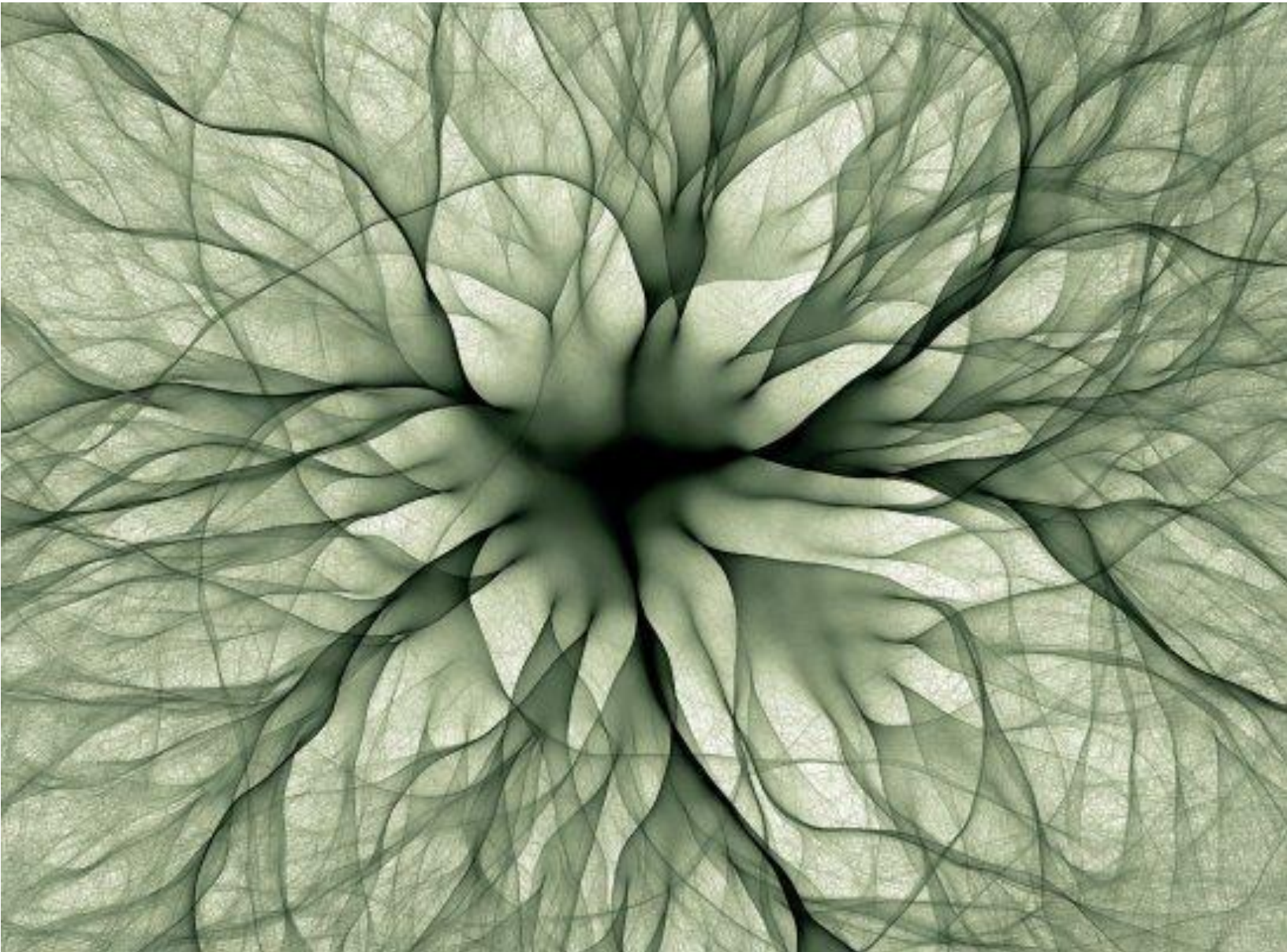


Los Alamos Creative District Plan

June 2011



Welcoming the world to experience Los Alamos' unique creativity

A. Creative District Plan

The plan was developed by Los Alamos MainStreet Program of LACDC, with funding provided by the New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Program.

Los Alamos Creative District Steering Committee

Emiley Bainbridge, Los Alamos Commerce & Development Corporation
Nancy Bartlit, Historic Sculpture Masterplan Committee, Historic Advisory Board, Fuller Lodge Historic Board
Linda Deck, Bradbury Science Museum
Suzette Fox, Los Alamos MainStreet
Russ Gordon, Gordon's Concerts
Marlane Hamilton, Los Alamos Arts Council
Kevin Holsapple, Los Alamos Commerce & Development Corporation
Stephani Johnson, Los Alamos County Community Services Department
Charlie Kalogeros-Chattan, Los Alamos County Library System
Katy Korkos, Los Alamos Chamber of Commerce
Steve Laurent, Los Alamos County Community Development Department
Carolyn Mangeng, Los Alamos Master Gardeners
Heather McClenahan, Los Alamos Historical Museum
Carol Meine, Los Alamos County Library System
Ken Nebel, Fuller Lodge Art Center
Martha Perkins, Los Alamos County Community Development Department
Lisa Rosendorf, LANL Communication and Government Affairs
Kelly Stewart, Los Alamos County
Jim Trump, Union Development Corporation, Build New Mexico
Holger Waschinski, New Mexico Dance Theater
Ron Wilkins, Fuller Lodge Historic Districts Advisory Board & Historical Society Board
Karen Wray, Karen Wray Fine Art

Los Alamos MainStreet

A program of Los Alamos Commerce and Development Corporation

Kevin Holsapple, Executive Director
Emiley Bainbridge, Coordinator

Consultants

Cultural Planning Group
Jerry Allen & David Plettner-Saunders, Principals
www.culturalplanning.com



SIDEBARS IN THIS PLAN

Throughout this plan, there are sidebars based on twin themes:

Building on Los Alamos Culture—examples of local cultural assets that can be incorporated into and enhanced by the Creative District.

Model Programs & Projects—from throughout the world, intended to provide inspiration for the Creative District.

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CONTEXT

♦ *BACKGROUND ON THE CREATIVE DISTRICT*

The Los Alamos Creative District, designated by the State in 2009, is part of a statewide network of six cultural districts organized through the New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Program. Enabled by the legislature in 2007, this program is a joint effort of the New Mexico Department of Economic Development, the Department of Tourism, and the Department of Cultural Affairs. The goal of the statewide program is to help a community turn their vision into commerce, tourism, artistic growth, and civic pride. Stated in technical terms, it is to promote place-based community economic development rooted in a community's dynamic arts and cultural environment. The State's MainStreet Program, under the auspices of the New Mexico Arts Commission, manages the New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Program.

The New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Program is part of a national trend to create such districts. It is one of eight similar statewide programs created during the 2000s that have designated at least 127 local districts. This number is greatly augmented by cultural districts in individual communities, many of which were developed prior to 2000 and are not part of a statewide network.

Recognizing the potential for creating a successful downtown cultural district, Los Alamos' MainStreet Program of LACDC formed a group in 2008 to develop one of the early applications to the New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Program. County Council and other community groups endorsed this effort and an area of downtown Los Alamos was designated as a district in 2009. In 2010, Los Alamos commissioned a cultural resource assessment by the University of New Mexico and a more comprehensive assessment by a statewide resource team assembled by the New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Program. The Creative District was also adopted as a potential implementing strategy of the Los Alamos County Economic Vitality Strategic Plan.

These efforts paved the way for development of this plan, which serves as the framework for implementation of the Creative District.

2009 DESIGNATION OF LOS ALAMOS CREATIVE DISTRICT

Los Alamos MainStreet and members of the Creative District Steering Committee celebrate designation by the New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Program, a milestone in development of the district.



◆ BENEFITS OF THE CREATIVE DISTRICT

Los Alamos is poised to generate far-reaching economic and community benefits from its downtown Creative District. The Creative District will share and develop Los Alamos' unique creative heritage based on a concentration of people, programs and places located downtown but with impacts outside its physical boundaries. It will serve as a catalyst for enhancing the service, retail, restaurant and hospitality businesses in the Creative District. It will increase visitorship as well as the quality of life for residents of all ages. It will encourage development of needed public cultural facilities as well support historic preservation. And it will strengthen Los Alamos' vibrant cultural resources, improving their capacity to serve the public.

What produces these benefits?

First of all, cultural districts drive cultural and heritage tourism. Tourism is an essential component of New Mexico's economy: it is the state's second-largest private sector industry and its largest private sector employer.¹ Cultural and heritage tourism alone are the second-largest generator of state tax revenues.² Historic sites, Native American culture, arts and museums consistently rank as four of the top five reasons for visiting the state (outdoor recreation completes the list).³

Cultural districts, such as the Los Alamos Creative District, are a proven method of increasing tourism revenues, while simultaneously supporting local economic and cultural development. Districts create a stronger argument for coming downtown, by promoting a stronger mix of local businesses, vibrant activities, visitor amenities, and successful urban design. Districts enhance the attraction of a walkable downtown area, so they serve residents as well as visitors, and generate greater synergy among the unique elements of a place.

Cultural districts also generate substantial economic benefits beyond tourism. Well-managed districts result in increased direct and indirect spending, more jobs, higher local and state tax revenues, and, over time, increased property values.⁴

Cultural districts can be a catalyst for downtown revitalization. They are often associated with the construction of new cultural facilities – museums, and performing arts centers, as well as public gathering spaces. They usually include new,

¹ Source: New Mexico Tourism Coalition (2011).

