

ARTS AND CULTURE POLICY

Mission Statement: To support and promote the arts and culture of Bangor as a means to enhance economic development and the vitality of the community.

Vision Statement: The Commission on Cultural Development will create and maintain a comprehensive digital database of known cultural assets which will be readily available to citizens and visitors alike. Bangor will have a well developed month long program/festival (ARTober) devoted to the arts. The Commission will continue to review semi-annually grant requests from established arts and cultural organizations as well as individual artists. There will be a system to publicize these projects.

Diversity Statement: As stewards of the cultural assets of Bangor, the Commission on Cultural Development seeks to honor the diverse cultural backgrounds of its citizens and will undertake to represent the diversity of the community in its work as well as providing assistance to make the area's cultural assets available to all citizens.

Value Statement:

- We believe the arts are essential to human existence.
- We believe in the power of artists working cooperatively as a community - for economic viability, support, feedback, and the nurturing of new ideas.
- We value our role as a community resource and as a vehicle for communication for artists, the community and city staff.
- We believe in artistic excellence and all forms of creative engagement.
- We strive to support artists at all stages of their careers from diverse communities, artistic genres, and traditions.
- We believe that the arts are an important part of the economy of our city and strive to encourage the growth of this economic sector through advocacy, marketing, funding and education.

BACKGROUND

The City of Bangor created a Commission on Cultural Development (CCD, or the Commission) in November of 2004 with the charge to "promote the development of Bangor as a regional arts center that nurtures the artistic and cultural expression of its diverse peoples." (Bangor City Ordinances, Chapter 23, Section 18) The Commission has authorization to assess Bangor's cultural needs, develop and maintain a comprehensive Arts and Cultural Policy, review grant applications and public art requests, and work with the community to identify and encourage opportunities for the incubation of promising arts and cultural enterprises.

Since its inception, the CCD has recommended that the City award grants to cultural institutions and individual artists throughout Bangor. The financial impact of the funds thus

provided encourages growth and sustains creative industries, enterprises, and workforces in Bangor. Individual artists and cultural organizations are integral to the identity of the City, contributing to the economic vitality of the community. The CCD uses "artists" in broad terms to encompass all varieties of creators of culture.

SECTION 1: **FUNDING/GRANTS**

The Commission on Cultural Development is responsible for reviewing grant requests and making award recommendations to the City Council. Recommending grant funding is a major focus of the Commission and the majority of the City's annual budget allocation to the CCD shall be used for this purpose.

Each year, the Commission and/or a subcommittee thereof will:

- Review grant applications and propose funding to City Council
- Review grant application form and rubric and make recommendations for any changes
- With approval of City Council, consider and seek outside grants (e.g. Maine Arts Commission, National Endowment), as deemed appropriate.

SECTION 2: **ADVOCACY**

The Commission on Cultural Development advises the City Council on matters pertaining to Bangor arts and culture. The Commission seeks to advance decisions and policies conducive to a flourishing arts community and to heighten City leaders and the public's awareness of the economic impact and cultural value of the arts. As part of its advocacy efforts, the Commission will assist, whenever feasible, efforts to publicize upcoming events and will encourage collaborations among Bangor's organizations and individual artists. Marketing of arts and cultural events in the City of Bangor will continue to be the responsibility of individual organizations. Given the importance of the arts to the community, the Cultural Commission will assist individuals, organizations, and businesses, whenever possible, to promote the City's vibrant arts scene. Additionally, the Commission will cooperate with the Maine Arts Commission to facilitate workshops and other endeavors to assist individual artists and organizations.

Each year, the Commission and/or a subcommittee thereof will:

- Develop and maintain a digital presence including a series of Story Maps
- Design and facilitate ARTober, a month-long celebration of the arts

- Widely communicate availability of grant money for individual artists and organizations for artistic projects
- Seek opportunities to bring outside groups, organizations and stakeholders to the table in an effort to enhance the cultural offerings in Bangor
- Educate City Council, the public and stakeholder groups on the importance and impact of a vibrant arts and culture scene
- Advise City Council on matters pertaining to Bangor arts and culture, including advocating for comprehensive and cohesive planning.
- Strengthen connections between the City and Bangor's cultural community through streamlined messaging and improved communication
- Contribute to data analysis efforts on artistic events, organizations and the cultural environment
- Identify and promote opportunities for collaboration between artists and cultural organizations

SECTION 3: **CULTURAL VIBRANCY**

The Commission seeks to encourage and highlight the cultural vitality of Bangor as a whole. In addition to its roles in connecting individual artists and arts organizations to city funding opportunities, and in educating stakeholders on the impact and value of the arts in Bangor, the Commission will seek to increase the vibrancy and visibility of arts events and opportunities in the region. It will: take an active role in cataloging, publicizing and maintaining the city's physical cultural assets; support efforts of artists and arts organizations to connect with one another; and it will work to highlight the arts in the region through myriad channels.

Each year, the Commission and/or a subcommittee thereof will:

- Maintain committees dedicated to ARTober, cultural assets and grant review, as well as others as needed
- Facilitate an annual, month-long ARTober celebration
- Maintain database of cultural assets
- Create and maintain Story Maps, to be made available on the City website

- Build coalition between individual artists and arts organizations, for the purpose of planning and publicizing arts events and opportunities

Approved by Cultural Commission on May 7, 2021
Adopted by City Council on May 24, 2021