

## Arts, Culture, and Economic Development

By Steve Nivin, Ph.D. and David Plettner

### PLANNING THE CREATIVE AGE IN SAN ANTONIO

The U.S. economy has transitioned to an era in which creativity drives competitive advantage and labor is increasingly mobile in search of communities that satisfy creative as well as practical needs.

As a result, **the creative industry has become correspondingly more important.** Its importance derives from both its own economic impact as well as its impact on other industries. As a key driver of many regional economies, some local and state governments and their arts and economic development agencies have begun to engage in coordinated efforts to foster the growth of this industry.

**In this article, we document the economic impact of the creative sector across the country and discuss San Antonio's efforts in developing and implementing its strategic plan:**

The Cultural Collaborative: A Plan for San Antonio's Creative Economy.

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# arts, culture, and

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

By Steve Nivin, Ph.D. and David Plettner

### THE NEXT PHASE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

As economies advance into different stages of development, their growth in each stage is driven by a particular industry or sector of the economy. In the early stages of development, economies are usually driven by their agricultural prowess. As new innovations are developed that improve the efficiency of the agricultural sector, wealth increases and resources are able to be released to focus on developing the next stage. This second stage is usually driven by manufacturing. Finally, an economy develops into an information economy. This latter stage is where many of the most advanced economies, including the U.S., sit today. Thus, an economy generally moves from an Agricultural Age to an Industrial Age followed by the Information Age.

But what is next? As one of the most advanced economies in the world, many interested observers are watching the U.S. closely to see what stage of development is next. It seems clear to us that while the U.S. economy has not spent much time in the Information Age, the U.S. is rapidly moving into its next stage of development – the Creative Age (Florida 2002) or the Conceptual Age (Pink 2005) or the Design Age.

### CREATIVITY NOW DRIVES US ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Creative Age, as we prefer to call it, is one in which the work being done by creative people in each economy creates the value-added and drives



The Museo Alameda in San Antonio was designated as the first formal Latino affiliate of the Smithsonian outside of Washington D.C. and gave birth to the Smithsonian's affiliations program.

economic growth and development. Throughout U.S. (and anywhere else for that matter) economic history, the creative processes of technological change or innovation have been the main catalyst for growth in each stage of development. This will certainly continue to be the case as globalization increases and outsourcing of manufacturing and services flows to other countries, particularly Asia. For instance, according to Bill Breen, “Our companies will continue to prosper only if they push to the higher ground of innovating and creating ‘elegant, refined products and services’ – which might well be produced elsewhere” (Breen 2005, 69).

As innovation becomes even more important to the development of regional economies, it will concurrently become vital for regions to develop a culture that fosters the creative activity of innovation. This suggests that the development of a vibrant arts and cultural infrastructure is critical to the success of the development of any region.

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### PLANNING THE CREATIVE AGE IN SAN ANTONIO

*The U.S. economy has transitioned to an era in which creativity drives competitive advantage and labor is increasingly mobile in search of communities that satisfy creative as well as practical needs. As a result, the creative industry has become correspondingly more important. Its importance derives from both its own economic impact as well as its impact on other industries. As a key driver of many regional economies, some local and state governments and their arts and economic development agencies have begun to engage in coordinated efforts to foster the growth of this industry. In this article, we document the economic impact of the creative sector across the country and discuss San Antonio's efforts in developing and implementing its strategic plan: The Cultural Collaborative: A Plan for San Antonio's Creative Economy.*

Photo Credits Arturo Almeida

Rubio is featured in the City of San Antonio's Office of Cultural Affairs integrated arts marketing campaign, SAHEARTS. The campaign features San Antonio artists from a wide range of disciplines that reflect the diverse and vibrant arts community of San Antonio.



San Antonio artist Alex Rubio stands in front of one of his large commissioned paintings. His work focuses on images deeply rooted in his Latin American culture.

A vibrant arts community encompassing everything from pioneering and internationally renowned regional theater companies and museums...to the thick and diverse layers of artistic talent in the regional economy will serve as a major drawing factor for the location of new businesses, the recruitment of new employees from elsewhere and further gravitation of artists to the region. It also helps reinforce the loyalty of current residents and businesses to the region, providing the "lovability" that is so essential to the future of a high wage region in a fast integrating world. (Markusen and King 2003, 6)

Additionally, "...because the digital revolution has made it easier to work from remote job sites, skilled workers are more likely to be committed to a region and neighborhood than to specific firms or industries" (Markusen and King 2003, 7).