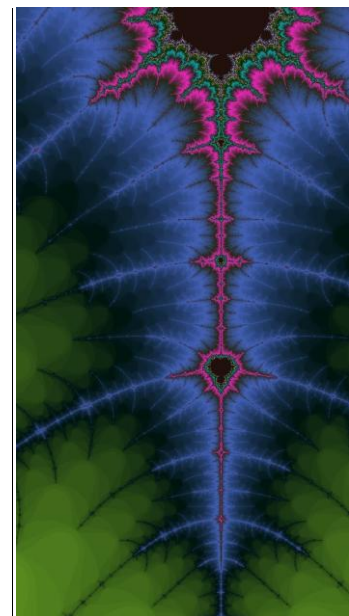
² Source: New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Program (2011).

³ Source: 2009 Web Survey, commissioned by the New Mexico Tourism Department.

⁴ Source: Texas Cultural Districts: Indicators for Measuring Success, commissioned by the Texas Commission on the Arts (2010).

BUILDING ON LOS ALAMOS CULTURE Art for Science Sake

A science and math-based art competition and exhibit is becoming a part of the Creative District's Next Big Idea Festival in 2011. A cornerstone feature of this contest is the Los Alamos Public Schools Fractal Art Challenge. Science and math-based art demonstrates scientific or mathematical concepts, principles or phenomena in creative ways. It can be created digitally on the computer, be a photograph or be produced through traditional fine arts methods including drawing, painting, pottery, fiber-arts, etc. A demonstration display of a large scale print is on display on 15th Street. This is the first installation of a planned science and math-based art walk in the downtown.



creative urban design strategies that promote a walkable, pedestrian-friendly environment. These, in turn, attract creative small businesses and amenities such as restaurants, bookstores and art galleries.

The Los Alamos Creative District will serve as a focal point for community pride, arising from ongoing development of the community's unique blend of scientific and cultural creativity, its compelling history, and its extraordinary natural environment.

The Los Alamos Creative District is well positioned to be successful. It has an acknowledged and unique collection of assets that can be augmented to achieve much greater community benefit. It has pursued a rigorous process of research, assessment and planning. It has identified a pathway for development that builds on strengths while shoring up weaknesses. And it has gathered substantial community participation and consensus in its leadership.

BUILDING ON LOS ALAMOS CULTURE

Los Alamos Arts Council

For more than 25 years, the Los Alamos Arts Council has underwritten a visit by Missoula Children's Theatre for a full week of auditions, workshops, rehearsals, and a public performance by local children. The theater group comes to town with the set, lights, costumes, props and make-up. They hold open auditions and cast 50–60 students who rehearse throughout the week and present a public performance on Saturday.



♦ COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Los Alamos is well known as a community with characteristics unique in New Mexico and the nation. Part of this is the influence of the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), which employs two-thirds of the workforce in professional occupations and provides thousands of jobs in a countywide community of 18,000 residents. This is New Mexico's highest concentration of highly educated and well-paid professionals, most of whom also engage in creative, scientific, and technical activities. In addition, this population is international, often possessing sophisticated tastes and a cosmopolitan character. Residents demonstrate a substantial demand for cultural services that is not currently being met by local producers, resulting in a net export of experiences and dollars as people often look elsewhere to engage their creative interests.⁵ In addition, residents express strong support for arts education in the schools.

Los Alamos' past, as the coordinating site of the Manhattan Project, has created an undeniably important role in world history. However, the place also shares a Native American history dating to at least the 10th Century, and a pioneer history that predates the taking of Los Alamos' private property by the US government by eminent domain in 1942. After the end of World War II, the federal government established the Lab as a premiere scientific research facility under the Atomic Energy Commission (subsequently transferred to the US Department of Energy). LANL is now one of the world's largest scientific and technical institutions, conducting multidisciplinary research in fields such as national security, outer space, renewable energy, medicine, nanotechnology, and supercomputing. As a location, Los Alamos remains relatively remote and defined in part by its geography of narrow mesas separated by canyons, which create both a sense of physical separation as well as neighborhood intimacy and small scale.

In 2006, the contract for management of Los Alamos National Laboratory was transferred from the University of California, a nonprofit educational institution, to a private company. One of the outcomes of this change was a substantial increase in local tax revenues and an improvement in the financial outlook of county government. With a renewed emphasis on security, there is also at least a perception among some residents that the activities of LANL are more isolated from the community than in the past.

LOS ALAMOS' RICH ARTS & CULTURAL ECOSYSTEM

Los Alamos Creative District begins with many civic, educational, scientific, arts and cultural organizations and other assets in the community (or the state) that will be important contributors to the success of the District.

Art in Public Places Board
Los Alamos Arts Council
Artist Lab/ISDM (UNM)
Bandelier National Monument
Bradbury Science Museum
Los Alamos Chamber of Commerce
City of Knowledge/Venice Project Center
Colorado College
Contemporary Hispanic Market
New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs
Los Alamos Arts Council
First United Methodist Church
Fuller Lodge Art Center
Fuller Lodge Historic District Advisory Board
Historical Society of New Mexico
Institute of American Indian Arts
Immaculate Heart of Mary Church
Karen Wray Fine Art Gallery and Studio
Los Alamos County Public Library
Los Alamos Concert Association
Los Alamos County Fair
Los Alamos Garden Club
Los Alamos Historical Society & Museum
Los Alamos Light Opera
Los Alamos Little Theater
Los Alamos MainStreet
Los Alamos Public Schools
Los Alamos Summer Concert Series
Los Alamos National Laboratory
Los Alamos Visual Analytics
Legacy Art
Living Treasures of Los Alamos
Los Alamos Bank
Los Alamos Relay for Life
Los Alamos YMCA
Maxwell Museum
McCurdy School
National Hispanic Cultural Center
Native Plant Society of New Mexico
New Mexico Dance Theater
New Mexico Women's Forum
Oxymoron Dance Group
Pajarito Environmental Education Center
Pojoaque Pueblo
Redfish Group
J. Robert Oppenheimer Memorial Committee
San Ildefonso Pueblo
Santa Clara Pueblo
Senior Center Retired & Senior Volunteer Center
Simtable.com
Society of Southwest Archivists
The Harp of the Spirit Publishing Company
The Wildlife Center
Traditional Hispanic Market
UNM Zimmerman Library Digital Collection
UNM-Los Alamos
Village Arts
Wilde Meyer Gallery
Women Artists of the West

Source: University of New Mexico Bureau of Business and Economic Research (2009)

⁵ Source: An Inventory and Assessment of Los Alamos Arts and Cultural Assets, University of New Mexico Bureau of Business and Economic Research (2009).



Bradbury Science Museum

Los Alamos has a collection of nonprofit cultural organizations that is remarkable for a community of its size. Many are located within the boundaries of the Creative District, including the Bradbury Science Museum, Los Alamos Historical Society, Fuller Lodge, Fuller Lodge Art Center, Mesa Public Library, Los Alamos Little Theater, New Mexico

Dance Theater and others. Most report financial stress, a result of both the economic recession and a challenging fundraising environment. They also contend with gaps in cultural facilities appropriate for a range of needs.

Los Alamos' historical assets are numerous, including Fuller Lodge, Los Alamos Historical Society, Bathtub Row, Ashley Pond, and the Los Alamos Post Office building. Los Alamos' arts assets encompass a collection of 91 works of public art located throughout the county, commissioned and managed by the County's Art in Public Places Advisory Board. Los Alamos is also in close proximity to other attractions, including Bandelier National Monument, outdoor recreation, and the omnipresence of great scenic beauty.

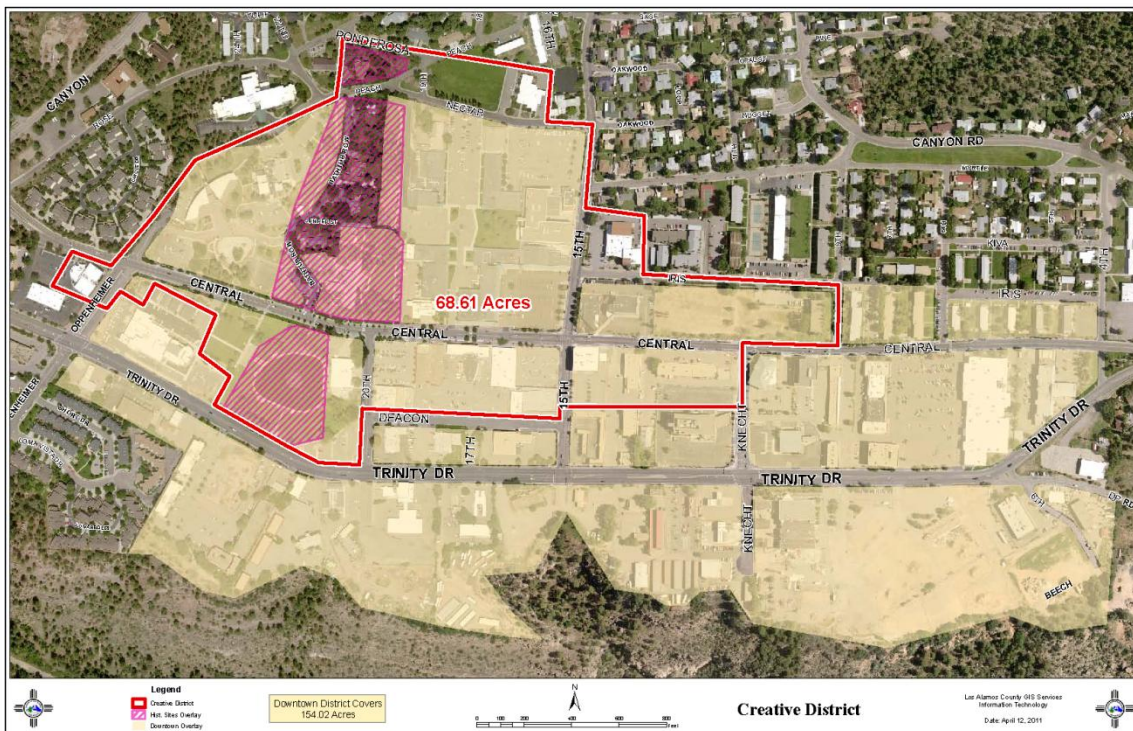


The Pajarito Room at Fuller Lodge

♦ CURRENT CONDITIONS IN THE CREATIVE DISTRICT

The Los Alamos Creative District is an area of downtown anchored at its eastern end by the Bradbury Science Museum and the municipal building, and at its western end by the historical district including Fuller Lodge, the Historical Museum, Ashley Pond and Fuller Lodge Art Center, as well as the Mesa Public Library. The commercial area connecting the two anchors is the acknowledged pedestrian core of the MainStreet district. The Creative District's northern boundaries include Nectar Street and the Little Theater, and its southern boundaries include Deacon Street.

