

Center for Creativity in Redwood City

Vision Report 2022

Center for Creativity Steering Committee

September 2022

INTRODUCTION

The arts open hearts and minds. The arts develop critical thinking and statistically enhance academic performance. The arts statistically encourage civic participation. The arts develop tomorrow's problem solvers. Art is an emotional, intellectual and spiritual play space.

We envision an arts center with a strong focus on community engagement at all levels of cultural production– from planning, to making, to public interfacing activities. Three words that might guide decisions are– **inquiry, connectivity, interaction**. Each is an essential building block for a more engaged, empathetic and creative community.

Cultural exploration and knowledge production is at the core of almost every art institution operating today. Artists, curators and art institutions seek to advance public discourse that links practices (behaviors, beliefs, habits . . .) and context within history and everyday social situations.

Our Arts Center will be a living-space. It is a laboratory for community invention and reinvention that shapes questions about who we are and is open to reconsidering and revisiting who we perceive we are. It is a “community driven collaboration” that explores new models of viewing the world, our communities, and negated histories. In this space we embrace and celebrate diversity and inclusiveness. It is a safe space exploring a fullness of being and looks beyond our limited certainties. It is not agenda driven, but community driven, where we learn together with open hearts and minds. With this focus we help develop tomorrow's thinkers and problem solvers from within our own community.

DESCRIPTION

- A permanent space, or conceptually-linked satellite spaces, for visual, performing and literary art production and productions.
 - A regional catalyst for creative exploration, through diverse cultural connectivity and innovative community interaction through art.
 - A local and regional destination for opportunities, experiences and services in creative culture, and social collaboration.
 - A resource hub for comprehensive information for all local arts and cultural activities, events, performances and opportunities.
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MISSION

Strengthen communities through art: inquiry, connectivity and interaction

INQUIRY, CONNECTIVITY, INTERACTION

How our community might be a catalyst for growth through art.

Creative Inquiry

- Create and perform art in community accessible studios, workshops and classes
- Experience exhibitions, installations and performances
- Participate in immersive and interactive experiences
- Learn from working artists performing their craft

Cultural Connectivity

- Produce, present and share ideas and work created through on-site and virtual forums
- Learn with and connect with diverse artists, teachers and classmates
- Experience international, regional and local voices
- Contribute to local cultural inventiveness

Community Interaction

- Gather for events, meet ups and creative recreation
 - Participate and engage in community driven social projects
 - Share stories through art
 - Contribute to creative culture here at home
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LOCATION

Physical space and programming go hand-in-hand, including the building's design and facilities. Extensive programming ideas have helped us imagine facility requirements.

We favor a single centralized location, or multiple satellite locations. A single location reduces staffing requirements and encourages the cross-fertilization of ideas and activities by nature of proximity. We envision a center that is a hotbed of cultural production worthy of visiting often. A location easily accessible to public transportation, major thoroughfares, and central to daily life best serves the community.

We can envision our Arts Center occupying the lower floors of a downtown commercial building or another location in close proximity to Courthouse Square, the Art Kiosk, the Fox Theatre, the San Mateo County Campus, and the County History Museum. This new addition would further establish the Redwood City Theatre District as an urban destination. Proximity to the train station would further encourage visitors from San Jose to San Francisco to visit downtown.

Building

We envision our Arts Center being housed in a building that gets international attention for its unique design. Including:

- **Artist Studios** - Working spaces for visual and performance artists (theatre, music, dance and spoken word).
- **Galleries** - Exhibition space for local and international artists, students and the community.
- **Black Box Performance Spaces** - Flexible space for performances, rehearsal, classes, and events.
- **Community Studios** - Ceramics, photography, digital media, etc. for individual practice and creative collaboration.
- **Classrooms** - Public and private classes, seminars and workshops.
- **Offices** - Administrative offices for the center and for smaller arts organizations.
- **Retail** - Cafe and retail shopping for the public.
- **Event Space** - Community, corporate and private event rentals.
- **Exterior Spaces** - Community gatherings, events and performances - amphitheater, courtyards, public art.
- **User Support areas** - restrooms, kitchen, lounge, lobby.

OPPORTUNITIES

The Art Center would strive to connect dots in the community by working collaboratively with local arts organizations, civic institutions, local merchants, partnerships . . . through shared program planning, project implementation and outcome review.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS (of an arts center)

Retain and support our local cultural creatives

Provide affordable studio space (visual art, theatre, dance . . .), exhibition and performance space, shared resources, teaching opportunities and professional development for local artists to underpin them creatively and financially.

Education

Encourage focus, reflection, and growth through art practice. Supplement declining arts education for youth with after school programs, day camps, and teaching artist residencies. Offer classes, field trips, and other opportunities for all ages - including elders, disabled, and unhoused.

Advance local innovation and innovators

Creativity is a catalyst for social and economic change. Creative practice encourages critical inquiry and exploration. A local arts center would provide an opportunity for conventional and unconventional thinkers to invent new approaches to problem identification and solution finding. We can develop tomorrow's problem solvers by advancing inspired learning and design thinking. Programming to include mentorship, scholarship, internship, employment and volunteer opportunities.

Improve community discourse

Art unifies communities, stimulates dialogue among diverse constituencies, and increases multicultural understanding. As our society becomes increasingly isolated due to our technological devices, art brings people together in public spaces. Art improves life and a community's well-being through the encouragement of communication, sharing, collaboration, understanding, empathy, collective good will, exploration and fun.

Position Redwood City & drive cultural tourism

A long-term investment in art and social development would provide an opportunity to become "The Arts, Culture, and Entertainment destination on the Peninsula", attracting visitors and investors.

RESOURCES

[Americans for the Arts](#)

[Californians for the Arts](#)

[Thrive Alliance for Nonprofits](#)

[San Mateo County Arts Commission](#)

[Redwood City Arts Commission](#)

[Center for Creativity](#)