Furthermore, not only will it be important to be able to successfully innovate in order to survive in the 21st century economy, but these innovations must also be designed to be aesthetically pleasing. This is an era where emotions, experiences, and aesthetics drive consumer demand. It used to be that those educated in science, technology, engineering, and math were the key players in the innovation process. Now, however, firms are finding it necessary to include in the innovation process those who are trained in the arts because, without being properly designed, the innovation will most likely fail in the market. "Technology companies are realizing that design is a powerful competitive advantage. There is a sense of urgency around this" (Sam Lucent, top brand designer at Hewlett-Packard, in Morrison, 2005). In the past, engineers led the innovation process, but with design becoming a major source of added value (Breen 2005, 69), designers are now starting to lead the innovation process. As Virginia Postrel states, "Aesthetic creativity is as vital, and as indicative of economic and social progress, as technological innovation" (Postrel 2003, 16).

According to Dan Pink, there are three main factors propelling the importance of the arts in economic development: Asia, automation, and abundance. Many of the

jobs "that can be reduced to a set of rules, routines, and instructions" (Pink 2005, 71) are being outsourced to Asia because they can simply be done there cheaper. This means that many routine manufacturing and service jobs are being outsourced to Asian companies. However, this also means that the real value creation in the U.S. economy is in those jobs that are not routine – jobs that require creativity. This is the area where U.S. firms and workers must excel (Pink 2005, 71).

Automation has the same kind of effect. Computers now have the capability to "execute sequential, reductive, computational work better, faster and more accurately than even those with the highest IQs" (Pink 2005, 71). Lawyers who only draft simple wills or contracts can be replaced by software that guides the client through the completion of these forms. Manufacturing workers performing routine tasks on the production line can be replaced by robots. Stockbrokers who simply process orders can be replaced by online brokerage services. "Now that computers can emulate left-hemisphere skills, we'll have to rely ever more on our right hemispheres" (Pink 2005, 72).

Relative to those living a few generations ago, our lives are defined by an abundance of goods and services. This wealth and abundance has allowed us to satisfy our needs for those products and services necessary for survival. In fact, such abundance has allowed us to demand that the goods and services we consume satisfy our desire for beauty and spirituality and our emotional needs (Pink 2005, 72). In other words, businesses can no longer just manufacture and sell their products to be successful; they have to satisfy our emotional needs through superb design. A retail store cannot just open shop in a simple boxy store and sell its goods; it needs to create an experience for the consumer in order to be successful. One implication is that "in both business and



The logo for the Office of Cultural Affairs new arts & culture website, www.sahearts.com. The website serves as a comprehensive and accessible cultural/art resource for residents and tourists, and serves as the gateway to discover San Antonio's cultural treasures.



personal life, now that our left-brain needs have largely been sated, our right-brain yearnings will demand to be fed” (Pink 2005, 72).

There are other reasons why the arts appear to be important to economic development. Having an active and vibrant arts community within a city creates an environment that encourages creativity and attracts the vital components for a successful innovative and creative economy: creative people. According to Richard Florida, “To stay innovative, America must continue to attract the world’s sharpest minds. And to do that, it needs to invest in further developing the creative sector. Because wherever creativity goes – and, by extension, wherever talent goes – innovation and economic growth are sure to follow” (Florida 2004, 123).

Throughout American economic history (and world economic history for that matter), innovation has been the engine driving economic development. Given the increase in globalization and outsourcing, along with the rapid acceleration of technological change, it seems reasonable that innovation is increasingly important to the further development of our regional economies. This begs the question of what drives innovation?

Because of the strong relationship between an economy’s creative sector and its ability to innovate, as Florida states above, it seems reasonable that the development of a region’s creative sector is vitally important to the future economic development of an economy (also see Nivin 1998). As Christopher Farrell put it, “Artists are significant and vastly underestimated contributors and generators of local economic growth. The more creative types working in a regional economy, the better is its outlook for improved earnings, productivity, and competitiveness” (Farrell 2003). In other words, a creative environment drives innovation which drives economic development.

## THE ARTISTIC DIVIDEND

A creative environment also drives economic development through its “artistic dividend – the aggregate economic impact that would not occur without the presence of artists” (Markusen and King 2003, 4). The term “artistic dividend” was coined by Markusen and King (2003).

We suggest that the productivity and earnings in a regional economy rise as the incidence of artists within its boundaries increases, because artists’ creativity and specialized skills enhance the design, production and marketing of products and services in other sectors. They also help firms recruit top-rate employees and generate income through direct exports of artistic work out of the region (Markusen and King 2003, 3).