Map of the Los Alamos Creative District



The boundaries of the Creative District were established by applying State guidelines for Arts and Cultural Districts to the specific needs and opportunities of downtown Los Alamos. The district is focused around the hubs of two key cultural assets that are already generating substantial visitation: the Bradbury Science Museum to the East and the Los Alamos Historic District to the West. An additional consideration was to include all properties that had potential to benefit from the State historic tax credit provisions applicable to Arts and Cultural Districts.

There was considerable discussion about the boundary in conjunction with the various public sessions and Steering Committee interactions that produced this plan. There was a strong consensus on the boundaries presented in the plan by the Steering Committee after considering all of the ideas and inputs received through the planning process. It was agreed that if the district succeeds that there will be no reason not to consider expanding the district boundaries. However, the district would be more difficult to implement and make successful without a reasonably tight initial focus.

In a May 13, 2011 letter to the Los Alamos Creative District endorsing the draft of this plan, the State Arts and Culture District Program spells out its approval of the boundaries in relation to those guidelines and their adaptation to Los Alamos:

The State Arts and Culture District (ACD) Council concurs with the Los Alamos Creative District recommended boundaries for the District as shown in the Cultural Plan. The Plan's proposed boundaries are consistent with the strategy for the district to focus on a compact, walkable area incorporating the existing major visitor attractors of the Bradbury Science Museum and the Los Alamos Historical Museum. It also incorporates properties that can benefit from the historic preservation tax benefits enabled by the ACD legislation. This strategy was key to our original approval of the ACD in Los Alamos. We think it is important that the Los Alamos [Creative District] Steering Committee maintains focus on this strategy and resists expanding the boundaries of the district. We agree that success within a relatively compact, focused district may lead to a reasonable expansion of the district boundaries at a future date. Prematurely expanding the district boundaries would be contrary to the State's intent in approving an Arts & Cultural District in Los Alamos.



Ashley Pond

The Creative District has many assets, providing a platform for continued development of the area. As discussed above in the Community Description section, it has many cultural, arts, historical and commercial resources. It is a safe, family-friendly and walkable area, offering a variety of well-attended events and activities throughout the year. There have been recent streetscape and signage improvements.

Assessment conducted for the Creative District identified gaps and development potential in its current conditions. As one planning participant said, downtown Los Alamos is, "...the town that still isn't." Some of these characteristics are familiar to residents, such as limited amenities. Residents express a desire for more restaurants, evening entertainment opportunities, longer business hours, and a more vibrant mix of retail and services. Cultural organizations face limited venues for downtown activities, including mid-sized public meeting, performance, event and exhibition spaces. While widely perceived as a safe place, downtown is not uniformly pedestrian-friendly and lacks connections, wayfinding, and urban destinations that would encourage exploring and walking among downtown areas. There is plenty of parking (parking comprises 65% of downtown land use) but little street life, with an over-emphasis on shopping center development. There is a lack of cohesive urban design, which represents a clear opportunity for aesthetic improvement. There is limited affordable housing and no studio or live/work spaces. The recession and real estate market conditions have limited development options, and some creative ideas have been dismissed or delayed because of these challenges.

The presence of cohesive, diverse, and effective leadership for the Creative District is a great advantage. There is also a strong organizational infrastructure for continued planning,

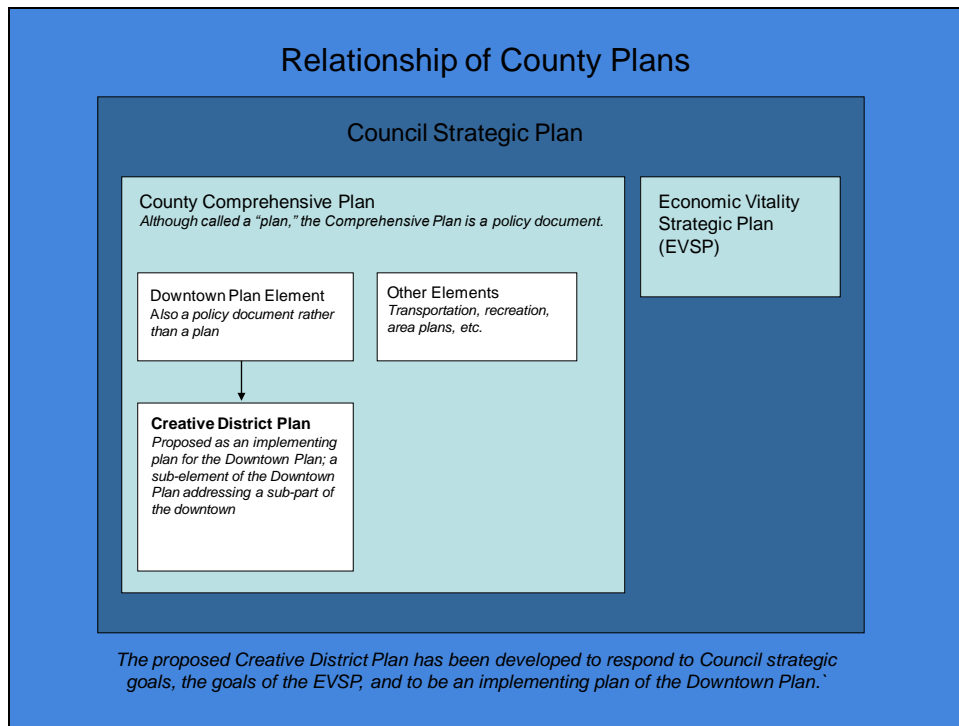


Los Alamos Fair & Rodeo Parade 2010

development and management of the Creative District. Implementation of this plan will call for a range of capacities, from programming and marketing to urban design and real estate development. The people and organizations involved with Creative District planning to date possess an unusually broad skill set in addressing these tasks.

♦ **ALIGNMENT WITH COUNTY PLANS**

Los Alamos County has developed several plans that have informed, and are relevant to, this Creative District plan. The County Council adopted two plans—the 2010 Economic Vitality Strategic Plan and the 2009 Downtown Los Alamos Element—and it identified 2011 strategic focus areas and goals, all of which provide a policy framework for the Creative District. Accordingly, the Los Alamos Creative District plan was developed in strong alignment with these other County planning efforts. Moreover, the Creative District plan is intended to operationalize these policy documents, to reflect their goals, and in particular to serve as an implementation plan of the Downtown Element. The relationship of these County plans is illustrated below.



Key elements of the relevant County plans are summarized on the following pages.

2011 Draft County Strategic Focus Areas and Goals

In January 2011, County Council conducted a strategic planning session and identified nine draft strategic focus areas, defining where resources should be spent. The Creative District plan contains goals and strategies that support all nine of these draft strategic focus areas.

- Financial sustainability (Los Alamos County and community)
- Quality cultural and recreational amenities
- Economic vitality and innovation
- Well-planned commercial and residential growth
- Housing and employment diversity
- Operational excellence
- Communication
- Continuum of education (K-20)
- Environmental stewardship

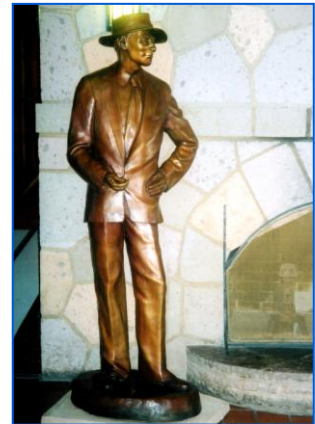
The Council also identified ten goals related to these strategic focus areas. Again, the Creative District plan directly supports seven of these goals:

- Eliminate downtown blight.
- Adopt a comprehensive plan, including land use ordinances, with design/architectural components clearly identifying individual parcels by use.
- Market and brand Los Alamos as a recreational destination emphasizing scenery over science and adrenaline over academics.
- Create a Los Alamos K-20 education continuum that ranks in the top 100 of schools in the nation at all levels.
- Implement a comprehensive recreational and cultural master plan.
- Promote a strong and diverse economic base through recruiting businesses and encouraging new business growth.
- Implement a strategy that results in 100% growth in retail activity.

BUILDING ON LOS ALAMOS CULTURE

Historic Sculptures

The Los Alamos County Arts in Public Places Board, the Fuller Lodge Historic Districts Advisory Board and the Historic Sculptures Master Plan Committee have come together to commission and display sculptures of historic residents of Los Alamos. The first two sculptures of J. Robert Oppenheimer and General Leslie Groves were dedicated as part of Rosenfest, a Los Alamos National Laboratory event commemorating another famous resident, physicist Louis Rosen.



