Warehouse and the new Texas Music Theater.	
Create a San Marcos Music Commission.	
Create an affiliate multi-disciplinary arts organization in San Marcos that serves as an advocacy organization for the arts.	
San Marcos should have staff dedicated to arts programming and not continue to rely on voluntarism.	
The City should create an Office of Cultural Affairs.	
San Marcos needs an interactive, communicative arts website that allows for easy linkages.	

- 5 = Highly Recommend**
4 = Recommend
3 = No Opinion
2 = Disapprove
1 = Highly Disapprove

Develop a San Marcos arts website and distribute arts e-blasts to interested community members.	
Create a mechanism, such as a monthly calendar, announcing local arts events and post them around the community.	
Meeting planners should be made aware of talented students at Texas State available to perform at events.	
San Marcos should pursue Cultural District designation from the Texas Commission on the Arts and encourage greater density of the arts downtown.	
The Chamber of Commerce should set up business workshops for artists.	
Create a coffee shop art gallery tour guide and promote the tour with a handout and Internet marketing.	
The Arts Commission should become more pro-active in developing arts organizations like River City Ballet to create a cadre of independent, quality arts organizations in the community.	
Incorporate the arts into Farmer's Market with music and crafts.	
Record Summer in the Park music events as a program and sell it to television stations.	
Create a Texas Café PBS style-music series based at Cheatham Street.	
Arts events and exhibits should be announced at City Council and Chamber of Commerce meetings to create a greater awareness of San Marcos arts.	

FUNDING THE ARTS

The City should have a Penny for the Arts program where 1% of every dollar spent on public construction goes to the commission of a public art installation.	
Increase the appropriation from the Hotel Occupancy Tax for the San Marcos Arts Commission.	
Fund after-school arts programs that run until 6 p.m. at every campus utilizing Title 1 funds, which can be allocated to support arts programming.	
There should be an Art in Public Places policy included in the citywide comprehensive master plan when it comes up for revision in 18 months as part of public development.	



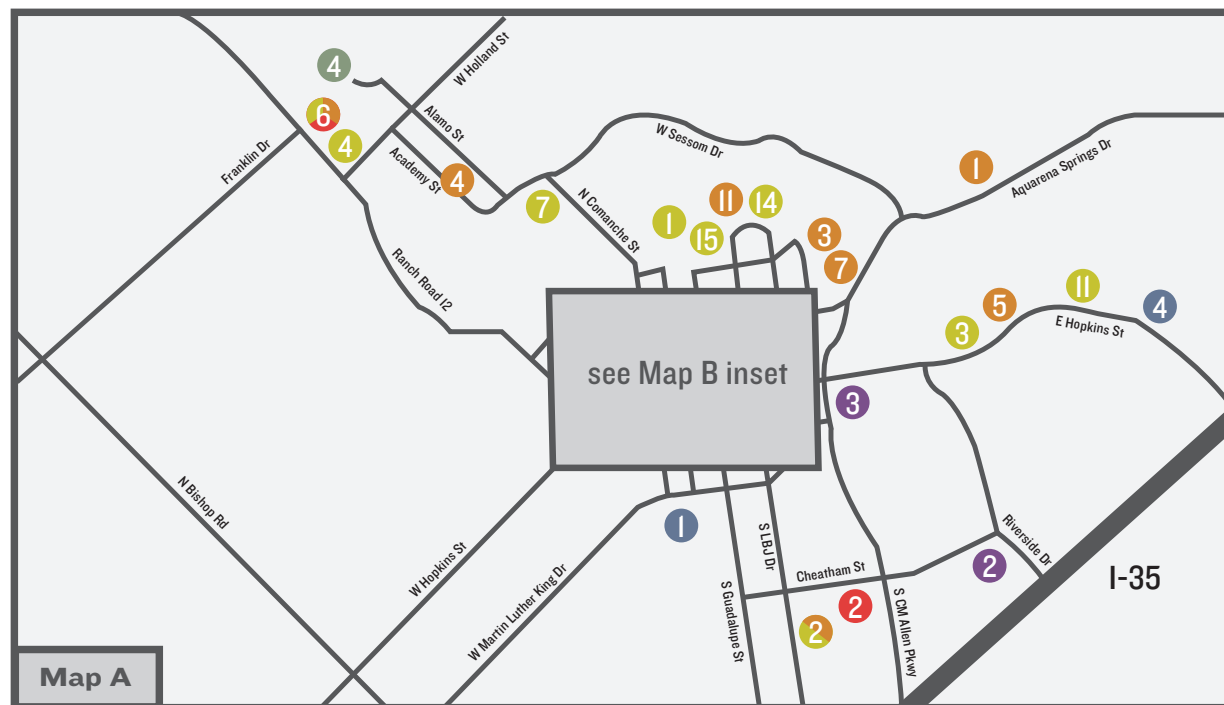
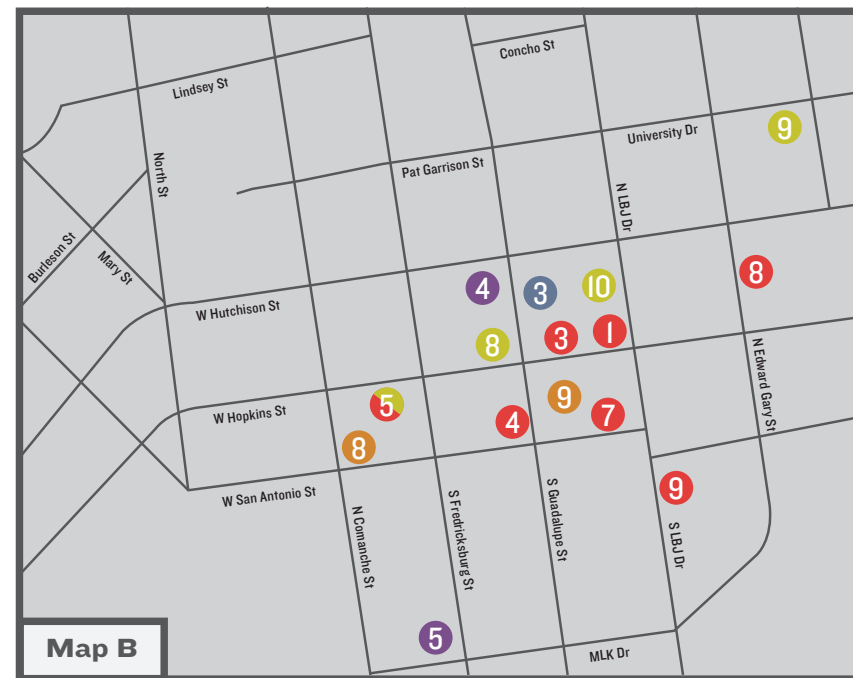
RECOMMENDATIONS AND GENERAL COMMENTS:

Please add your own comments, suggestions, and recommendations.

Completed surveys can be dropped off at the Parks and Recreation Department Main Office, San Marcos Activity Center, or Mail to: City of San Marcos Arts Master Plan, 630 E. Hopkins, San Marcos, TX 78666. Surveys must be received by July 20th, 2011.

APPENDIX B

Asset Inventory Schematic



CULTURAL MAP OF san marcos



Museums



Historic



Music



Galleries



Trails



Events

Museums



- 1 Dick's Classic Garage (120 Stagecoach Trl)
- 2 San Marcos Nature Center (430 Riverside Dr)
- 3 Charles S. Cock House Museum (400 E Hopkins St)
- 4 LBJ Museum of San Marcos (131 N Guadalupe St)
- 5 Calaboose Black History Museum (200 W MLK Dr)
- 6 Commemorative Air Force Museum (1841 Airport Drive)

Galleries



- 1 Witliff Collection (601 University Dr - Alkek Library)
- 2 Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos (211 Lee St)
- 3 The Walker's Gallery - SM Activity Center (501 E Hopkins Rd)
- 4 Soda Tooth Art Studios and Gallery (1428 Ranch Road 12)
- 5 Tantra Coffee House (217 W Hopkins St)
- 6 Wake the Dead (1432 Ranch Road 12)
- 7 JCM Gallery (601 University Dr - Joann Cole Mitte Building)
- 8 The Coffee Pot (129 E Hopkins St)
- 9 Jo on the Go (312 University Dr # B)
- 10 Root Cellar (215 North L B J Dr)
- 11 Sculpture Garden (630 E Hopkins St)
- 12 Eye of the Dog (405 Valley View West Rd)
- 13 Wimberley Glass Works (?????)
- 14 The Gallery of the Common Experience (601 Univ. Dr - Lampasas Building)
- 15 Southwestern & Mexican Photography (601 Univ. Dr - Alkek Library)

Historic



- 1 Eddie Durham, Cephas House (200 W MLK Dr)
- 2 Hays County Jail (1307 Uhland Rd)
- 3 Fire Station Studios (224 N Guadalupe St)
- 4 Dr. Eli T. Merriman Cabin (400 E Hopkins St)

Organizations



- 1 Center for Texas Music History (601 University Dr - Brazos Hall)
- 2 Main Street Program (630 E Hopkins St)
- 3 D'Ette & Co. Dancers (1405 N Bishop)
- 4 Go 2 Danz Studio (317 N LBJ)
- 5 River City Ballet (101 E Hopkins)

Music Venues



- 1 Bar One 41 (141 E Hopkins St)
- 2 Cheatham Street Warehouse (119 Cheatham St)
- 3 The Coffee Pot (129 E Hopkins St)
- 4 Nephews (100 N Guadalupe St)
- 5 Tantra Coffee House (217 W Hopkins St)
- 6 Wake the Dead (1432 Ranch Road 12)
- 7 Texas Music Theater (120 E San Antonio St)
- 8 Triple Crown (206 N Edward Gary St)
- 9 Sean Patricks (202 E San Antonio St # 119 ???)

Event Venues



- 1 Aquarena Center/Texas Rivers Center (921 Aquarena Springs Dr)
- 2 Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos (211 Lee St)
- 3 Glade Theater (601 University Dr)
- 4 San Marcos Academy (Academy St ??????)
- 5 San Marcos Public Library (625 E Hopkins St)
- 6 Wake the Dead (1432 Ranch Road 12)
- 7 Texas State University Mainstage Theater (601 Univ. Dr - Theater Bldg)
- 8 The Price Center (222 W San Antonio St)
- 9 Farmers Market (Hays County Court House - III E San Antonio St)
- 10 Hays County Civic Center (Fairgrounds - 3005 Clovis Barker Rd)
- 11 Texas State University Evans Auditorium (601 University Dr)
- 12 Eye of the Dog (405 Valley View West Rd)

Hike and Bike Trails



- 1 Purgatory Creek Natural Area (Upper)
- 2 Purgatory Creek Natural Area (Lower, Prospect Park)
- 3 Ringtail Ridge Natural Area
- 4 Schulle Canyon Natural Area
- 5 Spring Lake Preserve
- 6 Blanco Shoals