The components of the artistic dividend include:

- (1) ...the work that artists do to enhance the design features of a region’s manufacturing products or marketing efforts.
- (2) ...the success of photographers, painters, authors, poets and graphic designers in exporting their work out of the region over the internet, arts fairs, or via other direct sales routes.
- (3) ...the revenues and income to groups or individual artists who tour with theatrical, musical or dance performances.
- (4) ...the incomes earned and human capital created by the many artists who teach others their craft.
- (5) ...the incomes generated for support workers who build sets, edit manuscripts, print books and music, act as brokers or agents and engage in paid promotional efforts outside of arts establishments (Markusen and King 2003, 4).

For example, consider the first point in the above list: the impact of artists on the design of products. Companies in several industries are realizing the importance of this to their bottom line. “Established technology groups – not only PC makers but also manufacturers of cell phones and big-screen televisions – are being forced to make a critical choice: either play a cut-throat game at the low-cost end of the market or try to stand out with innovative consumer designs that drive higher margins” (Morrison 2005, 8).

According to Roger Martin, dean of the University of Toronto’s Rotman School of Business, “In this turbulent, get-real economy, the advantage goes to those who can outimagine and outcreate their competitors” (Breen 2005, 69). He goes on to stress the point that “the upshot...is nothing less than the emergence of the design

Photo credit: Al Rendon



The community celebrates Artist Day in San Antonio’s historic Deco district.

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economy – the successor of the information economy, and, before it, the service and manufacturing economies. And that shift, he argues, has profound implications for every business leader and manager among us: ‘Businesspeople don’t just need to understand designers better – they need to become designers.’...Real value creation now comes from using the designer’s foremost competitive weapon, his imagination” (Breen 2005, 69).

## DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY

Another reason the arts are so important to economic development is that this sector has a substantial direct economic impact from its own production, employment, and exporting beyond the indirect economic impacts of the creative sector.

Many studies have been conducted using a variety of methodologies to measure the economic impact of the creative industry. These studies vary by the particular

impacts and geographic areas where the impacts are measured. For instance, most studies focus on the non-profit arts sector, while others consider the impact of both the nonprofit and for-profit businesses in their creative industry. Many studies concentrate on the statewide impact while others analyze the impact within a city or metropolitan area. Table 1 summarizes the impacts found in a sample of these studies. The numbers in the table are not comparable because of the differences in methodologies.

Many studies have been conducted using a variety of methodologies to measure the economic impact of the creative industry.

These studies vary by the particular impacts and geographic areas where the impacts are measured.

**TABLE 1. Creative Industry Economic Impact by Region**

Region	Year Studied	Non-profit or For-profit	Economic Impact	Employment	Payroll
Texas <sup>2</sup>	2000	Both	\$98,421,577,412	1,918,484 ft <sup>6</sup>	\$61,747,000 <sup>1</sup>
Oregon <sup>3</sup>	2000	Non-profit	\$262.6 million	3,623 ft/pt	\$45,088,326
New England <sup>4</sup>	2000	Non-profit	\$5.217 billion	84,494 ft	\$1,503,501,000
Connecticut <sup>4</sup>	2000	Non-profit	\$969.6 million	23,569 ft	\$308,835,233
Maine <sup>4</sup>	2000	Non-profit	\$211.6 million	4,056 ft	\$49,860,919
Massachusetts <sup>4</sup>	2000	Non-profit	\$3.427 billion	39,784 ft	\$972,703,770
New Hampshire <sup>4</sup>	2000	Non-profit	\$136.4 million	3,093 ft	\$33,332,521
Rhode Island <sup>4</sup>	2000	Non-profit	\$316.8 million	8,703 ft	\$100,201,554
Vermont <sup>4</sup>	2000	Non-profit	\$156.2 million	5,289 ft	\$38,567,202
California <sup>6</sup>	2004	Non-profit	\$5.4 billion	66,300 <sup>6</sup> ft	\$2,656,100,000
Maryland <sup>7</sup>	2001	Non-profit	\$817.11 million	12,578 ft/pt	\$292,240,000
Kentucky <sup>8</sup>	1997	Both	NA	3,530 ft/pt	\$77,400,000
Florida <sup>9</sup>	2001	Non-profit	\$2.9 billion	28,302 <sup>6</sup> fte	\$877,800,000
North Texas <sup>10</sup>	2002	Non-profit	\$772.5 million	4,000	NA
San Antonio <sup>11</sup>	2006	Both	\$3.375 billion	26,744	\$1,006,139,328 <sup>1</sup>
San Antonio <sup>12</sup>	2003	Both	\$1.216 billion	11,888	\$270,600,000 <sup>1</sup>
Austin <sup>2</sup>	2000	Both	\$6,814,315,541	130,711	\$4,316,465,849 <sup>1</sup>
Dallas <sup>2</sup>	2000	Both	\$30,428,689,154	512,667	\$18,648,017,378 <sup>1</sup>
Fort Worth <sup>2</sup>	2000	Both	\$9,143,130,885	179,044	\$5,778,632,725 <sup>1</sup>
Houston <sup>2</sup>	2000	Both	\$23,441,675,806	429,275	\$14,911,307,775 <sup>1</sup>
U.S. <sup>12</sup>	2005	Non-profit	\$166,200,000,000	5,700,000	\$104,200,000,000