Economic Vitality Strategic Plan

In 2010, the County Council adopted an Economic Vitality Strategic Plan. The Creative District is specifically included as an economic development strategy, and in addition the Creative District plan supports several of its other strategies:

- Fully implement Los Alamos Creative District (10/10/10 goal exceeded). The district will comprise the pedestrian core of the downtown and will be branded to encourage heritage tourism. The 10/10/10 goal refers to having 10 retail establishments, 10 dining and treat establishments, with 10 of these open evenings and weekends within the district.
- Construct hotel, conference center, and tech attraction in downtown.
- Brand and promote Los Alamos in support of and consistent with this Economic Vitality Strategic Plan. Branding should effectively communicate a credible story of what is unique about our community (example ideas for branding themes could include, but should not be limited to "Energy City", "Science City," "Discovery City," "The Smartest Place to Be," or similar.)
- Develop and implement approaches to improving the appearance of commercial areas.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive signage program supporting effective wayfinding to attractions and commercial areas. Include development of "gateways" to commercial areas.
- Encourage rehabilitation/redevelopment of appropriate existing housing stock to improve quality/appearance of housing and address "affordable" housing needs.
- Establish and enhance world class sporting events.
- Construct a Teen Center.

Downtown Los Alamos Element

Adopted by the County Council in 2009, the Downtown Los Alamos Element was adopted as a component of the County's Comprehensive Plan. Again, the Los Alamos Creative District is aligned with the Downtown plan in a variety of ways. First, it supports the vision for downtown revitalization:

We will create a vibrant, buzzing, pedestrian-friendly downtown that includes a central gathering place, nighttime entertainment, movie theaters and more retail stores and restaurants. A mixture of retail, office space and housing, an aesthetic face lift and the redevelopment of parking will help to create a compact and appealing downtown that people will use. A performing arts center can also serve as a convention center.

Downtown Los Alamos includes a mixture of housing, retail, entertainment, office space, and services that draw residents, visitors, and commuters to downtown during weekday and weekend daytime and evening hours.

BUILDING ON LOS ALAMOS CULTURE

Los Alamos County Libraries

Music & Movement at the library is a lively and noisy half hour of songs, finger-plays, instruments, parachutes and fun for children 0-5 years old. This program is hosted twice weekly at the Mesa Public Library and once weekly at the White Rock Branch Library. Using songs, instruments and toys, staff and participants have fun and reinforce emergent reading skills, including: vocabulary, print motivation, phonological awareness, narrative skills, letter knowledge and print awareness.



Recommended revitalization actions relevant to the Creative District plan are to:

- Explore economically viable ways to bring new public facilities and attractions to the downtown such as meeting and event facilities, public plazas, and other “catalytic” projects as may be approved by the County Council.
- Continue to actively explore grants and other funding sources such as the state Main Street and Arts and Cultural District program to help fund downtown street, infrastructure and other improvement projects.

The Downtown plan also contains a vision for urban design:

Downtown Los Alamos is compact with high building density, connecting pedestrian pathways, aesthetically pleasing landscaping and green space and a combination of street parking, parking lots and “park- once” structures.

Recommended urban design actions relevant to the Creative District plan include those to:

- a. Encourage projects that take advantage of high densities, including new master-planned developments.
- b. Development a downtown pedestrian circulation plan.
- c. Develop the final alignment, design standards, and a funding plan for the creation of the downtown portion of the Canyon rim trail.
- d. Work with private developers for proposals for a new public “park-once” facility.
- e. Promote the use of bike lanes and bike parking facilities.
- f. Support the efforts of the public art program:
 - Create a master plan for the placement of all new publicly funded works of art and design in the downtown.
 - Support the efforts to bring a series of sculptures of local historical figures.
 - Encourage private development to incorporate high quality art and design elements in all new projects.
- g. Use public funds to upgrade downtown streets and infrastructure:
 - Establish downtown site plan standards that encourage private projects to grant easements to allow street improvements.
- h. Develop signage that encourages visits to the downtown.



New Mexico Dance Theater is located in the heart of downtown Los Alamos. The faculty of former professional dancers offers classes including: Mommy and Me, creative ballet, creative jazz, flamenco, jazz, tap, stretch & strengthen, pointe, partnering and all levels of ballet including teen and adult. The NMDT Performance Company, a nonprofit organization, is made up of intermediate and advanced pre-professional dancers and offers two productions to the Los Alamos community on an annual basis.



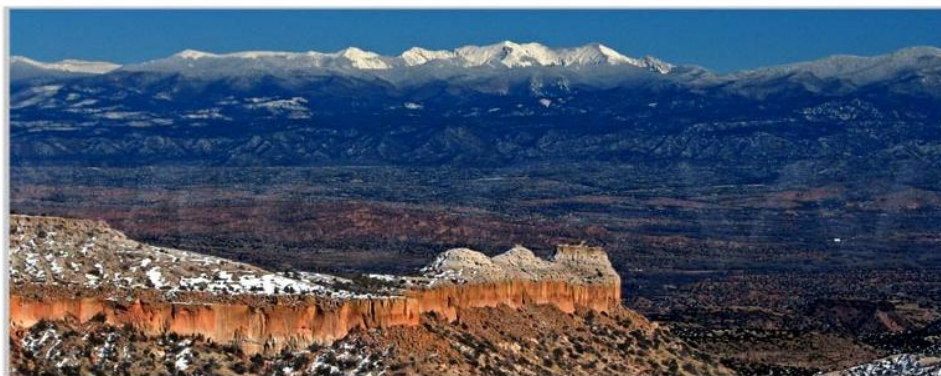
◆ **PLANNING PROCESS FOR THE CREATIVE DISTRICT PLAN**

This Creative District plan was developed in late 2010 and early 2011 as part of a larger, comprehensive process of Creative District development prescribed by the New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Program and described above in Background on the Creative District (page 3). In 2008, Los Alamos MainStreet Program of LACDC assembled a leadership group with diverse and comprehensive stakeholder representation to oversee Creative District planning. This Steering Committee (see roster on the cover of this plan) conducted a competitive bidding process and engaged The Cultural Planning Group to assist with preparation of this plan.

This planning process included:

- Review of relevant plans, studies and documentation of the community and Creative District.
- A three day site visit to Los Alamos to tour the Creative District; conduct a workshop and other meetings with the Steering Committee; interview key people; conduct an open town hall meeting; and lead discussion groups on particular topics.
- Research into model programs in other districts and communities.
- Development of a draft plan for vetting by the Steering Committee, County Councilors, County staff, stakeholder groups and the wider community.
- After vetting, development of a final plan for approval by the Steering Committee and adoption by the County Council.

A list of planning participants is included on the next page.



Los Alamos View to Truchas

♦ CREATIVE DISTRICT PLANNING PARTICIPANTS

The following citizens directly participated in development of this plan for the Creative District. While many people participated in more than one session, their names are listed here only once.

Los Alamos Creative District Steering Committee

Emiley Bainbridge, Los Alamos Commerce & Development Corporation
Nancy Bartlit, Historic Statues Master Plan Committee Chair, Fuller Lodge Historic Districts Advisory Board
Nona Bowman, Los Alamos Concert Association Board
Linda Deck, Bradbury Science Museum
Suzette Fox, Los Alamos MainStreet
Russ Gordon, Gordon's Concerts
Marlane Hamilton, Los Alamos Arts Council
Kevin Holsapple, Los Alamos Commerce & Development Corporation
Stephani Johnson, Los Alamos County Community Services Department
Barbara Judy, Bandelier National Monument
Charlie Kalogeros-Chattan, Los Alamos County Library System
Katy Korkos, Los Alamos Chamber of Commerce
Steve Laurent, Los Alamos County Community Development Department
Carolyn Mangeng, Los Alamos Master Gardeners
Heather McClenahan, Los Alamos Historical Museum
Carol Meine, Los Alamos County Library System
Ken Nebel, Fuller Lodge Art Center
Martha Perkins, Los Alamos County Community Development Department
Lisa Rosendorf, LANL Communication and Government Affairs
Kelly Stewart, Los Alamos County
Jim Trump, Union Development Corporation, Build New Mexico
Holger Waschinski, New Mexico Dance Theater
Ron Wilkins, Fuller Lodge Historic Districts Advisory Board & Historical Society Board
Karen Wray, Karen Wray Fine Art

Special Recognition of those who participated in subcommittees and gave significant contributions

Randy Autio, Los Alamos County
Fran Bertling, Los Alamos County Councilor
Nancy Coombs, KRSN
Charlie Deans, State Resource Team
David Jolly, Metzger Stores
Kathy Keith, Regional Development Corporation
Geoff Rodgers, Los Alamos County Councilor
Steve Smith, LAVA Visual Analytics
Sharon Stover, Los Alamos County Councilor
August Swanson, Darkling Images
Ann Weisman, State Resource Team
Steve Wells, Los Alamos National Bank
Rich Williams, State Resource Team
Don Wright, LACDC Small Business Development Center

January 2011 Town Hall - estimated 25 participants

March 2011 Town Hall - estimated 10 participants

UNM Bureau of Business and Economic Research, An Inventory and Assessment of Los Alamos Arts and Cultural Assets - 45 survey participants

State Resource Team Town Hall meetings - estimated 180 participants



Boys at the Los Alamos Ranch School, date unknown

VISION AND MISSION FOR THE CREATIVE DISTRICT

The Los Alamos Creative District is a place—a geographic area in downtown with specific boundaries—but it is also much more. It is an economic development strategy as well as a tool for cultural development. It serves downtown revitalization and is also a source of community pride and expression. It is rooted in its physical location but its impact will be felt far beyond its borders. In addition, the Creative District will also be a program of work implemented by a lead organization, often in partnership with others, and may eventually become an independent agency. To reflect and enable this multi-faceted purpose, vision and mission statements were developed for the Creative District.

Vision Statement

The vision statement answers the question, “What does success look like for the Creative District?”

The Los Alamos Creative District is the intersection of culture and science—a particle collider of ideas and innovation, showcasing the unique talents and intellectual power of the Los Alamos’ community. The Creative District invites the community and the world to participate in exploring the arts, science, technology, history, the natural environment and outdoor recreation. It draws residents and visitors of all ages to downtown Los Alamos with a compelling blend of cultural programs, retail, restaurants, services, residential living, urban design, and architecture. Its creative vitality generates economic prosperity through new jobs and revenues, and its impact is felt far beyond its physical boundaries.

CREATIVE DISTRICT THEMES

What makes Los Alamos unique?

ARTS

Local arts and cultural organizations, creative people, strong and sophisticated demand among residents for cultural experiences

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Manhattan Project history, LANL as premiere international research institution, spin-off companies

HISTORY

Native American settlement, homesteading, Ranch School, Manhattan Project, LANL

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & OUTDOOR RECREATION

Mesas, Bandelier National Park, mountain scenery, high altitude athletics

Mission Statement

The mission defines the Creative District's enduring purpose (why it exists), its stakeholders (who it seeks to serve) and its operational focus (what it does).

The mission of the Los Alamos Creative District is to advance the community's unique creative identity and generate increased economic prosperity. Los Alamos' creativity is a rare asset arising from its rich past and ongoing vitality in the arts, science, technology, history, the natural environment and outdoor recreation. The Creative District provides a focal point for amplifying this creativity. It builds on, serves and connects a broad range of stakeholders, including residents of all ages, visitors, cultural organizations, downtown businesses, individual "creatives," schools, LANL, and County government. In all of its activities, the Creative District aspires to reflect Los Alamos' heritage of the highest standards of creativity and innovation across multiple fields of interest.

The Creative District seeks to enhance downtown Los Alamos as a gathering place and economic driver through inter-related efforts that include:

- *Tourism development, with a special emphasis on cultural, heritage and educational visitors.*
- *Cultural, educational and community programming to enliven the downtown area.*
- *Collaboration among cultural, scientific and recreational activities; business development to enhance economic and cultural vitality.*
- *Supporting development that improves the built environment and provides needed facilities and venues.*
- *Encouraging active public participation in Creative District activities and leadership.*
- *Fostering communication and cooperation among stakeholders.*
- *Engaging young people.*
- *Supporting educational efforts in the schools.*



MODEL ART PROJECT: OPEN BURBLE
Singapore (Strategy 1.3)

Burble: Artist - Orman Haque. The first Burble ever, launched at the open ceremonies of the Singapore Biennale 2006, was known as [Open Burble](#) and consisted of a 15-storey structure designed, assembled and controlled by members of the public. The purpose of the project was to explore how people could design and contribute to their urban environment at a massive scale, albeit just for one night.

THE PLAN

The plan for the Los Alamos Creative District presents a bold vision and envisions a dramatic transformation of downtown. Los Alamos has long been a center for scientific and technical innovation, while paradoxically the community has described itself as risk averse in some aspects. This plan combines ambition that reflects Los Alamos' aspirations and capacity for achievement, coupled with achievable actions that can generate visible, short-term impact.

Goals of the Creative District

The Creative District has six goals to implement its vision and mission:

1. **Programming:** to provide ongoing activities and events that reflect high creative ambitions, the character of Los Alamos, draw on local as well as outside resources, engage the community, and expand visitorship.
2. **Branding and Marketing:** to communicate an authentic and compelling identity for the Creative District, encourage participation by residents and visitors of all ages, maintain positive community relationships, and increase economic activity downtown.
3. **Physical Development and Facilities:** to create a more walkable, pedestrian-friendly downtown environment, enliven the experience of being downtown, provide venues for public gatherings, promote downtown residential living, and elevate the aesthetic quality of built environment.
4. **Economic Development:** to increase economic activity, support the development of diverse creative businesses, provide needed retail services, and increase patronage by residents and visitors in the downtown area.
5. **Management:** to provide effective and sustainable management for the Creative District, building on the capacity of existing organizations and people.
6. **Funding:** to provide stable, long-term resources for the programming, operations, marketing and physical development of the Creative District.

Each goal embodies a mix of ambition and practicality, and is accompanied by recommended strategies. Additional detail is provided in a summary implementation plan (page 40) and a detailed implementation grid (attached in a separate document). To provide starting points and a sense of phasing, a list of implementation milestones is provided on page 47.



MODEL ART PROJECT: PRIMAL SOURCE
Glow Festival, Santa Monica (Strategy 1.2)

Commissioned by the City of Santa Monica, California, for Glow 08, Primal Source was an all-night performance/installation brought to life through the active participation of festival-goers (estimated at 200,000 over the course of the night). Located on the beach near the Pier in an area that had been specifically landscaped over the course of several days, and making use of a large-scale outdoor waterscreen/mist projection system, the mirage-like installation glowed with colours and ebullient patterns created in response to the competing and collaborative voices, music and screams of people nearby. The Glow 10 Festival drew more than 250,000 visitors in September 2010.

◆ PROGRAMMING

Programming is the heart of the Creative District. It will include a broad range of activities and events, year-round, on different days of the week, and times of day. Los Alamos' rich ecology of arts, cultural, historic and scientific organizations, downtown businesses, and creative individuals forms the foundation on which programming can be developed (see Community Description, page 5).

Two essential elements of Creative District programming will increase its effectiveness and distinguish it from all other cultural districts. First, programming will be based on key themes in Los Alamos' identity: the arts, science and technology, history, the natural environment, and outdoor recreation. Second, programming will be curated to best explore and express the creative potential of these themes.

Model programs and projects in sidebars throughout the plan provide examples of inspiring uses of creativity, many of which include elements of arts, science and technology, community participation, and other key aspects of recommended District programming. While they are not intended to be adopted by Los Alamos, they illustrate how the Creative District might approach its own extraordinary capacity and heritage for cross-disciplinary innovation.

1. **Programming Goal:** to provide ongoing activities and events that reflect high creative ambitions, the character of Los Alamos, draw on local as well as outside resources, engage the community, and expand visitorship.

Strategies

- 1.1. The Creative District should provide programs for both residents and visitors, including programs for youth.

Programming can often be designed to attract residents as well as visitors. It will also be important to provide programming geared to children and families, and for young people. Involving young people in the Programming Advisory Committee (see Management strategy 5.1, page 32) is an excellent way to identify effective opportunities.

- 1.2. Programs should focus on Los Alamos' themes of the arts, science and technology, history and the natural environment and outdoor recreation.

These themes reflect authentic elements of Los Alamos identity. Incorporating and combining them in Creative District programs is fundamental to fulfilling its vision and mission. These themes also distinguish the Creative District from all other cultural districts, and provide a robust platform for creativity of national and international importance.

MODEL ART PROJECT: DR. MEGAVOLT



Dr. MegaVolt is a performance act that has appeared at several Burning Man Festivals as well as institutions like the Exploratorium. It features a person in a metal mesh suit interacting with artificially generated lightning. The Doctor sets objects on fire with electricity originating from large Tesla coils, spars with the electric arcs and exhorts the audience to worship the elemental force of electricity. (Strategy 1.2)

- 1.3. Programs should include a participatory element, where appropriate to the program, to better engage the community.

Building in methods for people to participate in programs can engage them more fully in those activities and support development of the Creative District. There are rich opportunities for participation that reflect everyday creativity; spontaneity; families, children and young people; and achievement by residents. Such participation can be designed increase attendance and boost the economic impact of events.

- 1.4. The Creative District should curate each season of programs and activities, employing a creative director, involving local cultural organizations and businesses, and encouraging collaborations.

Curation is the creative direction of programming to illuminate new meanings, create connections, and inspire participants. Curation involves planning and organizing programs so that they can be interrelated to synergistic effect. It is critical to the success of the Creative District, in combination with the focus on Los Alamos' themes of the arts, science and technology, history, and the natural environment. This will require establishing a creative director position, part of whose responsibilities include involving local cultural organizations and businesses in the Creative District in development of programming (Management strategy 5.3, page 32). Fostering collaborations is a natural outgrowth of this approach.

- 1.5. The Creative District should create a grants program to support local cultural groups' operations and programs in the Creative District.

Los Alamos' cultural organizations, like the great majority of other US cultural organizations, consistently identify the need for funding to assist with the fulfillment of their missions. A grants program to support operations and programs taking place in the Creative District will support the provision and coordination of activities that align with the District's mission, while helping sustain these organizations as a vital part of Los Alamos community.

- 1.6. The Creative District should develop the Next Big Idea festival into a signature festival encompassing art, science, and the environment and including a participatory "fringe festival" involving residents.

The Next Big Idea festival, started downtown in 2008, celebrates Los Alamos' unique history and future as a



MODEL PROGRAM: PARKING DAY

Parking Day is a project that happens annually in 1,250 cities around the world. Community members take over a parking space and decorate it any way they like. (Strategy 1.3)



Adults and children alike enjoy art classes at the Fuller Lodge Art Center. Classes are taught by professional artists and appeal to beginner through advanced students. During the summer, FLAC offers 6 weeks of Art Camp for elementary-aged children.

place of discovery and innovation. It is the expression of the community's interest in a signature event that can galvanize residents and attract visitors. The festival can be enhanced to continue to fulfill this purpose. Curating a high-profile series of commissioned events that reflect the District's themes will add depth and prestige to the festival. Adding a participatory, self-selecting "fringe festival" to the existing schedule of produced events, can increase the festival's duration, participation and scope. This will also give local businesses and citizens the opportunity to showcase their creative talents.