1 This is personal income, which includes wages, salaries, interest, dividends, proprietors’ profits, or other sources of income.

2 Peryman, 2000

3 Buehler and Trapp, 2001

4 Wassall and DeNatale, 2003

5 Direct and indirect

6 Thompson, Mataraza, and Johnson, 2004

7 Maryland State Arts Council, 2002

8 Thompson, Berger, and Allen, 1998

9 Stronge, 2004

10 Deloitte & Touche and Dallas Business Committee for the Arts

11 Nivin, Silverman, and Birdwell, 2008

12 Americans for the Arts

13 Butler and Stefl, 2005

Because of the differences in methodologies and definitions of the creative industry, the impacts vary widely, even for the same region. However they are measured, the creative industry impact to the economies within these states and cities is substantial. Recall that the impacts shown in this table are the economic impacts generated from spending by arts organizations, their patrons and in some cases, the indirect and induced effects resulting from this spending. The measurement of the impacts would be even larger if other equally important factors were calculated, such as the impacts of improved quality of life, improved productivity of local firms, and enhanced ability to attract and keep labor.

A couple of studies from the sample provided a measurement of the value of the quality of life the arts provide to the citizens of the region. Contingent valuation surveys are often used in cost-benefit analyses to capture

These studies are evidence of the sizeable economic impact of the creative industry in economies throughout the country. It is important as part of the planning process to show the importance of the creative industry within the economy, and these studies are a vital component of doing that. The economic impact studies of the creative industry in San Antonio have certainly been important not only in the planning process but throughout the process of implementing the cultural plan.

these values called existence values, which is defined as the value that people derive from a good or service even though they do not actively consume the good or service. In other words, even though someone may not “consume” the arts, he or she might derive value from knowing that the arts are present within the community. Even if a person does not attend arts and cultural events, he or she may derive value (e.g., via improved quality of life) just by knowing that the events are there if they want to attend or if their children want to attend someday. They could also “consume” public art even though they do not have to pay a dollar price for the enjoyment of, say, a statue in a public park. Contingent valuation surveys are one method for measuring these values.

Thompson, Berger, and Allen (1998) measured the impact of the arts on the quality of life of the citizens of Kentucky using this method. “It was estimated that Kentucky households together would be willing to pay \$10.9 million in order to expand the number of arts performances in Kentucky, while Kentucky households would be willing to pay \$21.8 million in order to avoid a 25 percent decline in the number of arts performances in Kentucky” (Thompson, Berger, and Allen 1998, 3). In a more current study of Kentucky, Thompson, Berger,

Blomquist, and Allen (2002) found that the average Kentucky household would be willing to pay \$11.44 to avoid a 25 percent reduction in arts events and exhibits, and \$26.76 to avoid a 50 percent reduction.

Thompson, Mataraza, and Johnson (2004) calculated similar willingness to pay values for California. By adjusting the Kentucky values for the higher income and education levels in California, they estimate that the willingness to pay to prevent a 25 percent reduction in arts events in California is \$15.35 per average household. This value increases to \$33.27 to avoid a 50 percent reduction. Clearly, the quality of life impacts contribute substantially to the overall economic impact of arts and culture in a region.

Many of these studies also did not include the for-profit sector of the creative industry, which could add significantly to this industry’s size. For example, the California study only measures the impact of the non-profit arts organizations, but it is estimated that the impact of the film industry in Hollywood was about \$33.4 billion in 2000

#### OVERVIEW OF SAN ANTONIO METROPOLITAN AREA

Population (2007) <sup>1</sup>	1,997,969
Percent Population Hispanic or Latino (2007) <sup>1</sup>	52.6%
Per Capita Personal Income (2007) <sup>1</sup>	\$22,448
San Antonio Gross Domestic Product (millions 2006 \$) <sup>2</sup>	\$72,738

1 Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey

2 Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

(Melinda Ann Farrell 2002). There are also a large number of other creative businesses, such as design and architecture firms, located in California that would substantially add to the overall impact, if they were included in the study. For instance, in the San Antonio study by Nivin, Silverman, and Birdwell (2008), the design and advertising sector accounts for \$518.1 million (15 percent) of the total economic impact of \$3.375 billion.