1.7. The Creative District should provide a regular schedule of programs and activities to animate the streetscape.

In addition to a signature festival and other major events, the Creative District can enliven the downtown streetscape on an ongoing basis with simple, inexpensive programs. These programs can be curated and organized to draw people downtown, reinforce business activity, activate particular places and times, showcase local creativity, and provide public artistic experiences. Examples include a busker program of street artists and performers, temporary public art, an artist-in-residence program, food carts, and pop-up retail businesses. An annual exhibition of contemporary, nationally recognized Native American artists could draw on by establishing a compelling, separate identity for the Creative District. Collaboration with other institutions devoted to art, science and technology, such as the Exploratorium in San Francisco and the Santa Fe Institute, could provide valuable programs, connections and visibility to the Creative District.

1.8. The Creative District should consider the creation of an educational institute focusing on art and science learning.

An institute could function as a new producing and presenting organization to provide programs not otherwise available in the Creative District, and as an adjunct of the proposed educational resort (Economic Development strategy 4.3, page 30), a Los Alamos Institute of Arts, Science and Humanities, perhaps looking to the Dallas Institute for Arts and Humanities as model.

1.9. The Creative District should continue to explore its role in the proposed Manhattan Project National Park, including locating the visitors' center within the district.

As plans for the new national park develop, the Creative District can explore the potential benefits of this opportunity, and in particular investigate the location of the visitors' center within the District. Because the national park is by nature multidisciplinary, it appears to align with the multi-themed identity of the Creative District, and could strengthen tourism by reinforcing connections between the District and its surrounding attractions.

1.10. The Creative District should build on the student Science and Math Competition by including commissioned projects and encouraging broader community participation.

The Science and Math Art Competition, which is incorporated into the Los Alamos School District's curriculum, provides an excellent basis for expansion of Creative District programming. The District can enhance this competition with such elements as commissioning art projects, providing artist/student activities downtown, establishing the science and math-based art walk, encouraging community participation in the competition, and promoting the competition more widely.

◆ **BRANDING AND MARKETING**

Branding and marketing of the Los Alamos Creative District are essential to its success. Its mission includes increased community engagement, tourism and economic growth, all of which depend on effective communication of why the District is attractive and what it has to offer. The target audience for the Creative District has several groups: residents of all ages, workers who live elsewhere, and tourists, with an emphasis on the cultural, heritage and educational traveler. However, business travelers now account for nearly 90% of all overnight stays. Many tourists and commuters bypass downtown without being enticed to visit. Residents now experience a lack of evening and weekend activities downtown, and restaurants tend to close early. The Creative District and its resident cultural organizations seek to attract growing audiences for their events. Addressing these challenges to a more lively and consistent pattern of downtown visitorship will require a variety of changes, all of which must be communicated in a manner that reinforces a compelling identity for the Creative District.

There are a number of current branding and marketing programs in Los Alamos that relate to the Creative District, downtown and the community's cultural and scientific offerings. In particular, the County is developing its own brand. While the County's brand will cover a larger area and broader goals, the Creative District can contribute to and reinforce the County's effort. This and other marketing programs provide a strong basis for the Creative District to develop more effective marketing, and for that marketing to reflect the level of its creative ambitions. Clearly, Creative District marketing can begin by organizing greater collaboration among these efforts.

2. **Branding and Marketing Goal:** to communicate an authentic and compelling identity for the Creative District, encourage participation by residents and visitors of all ages, maintain positive community relationships, and increase economic activity downtown.

Strategies

- 2.1. The Creative District should articulate a brand identity based on the themes comprising Los Alamos' cultural identity: the arts, science and technology, history, the natural environment, and outdoor recreation.

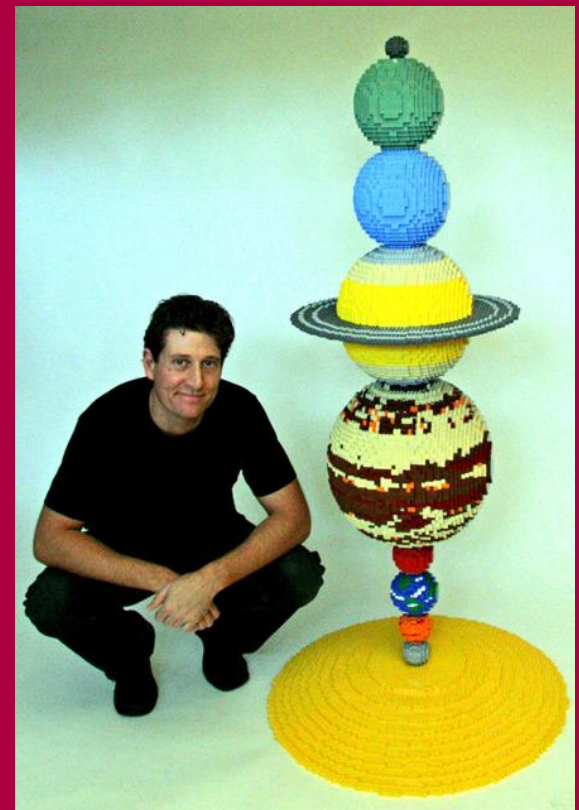
As discussed above in Programming, these themes reflect authentic elements of Los Alamos identity, and should be incorporated into a brand for the

MODEL PROGRAM: LUBBOCK ARTS FESTIVAL Family Programming and Lego Sculpture (Strategy 1.1)

The Lubbock (Texas) Cultural District tripled attendance at its 32nd annual Lubbock Arts Festival by refocusing its programs on the many families in the community seeking cultural experiences appropriate to their needs and tastes. The District invited New York Lego sculptor Nathan Sawaya to exhibit works that appealed to children, while engaging adults with sophisticated arts tastes. Sawaya's work provides an opportunity for participatory programming that children and parents could engage in together. The theme of the four-day, 2010 arts festival, "Life, Lego Art and the Pursuit of Happiness," was centered around the 30-piece Lego sculpture show, "The Art of the Brick," and exhibited at the civic center.



Nathan Sawaya, a corporate attorney-turned-artist, comments on his work, *Solar System* (pictured below): "My Very Excited Mother Just Served Us Nine Pizzas. Anybody use this grade school trick to remember the planets of our Solar System? Another effective way to remember them is to build a five-foot tall sculpture out of LEGO As you can see, I've built our Solar System from the Sun out, or rather, up. The celestial bodies are built roughly to scale, starting with the Sun. I am aware that the planets are not actually piled upon each other; this is an artistic interpretation. I am an artist, not a scientist. And on that note: Pluto will always be a planet to me, no matter what those International Astronomical Union snobs say."



Nathan Sawaya, *Solar System*, Lego blocks (5 x 1.75 ft.)

Creative District. The County intends to refine its own brand in the near future, so it will be important to coordinate with this effort.

- 2.2. The Creative District should create a comprehensive, multi-year marketing plan, conforming to the New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Marketing Standards.

A marketing plan is a requirement of the State's Arts and Cultural District Program, which has published standards that encompass brochures, websites, walking tours, advertising, coordinated design, publicity, and social media. The marketing plan should be carefully coordinated with the brand and with urban design features, such as signage and wayfinding. An effective marketing plan will:

- Articulate a clear image of the authentic identity of Los Alamos and the Creative District;
- Arise from a consensus involving all District stakeholder groups;
- Assess all current marketing efforts that relate to the downtown and local cultural programming and assets;
- Identify opportunities for collaborations, cross-promotions and economies of scale;
- Include a stable, long-term source of funding, and
- Contain benchmarks and measurable goals for assessing the success of the marketing strategies.

- 2.3. Enhance existing marketing to residents.

Marketing to residents can be expanded by a number of immediate steps, including expanding the e-list, continuing development of the website, increasing newspaper and other advertising, and expanding publication and distribution of *The Essence*. In addition, the Creative District can explore marketing collaborations with the Lodgers Tax Advisory Board, the County and others; collaborative marketing and cross-promotion of events among businesses and cultural organizations; development of a robust social media program; and creation of a mobile/Smart Phone application.

- 2.4. Enhance marketing to visitors.

Marketing to visitors can likewise be expanded by a number of immediate steps, including providing hospitality training to encourage local hoteliers and other businesses to promote programs and amenities in the Creative District; improving collateral materials for placement in hotels; and developing package deals focusing on, or combining, science, arts, and outdoor recreation; and developing electronic kiosks that could also serve as platforms for electronic displays of programming. The District can also explore opportunities arising from the County's Community Broadband Initiative, such as free Wi-Fi access and use of broadband capabilities in district programming.



Downtown wayfinding kiosk

- 2.5. Explore marketing collaborations with other New Mexico Arts and Cultural Districts, with funding from the Regional Development Corporation.

The Creative District is one of a network of six cultural districts in the state, including the Silver City and Las Cruces districts. The Los Alamos Creative District can explore development of collaborative marketing, such as cross-promotion and scheduling, joint programming, and shared marketing services. The Regional Development Corporation is a potential source of funding otherwise unavailable to Los Alamos through collaborative effort on behalf of all three of the New Mexico Arts and Cultural Districts in their service area.



MODEL PROGRAM: URBAN TREES
San Diego (Strategy 3.1)

The Urban Trees project is sponsored by the Port of San Diego. Following an open call for proposals, 30 artists are commissioned to create temporary sculptures that are placed along the San Diego waterfront. Each artist is given an armature on which to construct the art and a small honorarium to cover the artist's time and materials. The finished artworks are erected on permanent bases for a period of one year at which time the sculptures are returned to the artists.

♦ Physical Development and Facilities

Physical development of the Creative District presents an opportunity over time to transform downtown into a magnetic, cohesive, and vibrant small urban area that reflects the unique and extraordinary character of Los Alamos. Physical development addresses the built environment of downtown in its relationship to the mission of the District. This ranges from wayfinding and signage, to improvements in urban design, to potential major developments (or redevelopments). An overall concern is enhancements that will support a more pedestrian-friendly environment as well as a more aesthetically ambitious and successful collection of buildings. Related to this are cultural facilities, venues and spaces that support the programming envisioned for the Creative District.

Assessment conducted for the Creative District identified gaps and development potential in its current conditions. As one planning participant said, downtown Los Alamos is, "...the town that still isn't." Some of these characteristics are familiar to residents, such as limited amenities. Residents express a desire for more restaurants, evening entertainment opportunities, longer business hours, and a better mix of retail and services. Cultural organizations face limited venues for downtown activities, including mid-sized public meeting, performance, event and exhibition spaces. There is also a lack of cohesive urban design and a clear opportunity for aesthetic improvement. While widely perceived as a safe place, downtown is not uniformly pedestrian-friendly and lacks connections, wayfinding, and urban destinations that would encourage exploring and walking among downtown areas. There is plenty of parking (parking comprises a startling 65% of downtown land use) but little street life, with an over-emphasis on shopping center development. There is limited affordable housing and no studio or live/work spaces to encourage downtown living. An environmental challenge is that the recession and real estate market conditions have limited development options, and as a result, some creative ideas have been dismissed or delayed.

3. **Physical Development and Facilities Goal:** to create a more walkable, pedestrian-friendly downtown environment, enliven the experience of being downtown, provide venues for public gatherings, to increase residential living downtown, and elevate the aesthetic quality of built environment.

Strategies

- 3.1. The Creative District should take initial steps to enhance its visibility.

Visibility can be improved in short-term by actions such as: developing a program of temporary public art projects, with an emphasis on enlivening Central Avenue; encouraging the County to enact a public art requirement for all private development, perhaps as part of the development of a countywide public art master plan; providing signage/way-finding improvements that will direct people from the edges of the Creative District (particularly from Trinity) into the center along Central Avenue; and

Model Project: Multi-Use Facility The Forum at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco (Strategy 3.3)

Modern, spacious and elegant, the YBCA Forum is a modular space that offers diverse possibilities for any event such as performances, lectures, business and community meetings, social gatherings and other special events.

Features:

- 6,700 square feet (approximate measurements: 87' length x 77' width x 29' high)
- Flexible space with a sprung wooden floor and direct access to the East Garden for expanded use and increased capacity.
- Full theatrical lighting and sound, black drapery and modular staging platforms.
- Audio Visuals, Internet connections and analog phones.
- Back stage dressing rooms and restrooms.
- Maximum capacity of 850 for a standing reception and a flexible seating for 550 - 350.
- Public amenities include a spacious lobby, box office, restrooms and pay phones and full wheelchair access.

House Capacity:

- 850 standing only.
- 600 lecture with small stage (stage size 9'x8'x24" H) – shown in photo below.
- 400 dining with small stage (40 total - 60" rounds and one 9'x8'x24" stage).
- 320 15' D x 24' W x 32" H stage and Grandstand Seating Riser System (set-up varies).



creating a strong visual identifier(s) that communicates a special awareness of place (an example is the red streets that define the downtown district of Graz, Austria).

- 3.2. The County should implement its zoning and building codes that create a more pedestrian-friendly environment in the Creative District.

The County has already updated its zoning and building codes to permit many of the uses that will be supportive of the revitalization of downtown Los Alamos. The County should be encouraged to adopt a flexible and encouraging attitude for new private development. Of particular concern are encouraging location of businesses along the street edges and relocating parking away from pedestrian walkways. The pedestrian right-of-way should be developed to allow food and retail carts, street artists, temporary public art, sidewalk cafes and other elements that encourage a lively street scene.

- 3.3. The Creative District should convene interested potential partners to plan and develop a multi-use performance/meeting facility, in conjunction with a high quality hotel/resort development in the Creative District.

There is a need for a flexible facility that can accommodate mid-size performances and other community meetings and events (those whose capacity falls between the 956-seat Duane W. Smith Auditorium and the smaller venues available downtown such as Fuller Lodge). Rather than a traditional performing arts center, a multi-use "Forum" facility, such as the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Forum (6,700 square feet, with 300 capacity for performances and 450 for lectures), would best suit the multiple uses demanded by the Creative District's varied activities. A "Forum" would handle a range of meetings, lectures, galas and performances, and could also include the proposed Visionarium and a "global virtual meeting" capability. Such a multi-use facility could accommodate formal public meetings larger than the County Council chambers' capacity. It would make sense to develop such a facility in conjunction with a meeting/convention center strategy.

- 3.4. The Creative District should identify a site for, and help develop, a small outdoor public performance/gathering place, such as Ashley Pond, the Civic Center or in association with the multi-use facility recommended in Strategy 3.3.

An outdoor public venue in the Creative District could provide a needed venue for small-scale performances and events, including the farmers' market, and could serve as a physical destination/anchor for the Creative District. A permanent venue should be pursued for the Farmers' Market.

Model Project: Artists' Live/Work Working Artists Ventura (Strategy 3.5)

Working Artists Ventura is a state-of-the-art, sustainable village designed for artists and creative businesses. Located in the cultural district of downtown Ventura, California, WÄV provides affordable living and working space for over one hundred artists of every kind; painters, sculptors, dancers, poets, musicians, filmmakers and more. The WÄV Theater Gallery offers performances, art openings and public gatherings. Arts-friendly small businesses include coffee houses, galleries, cafes, wine bars and jazz clubs that draw foot traffic and contribute to the vitality of the neighborhood.

WÄV provides sixty-nine new units of affordable housing. Because artists need high ceilings, plentiful light and open space, they and their families find it particularly difficult to live and work in traditional affordable housing. That's why WÄV offers fifty-four affordable units especially designed and funded for the needs of artists with families.

Of the total cost of \$57 million, only \$2.5 million has been contributed by the City of Ventura, mostly in the form of land and planning costs. Ventura has worked with PLACE, a Minneapolis-based nonprofit developer of artist studio and living spaces.



- 3.5. The Creative District should plan and develop an artists' live-work/studio facility.

A live/work facility for artists would provide much-needed space for individual "creatives," promote downtown residential living, create new affordable housing, and help extend the daily life/work cycle of downtown. Developments focused on artists' live/work are often done at very low cost to local government, handled by a nonprofit organization specializing in such projects that provides access to funding (e.g., ArtSpace USA and PLACE, both located in Minneapolis).

- 3.6. The County should develop a downtown parking garage to replace off-street parking that is located between downtown buildings and the public rights-of-way.

Replacing the shopping center-style parking with a parking garage would be a major step in improving urban design downtown, providing the opportunity for development that brings building facades closer to the curb and enhances the pedestrian experience. This would also serve to highlight the intimate, low-rise character of those areas downtown that are the most authentic and walkable. The County has adopted plans for a parking garage and set aside a fund dedicated to implementation of the parking recommendations of the Downtown Element, which could be used for a parking garage. When the parking structure is designed, the City should consider incorporating ground-level spaces for art-related uses such as galleries, bookstores, art supply stores and artist studios spaces. It should also consider using an artist to design the façade of the building to ensure that the building contributes to the aesthetic enhancement of the Creative District.

- 3.7. The Creative District, in collaboration with the County, should develop a program of incentives for downtown Los Alamos to become a showcase for innovative architecture

Physical development of the Creative District, as well as implementation of the Los Alamos Downtown Element, will require over time significant new development and redevelopment. This presents the extraordinary opportunity for Los Alamos to become a recognized destination and showcase for innovative architecture and urban design, and to further distinguish itself from other New Mexico cities that celebrate historical

MODEL PROJECTS

Beautiful Parking Structures

Parking structures whose design contributes to the aesthetic experience of the urban landscape, and can include groundfloor retail, galleries, and other uses that enliven the street.





MODEL PROJECT: RED STREETS
Graz, Austria (Strategy 3.1)

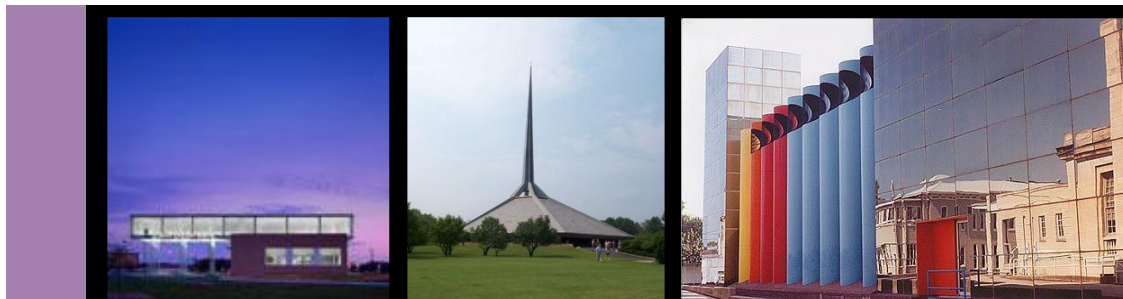
Austrian architects Sandra Janser and Elisabeth Koller have painted streets in Graz, Austria to resemble a running track as part of a regeneration project. Called *Ready, Steady, Go!*, the 2500 feet (750m) long installation on the Jakoministraße and Klosterwiesgasse aims to attract visitors to the area. The installation was completed for Design Month Graz 2010 and won the first prize in a design competition.

architecture. Columbus, Indiana is an excellent (and rare) model for this aspiration. With a population of only

39,000, Columbus is ranked 6th in the US by the American Institute of Architects for innovative design, and has more than 50 buildings designed by internationally recognized architects, including 7 by Pritzker Prize winners. The Creative District could sponsor architectural competitions, create an architectural review panel, offer grants to support the extra expense of such design, and make other efforts to incentivize innovation.

- 3.8. The Creative District should create a focal point for welcoming and reception of visitors and residents, one that serves area attractions as well as the District.