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## ECONOMIC IMPACT IN SAN ANTONIO

The impact of San Antonio's creative economy further illustrates the components of the various sectors of this industry. In the Nivin, Silverman, and Birdwell study (2008), the creative industry is defined as including the following sectors: design and advertising, museums and collections, performing arts, arts-related schools, visual arts and photography, printing and related activities, and self-employed artists. In this study, Nivin et al. were able to analyze the impact both by industry (numbers are reported here) and by occupation. The overall 2006 economic impact of this industry is estimated to be \$3.375 billion with 26,744 workers and \$1.006 billion in wages. The economic impact by sectors is shown in Table 2.

Capturing the self-employed artists in these studies has always been an issue, but Nivin et al. were fortunate to get data by occupation from the Texas Workforce Commission that allowed them to capture the impact of the self-employed artists, as well as break down the employment in the creative industry by occupation. It is interesting to note that the self-employed artists are the largest occupational group by employment. Thus, this is some verification to the argument that self-employed artists are a significant component of the creative industry. The results by occupation are also quite interesting.

**TABLE 3. Top 10 Creative Occupations by Employment in San Antonio (2006)**

Occupation	Employment
1. Graphic designers	1,440
2. Musicians and singers	985
3. Photographers	975
4. Librarians	936
5. Public relations specialists	880
6. Merchandise displayers and window trimmers	782
7. Architects (excl. landscape and naval architects)	726
8. Marketing managers	674
9. Editors	606
10. Chefs and head cooks	599

Table 3 shows the top ten occupations by employment, and Table 4 shows the top ten employers of creative occupations in San Antonio in 2006.

The largest number of creative workers in San Antonio, by a sizable margin, are employed as graphic designers with chefs and head cooks being the tenth highest creative occupation by employment, reflecting the strong hospitality industry in San Antonio. Maybe even more interesting are the results showing self-employed artists as the industry, assuming you can call this an "industry," that employs the largest number of

**TABLE 2. Creative Industry Economic Impact\* in San Antonio**

Sector	Economic Impact (millions)	Employment (number)	Payroll (millions)
Performing Arts	\$379.3	2,815	\$64.9
Design and Advertising	\$518.1	3,544	\$175.3
Museums and Collections	\$280.0	4,375	\$91.9
Visual Arts and Photography	\$66.1	657	\$66.1
Schools	\$15.9	282	\$5.1
Printing and Related Activities	\$1,868.6	10,860	\$508.2
Self-employed	\$147.5	4,212	\$147.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,375.5</b>	<b>26,744</b>	<b>\$1,006.1</b>

\* These are direct impact. There are no multipliers added to these numbers. Sum of the sectors may not match the total numbers due to rounding.

creative workers. As already mentioned, this provides some evidence of the importance of the self-employed artists in the creative industry. It is also easy to see the importance of educational institutions as employers of creative workers.

Overall, this industry registers a sizable economic impact that is comparable to some of the other industries San Antonio targets for development, such as the information technology and aerospace industries. Realizing the importance of the direct impacts, as well as the equally important secondary impacts, of this industry, San Antonio has created a plan to foster the development of this vitally important industry.

## THE CULTURAL COLLABORATIVE: A PLAN FOR SAN ANTONIO'S CREATIVE ECONOMY

In 2005, the city of San Antonio adopted a 10-year cultural plan for developing its creative economy, called The Cultural Collaborative (TCC). The product of nearly two years of research and community outreach, the plan is among the first of its type in the nation to address

**TABLE 4. Top 10 Industries Employing Creative Occupations in San Antonio (2006)**

Industry	Employment
1. Self-employed artists	4,212
2. Radio and television broadcasting	1,058
3. Newspapers, periodical, book, and directory publishers	847
4. Elementary and secondary schools, public and private	708
5. Colleges, universities, and professional schools, public and private	686
6. Religious organizations	641
7. Architectural, engineering, and related services	611
8. Advertising and related services	555
9. Specialized design services	424
10. Junior colleges, public and private	421



the full spectrum of the creative economy - nonprofit arts and cultural organizations, creative businesses, and creative individuals.

TCC's goal is to support the growth and recognition of San Antonio's creative economy. The plan is broader than an economic development plan; one of TCC's main ideas is that strengthening the regional creative economy is more than an exercise in business development. Fostering creativity throughout the community and providing an environment conducive to creative people and activities are subtle goals that require a different approach to planning.

TCC research documented that San Antonio is, and recognizes itself as, a "cultural place." More than nine of ten San Antonians of all backgrounds participate in arts and cultural activities each year, and they naturally weave them throughout their personal and work lives. They value this integration of culture in their lives and community, and view it as a distinguishing feature of living in San Antonio. TCC is among the first plans of its type to recognize and support this integration. The plan supports the growth of not only major creative businesses and recognized arts institutions, but also development of the equally vibrant undercurrent of cultural activity flowing throughout the community—nonprofit and commercial, professional and community-based, institutional and individual.

#### FROM THE ARTS TO THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

This scope of planning arose from a combination of strategic planning for the arts and for economic development. Arts planning, or cultural planning, is a form of master planning for the non-commercial arts – museums, performing and visual arts organizations, individual artists, and the like. Local governments, through their arts commissions or arts councils, have typically

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created cultural plans to strengthen their arts communities and generate greater community benefit from them. More recently, as the arts community has understood its role in the economy, arts planning has expanded to encompass the broader constituency of the creative economy and has begun to embrace tools of economic development.

This greater scale of planning reflects the current, inclusive notion of "the arts" in the culture at large. An increasing body of research shows high levels of arts participation among all Americans once a broad definition

of arts is applied. Most Americans no longer discriminate among fine, popular, design, folk, and ethnic arts. They are as likely to spend \$100 to attend a Rolling Stones concert as an opera, or \$5,000 to buy a quilt as a work of contemporary art. Few distinguish between nonprofit and commercial producers of the arts. Choreographer Liz Lerman, winner of the 2002 MacArthur "Genius" Award, describes the shift to a contemporary definition of the arts as a vertical hierarchy becoming a level playing field. Using the dance field as an example, ballet used to be on the top of a pyramid, with folk dance and hip-hop on the bottom. Now we are more likely to see all art forms on the same level, having similar value but different focuses.

#### THE PLANNING PROCESS

To address a wider notion of the creative economy, TCC employed a combination of planning techniques. Community outreach gathered input directly from stakeholders. More than 1,000 individuals participated in a citywide conference, community forums, discussion groups, individual interviews, and a random household



Photo credit: Jorge Sandoval

One of San Antonio's many contemporary art spaces, Blue Star Contemporary Art Center provides contemporary art exhibitions and art education programs for San Antonio.

survey on the arts and culture in San Antonio. Participants were drawn from inside and outside the creative economy.

Community outreach was supplemented by primary research. An economic impact study (Butler and Steff, 2005) was conducted to measure the output of San Antonio's creative sector and compare it with other economic sectors already targeted for development. In addition, the random household public opinion survey generated an understanding of the extent and character of residents' cultural activities and their opinions about cultural development. This telephone survey, conducted in English and Spanish, was among the most comprehensive of its type in probing the specifics of residents' arts-related activity and their goals for arts and culture in



the community. It was innovative in “going beyond the usual suspects” and gathering the input of community members who do not view themselves as arts stakeholders.

## STRATEGIES

The scale of this planning yielded strategies that integrate tools for both economic and cultural development. TCC has five objectives that support its goal and strategies.

The first objective is to provide greater access to arts and culture to residents of San Antonio. Despite high levels of cultural participation throughout all demographic groups of the community, increasing access was a fundamental value and goal articulated by the community throughout the TCC planning process. Strategies include:

- Bringing the arts and culture to the neighborhoods by facilitating increased use of existing venues and programs throughout all geographic areas of the city.
- Making the arts and culture relevant to diverse cultures by focusing on the needs and interests of target populations and addressing other barriers to access, such as cost, transportation, time and information about available programs.
- Expanding arts and cultural education by addressing education on the policy level, and making existing arts and cultural resources more available to schools.
- Improving community-wide marketing to residents.

The second objective is to promote the growth of San Antonio’s creative economy. TCC was founded in part on the observation that San Antonio’s creative economy is an important yet under-recognized economic sector, and that the community as a whole will benefit from development of the creative sector. As noted above, the economic impact study commissioned by TCC documented that San Antonio’s creative sector has an economic impact comparable to other local industries currently targeted for economic development. Economic development strategies include:

- Adapting small business development to meet the particular needs of the creative community, including a business incubator and business training.
- Implementing workforce development initiatives, including creative training at all educational levels and professional development.
- Supporting creative individuals through technical assistance and artists fellowships.
- Developing or enhancing cultural districts throughout the city.
- Expanding cultural and heritage tourism by creating a specific plan and program at the Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The third objective is to increase community awareness of the role and value of all San Antonio’s arts and culture. A consistent community message was that the accomplishments and value of San Antonio’s arts and cultural community are not well understood or supported by the public and policy makers. In essence, the creative community seeks a place at the policy table. Strategies in support of this objective are:

- Implementing an independent, long-term advocacy initiative to increase public understanding of the role and value of San Antonio’s arts and culture.
- Ensuring cultural equity through adoption of a cultural equity policy.
- Increasing outreach to the community through technical assistance and targeted funding.

The fourth objective is to promote San Antonio’s authenticity and creativity and strengthen its unique and diverse culture, heritage, and architecture. TCC planning participants view San Antonio as engaged in a long-term struggle to define and preserve its authentic identity.

The first objective is to provide greater access to arts and culture to residents of San Antonio. Despite high levels of cultural participation throughout all demographic groups of the community, increasing access was a fundamental value and goal articulated by the community throughout the TCC planning process.

They place great value on aspects of San Antonio’s quality of life and consider its culture and creativity as essential ingredients. Their experience of this authenticity is largely a cultural one, intimately linked to creativity, as well as heritage and tradition. This objective includes the following strategies:

- Improving urban design through development of an urban design master plan that addresses civic aesthetics in new public and private development and promotes the successful integration of contemporary architecture into the cityscape.
- Improving the public art program by developing a public art master plan.
- Many of the other strategies throughout the plan also serve to fulfill the objective of strengthening authentic identity and creativity.

The fifth objective is to develop increased resources of all types. San Antonio’s creative community is now, and has been historically, under-funded and under-resourced. Increasing resources will “raise the bar” of support and reshape the ecology of resources available to the creative community. Moreover, according to the TCC public opinion survey, San Antonians are willing to pay

**TABLE 5. The Cultural Collaborative Recommendations**

(Checkmarks indicate recommendation has been implemented or is in process)

<b>OBJECTIVE 1: ACCESS</b>		
1	Develop a network of neighborhood “cultural captains”	
2	Develop a Neighborhood Arts Catalogue of arts classes, exhibitions, performing arts groups and literary arts programs	✓
3	Develop an inventory of available cultural venues and potential venues, and provide referrals and incentives to make the spaces more available	✓
4	Acquire a well-equipped portable stage to support festivals and special events in parks and neighborhoods	✓
5	Develop a “one-stop” permitting process for festivals and special events, coordinating city support services	
6	Establish an affordable fee schedule for cultural organizations and festivals to use city-owned venues	
7	Develop “Opportunity San Antonio,” a board diversity training program to encourage diverse participants in the governance of cultural institutions	
8	Establish a partnership to address arts and cultural education on a policy level	✓
9	Make existing arts education resources more available through information and referrals, coordination of existing programs, and development of a comprehensive resource directory	✓
10	Create an arts and cultural education staff position to support the arts and cultural education partnership	✓
11	Strengthen the arts education curricula, programming and community connections at the three arts magnet schools	✓
12	Create a scholarship program for students and continuing education program for artists	✓
13	Strengthen community wide marketing of San Antonio’s arts and cultural organizations and events to residents	✓
<b>OBJECTIVE 2: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>		
14	Provide small business assistance targeted at creative businesses, including sole proprietorships	✓
15	Support the education and development of the creative workforce	✓
16	Support the development of existing and emerging cultural districts or zones	✓
17	Create a program of fellowships for individual artists of all disciplines in San Antonio	✓
18	Develop support services for San Antonio’s individual artists, including networking opportunities, information and referral services, a resource directory, professional development training, and leadership development	✓
19	Re-institute and enhance the Catalog of On-Site Artist Services (COSAS), the directory of San Antonio artists and craftspersons	✓
20	Create a cultural and heritage tourism program within CVB designed to promote San Antonio’s cultural assets and identity, move visitors beyond current zones, and encourage visitation in neighborhoods	✓
21	Develop a cultural and heritage tourism plan to inform the new cultural and heritage tourism program	✓
22	Identify and pursue other economic growth opportunities within San Antonio’s creative economy	✓
23	Coordinate the efforts to develop the creative economy	✓
<b>OBJECTIVE 3: COMMUNITY AWARENESS</b>		
24	Create a comprehensive, long-term advocacy initiative	✓
25	Develop a cultural equity policy statement to guide the efforts of TCC and OCA	✓
26	Provide technical assistance to arts and cultural organizations to develop plans for cultural equity and/or more effective outreach	✓
<b>OBJECTIVE 4: AUTHENTICITY AND CREATIVITY</b>		
27	Develop an urban design master plan	
28	Develop a Public Art Master Plan for San Antonio	✓
29	Complete implementation of OCA’s Neighborhood Discovery Tours package	✓

**TABLE 5. The Cultural Collaborative Recommendations (continued)**

(Checkmarks indicate recommendation has been implemented or is in process)

<b>OBJECTIVE 5: Resources</b>		
30	Develop a temporary new arts and culture committee, The Cultural Collaborative (TCC), to oversee implementation and lead advocacy	✓
31	Increase the annual budget allocation to the Office of Cultural Affairs for grant-making by \$500,000 per year during the first three years of plan implementation	✓
32	Develop a new, dedicated tax-based revenue stream for arts and culture through a joint tax initiative	
33	Develop a capital grants program for arts and cultural organizations for deferred maintenance and capital projects of less than \$100,000	✓
34	Develop a capital grants program for arts and cultural organizations for capital projects in excess of \$100,000	
35	Promote the increase of private funding for the arts and culture	✓
36	Increase funding allocated to OCA for new staff positions and related program expenses	✓
37	Explore the development of a performing arts center in such buildings as the Municipal Auditorium or the Federal Courthouse	✓
38	Explore the development of enhanced cultural uses of HemisFair Park, including a small (approximately 100-seat) outdoor amphitheater	

higher taxes for the arts and culture. Two out of three respondents (66 percent) indicated strong support for an initiative to generate tax revenue for arts support if it meant they would spend an additional \$5 per year in taxes; 58 percent strongly support an additional \$10 annual tax increase. Increasing resources involves the following strategies:

- Generating new leadership by creating The Cultural Collaborative Implementation Committee to oversee implementation of the plan and to take the lead on advocacy.
- Increasing public funding by increasing city funding allocated to arts and culture, and developing a new, dedicated tax-based revenue stream through a joint tax initiative in collaboration with other community organizations.
- Supporting and working collaboratively with The Fund, a new unified, annual fundraising campaign based on the principles of employee giving.
- Increasing private funding by convening funders around issues of communitywide importance.
- Addressing cultural facility needs by developing new capital funding programs and investigating the potential of adapting or building a cultural facility for a shared-use performing arts center.

## IMPLEMENTATION

TCC is a broad and ambitious plan that must draw on leadership and resources from diverse sectors of the community. Although it was adopted by City Council, TCC is being implemented under the auspices of a larger mayor-appointed steering committee of community

leaders described in the fifth objective. Elected officials and city agencies, including Economic Development, the Office of Cultural Affairs and the Convention and Visitors Bureau, play substantial roles in implementation. Additionally, the regional and local chambers of commerce, business executives, arts and cultural organizations, artists, philanthropists, and educators are all represented on the TCC Implementation Committee. This committee is coordinating and overseeing implementation progress, and will evaluate and refine implementation on an annual basis.

After three years, 78 percent of the plan has been implemented or has begun implementation (see Table 5). Key accomplishments in the first three years of implementation include a major increase in funding for the nonprofit arts community, new support for individual artists, business education for local artists, development of a public art master plan, initiation of a marketing campaign including increased use of arts and culture in branding and marketing San Antonio as a tourist destination, completion of a feasibility study of a new performing arts center, voter approval of a bond issue for a performing arts center, planning for an incubator for new arts-related businesses, and ongoing communication and partnership between Cultural Affairs and Economic Development.


## CONCLUSION

Creativity and the arts have become essential elements of American economic competitiveness. The work being done by creative people in each sector provides the value-added that drives economic growth and development. The creative sector itself produces both an



“artistic dividend” – the aggregate economic impact that would not occur without the presence of artists (Markusen and King 2003) – and substantial direct impact, and in many communities is sizeable enough to warrant specific economic development efforts.

The creative sector encompasses individual and community capacities that can be developed through planning on the local level. A combination of economic

development and arts planning is a promising new approach to strategic planning in this area, and the city of San Antonio provides a laboratory. Its ten-year plan for strengthening the regional creative economy, The Cultural Collaborative, approaches the task as more than an exercise in business development, integrating strategies for arts and cultural development with adaptations of conventional economic development. 

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