The Creative District would benefit from a visitor center that provides a focal point and orientation for visitors as well as residents, and that reflects the character and ambitions of the district. The current visitor center is not prominent enough to fill this role. The visitor center function could also provide information on attractions such as Bandelier National Park, the proposed Manhattan Park National Park, and events taking place inside and outside the Creative District.



Photos L to R:
 Irwin Union Bank, Creekview Branch
 Deborah Berke & Partners Architects
 2009 AIA New York State Design Award
 North Christian Church,
 Eero Saarinen Architect (1964)
 AT&T/SBC Switching Station
 Paul Krenn, Architect

MODEL PROGRAM: COLUMBUS, INDIANA ARCHITECTURE (Strategy 3.7)

With a population of only 39,000, Columbus is ranked 6th in the US by the American Institute of Architects for innovative design, and has more than 50 buildings designed by internationally recognized architects, including 7 by Pritzker Prize winners.

◆ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Promoting economic growth is essential to the purpose of the Creative District. Nearly all District activities will have economic impact, so they must be organized to achieve the desired benefit. In Los Alamos, the Creative District is designed to increase vitality, visitation and tourism, downtown spending, and (over time) property values. There is strong evidence that, if successfully implemented, the Creative District can generate significant economic benefits. Cultural districts throughout the US have produced positive economic impacts, with one study reporting an average of \$3 in increased local spending for every \$1 invested in the district.⁶ Based on three successive national studies, Americans for the Arts has demonstrated significant economic impact from nonprofit arts activity alone (not counting the impact of commercial, arts-related businesses). Positive impacts are so predictable that they developed created a calculator to estimate total impact in terms of jobs, household income, and local and state government revenue.⁷ A study of property values near cultural anchors and districts in 23 US cities over ten years showed increases between 7% and 35% greater than in the rest of each city.⁸

There are also compelling financial reasons for the Creative District to focus on visitation and tourism. The Los Alamos area currently attracts approximately 300,000 visitors and tourists annually, generating \$470,000 in local GRT and \$250,000 in lodger tax revenues. Day visitors alone generate an estimated \$100,000 in local GRT revenues for every \$10 of per-person spending. The County and the Lodger Tax Board seek to increase those numbers and the Creative District has identified three general approaches: 1) promoting increased day visitors and their local expenditures, 2) increasing hotel stays, and 3) enhanced development and packaging of attractions. Gains in any or all these approaches will produce measurable economic benefits.

In addition to tourism, the Creative District will promote increased downtown use by residents, with associated spending and tax revenues. Los Alamos residents, with high average levels of education and income, seek downtown amenities that reflect the range and sophistication of their interests. Enhancements promoted by the Creative District will provide more reasons for residents to come downtown more frequently, stay longer and spend more.

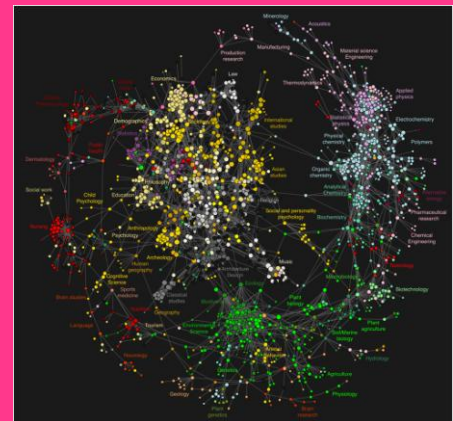
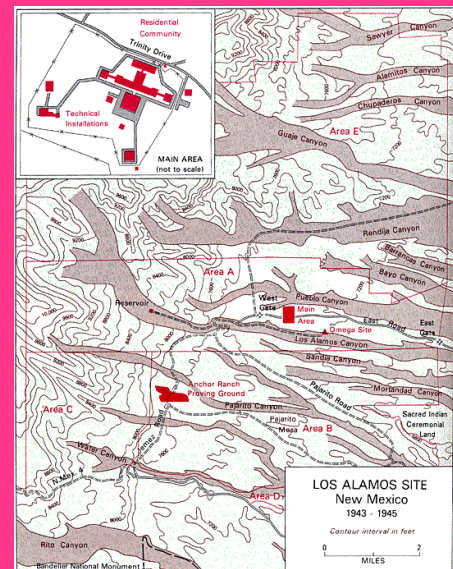
This Creative District plan is well aligned with the County's economic goals and strategies, as expressed in its 2011 Strategic Focus Areas and Goals, the 2010 Economic Vitality Strategic Plan, and the 2009 Downtown Element of the Comprehensive Plan. This alignment will allow for coordination of efforts and greater impact from limited resources.

⁶ Source: Texas Cultural Districts: Indicators for Measuring Success, commissioned by the Texas Commission on the Arts (2010).

⁷ Americans for the Arts, *Arts and Prosperity III Calculator*, http://www.artsusa.org/information_services/research/services/economic_impact/005.asp

⁸ Ibid, reporting a study by QBL Real Estate.

VIEWS OF LOS ALAMOS



Top to bottom
Infrared image of Los Alamos
Map of Site Y
"Map of Science" LANL

4. **Economic Development Goal:** to increase economic activity, support the development of diverse creative businesses, provide needed retail services, and increase patronage by residents and visitors in the downtown area.

Strategies

- 4.1. The Creative District, in collaboration with the County, should provide incentives to attract cultural businesses and other desirable retail to the Creative District, and to retain and support its existing cultural businesses.

Incentives are key to attracting and retaining businesses that will provide a better range of desired amenities downtown. Incentives should be targeted to cultural, retail and other businesses that support development of the Creative District. Incentives can include temporary (start-up) lease guarantees, no- or low-interest loans, grants, and technical assistance. The District should also consider signing a master lease with one or more District property owners to facilitate the location or relocation of galleries and other cultural businesses into the District. Alternatively, the City could acquire properties and work with a developer to create spaces for cultural businesses and organizations.

- 4.2. The Creative District should promote implementation of the 10/10/10 goal to increase the presence of arts, cultural, retail, dining, treat and hospitality businesses in the District.

The 10/10/10 goal is a practical approach to improving the mix of downtown amenities. It is a recommendation of Los Alamos' Economic Vitality Strategic Plan, aligns with the New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Program legislation, and complies with the New Mexico Local Economic Development Act (LEDA).

- 4.3. The County should work with private developers to explore the development of an educational resort facility in the Creative District, providing programs such as experiential learning related to Los Alamos and mini-TED Conferences (an organization dedicated to promulgating innovative ideas in multiple disciplines).

Fulfilling the goal of increasing visitation and tourism that is appropriate to Los Alamos and the Creative District is likely to require development of a resort facility. The tourism segments targeted by Los Alamos prefer higher-end accommodations. A resort facility that includes amenities, such as the multi-use facility described above (Physical Development strategy 3.3, page 26), will make possible conferences, symposia, events and activities that reflect the creative purpose of the District.

MODEL PROJECT: BERGAMOT STATION SANTA MONICA, CA *Attracting galleries and other arts-related businesses to the Creative District (Strategy 4.1)*

Bergamot Station is a public/private partnership that is home to 29 galleries and artist studios. Since opening in 1994, it has blossomed into a wildly popular art destination for visitors from around the country and the world, with well over 600,000 each year. It now appears in most every tourist guide as a primary cultural destination, noted for its growing cluster of galleries which allow one to spend the day seeing art, rather than driving.

The name "Bergamot Station" dates back to 1875 when it was a stop and car storage area on the steam powered Los Angeles and Independence Railroad from Santa Monica to downtown Los Angeles until 1953. Subsequently, the line was used for light freight delivery. When it fell into disuse and eventual abandonment in the late 1980s, the City of Santa Monica purchased the entire parcel from Southern Pacific Railroad in 1987 to prevent it from being split up and sold. At that time a future light rail service along the right of way was anticipated within 10 years, and the site would be needed as a service yard and passenger station.

The main manufacturing company moved out in 1993, leaving a large industrial complex sitting vacant. Even under the most optimistic scenarios, plans for the light rail were years away. The City, seeking a productive use for the site, approached Wayne Blank, developer and co-owner of the Shoshana Wayne Gallery. Blank's development expertise had already been tapped by the City of Santa Monica for an earlier project: the conversion of a vacant city-owned airport hangar into artists' studios. Pleased with the airport project's outcome, The City asked Blank to conceive of an artistic use for the site. Blank along with acclaimed architect, Lawrence Scarpa, created a campus-like complex that retained its industrial and rudimentary look. Bergamot Station held its official opening on September 17, 1994.



- 4.4. The MainStreet Program of LACDC should convene property owners to discuss common interests and explore projects to physically develop the Creative District.

Property owners clearly are essential stakeholders in many aspects of this plan. Convening them to explore ideas and projects that align with the goals of the Creative District can help identify desirable projects, support their efforts, and in some cases secure significant new resources.

BUSKING

The Art of Enlivening the Street (Strategy 1.7)



♦ *MANAGEMENT*

Management of the Creative District will involve an unusual range of functions. Cultural districts always involve programming and marketing, but management of the Los Alamos Creative District will be far broader. District goals call for economic development in terms of tourism and small business development, real estate development, other physical development, supporting the creation of new funding, and extensive coordination. Finally, the identity of the Creative District is multi-disciplinary, encompassing the themes of the arts, science and technology, history, and the natural environment. Representing this identity throughout the many functions of the Creative District will require a sophisticated and creative effort.

5. **Management Goal:** to provide effective and sustainable management for the Creative District, building on the capacity of existing organizations and people.

Strategies

- 5.1. Los Alamos MainStreet Program of LACDC should manage the Creative District for an initial two- or three-year start-up period, after which the need for a new separate nonprofit management entity should be evaluated.

Management of the Creative District involves a complex set of capacities and tasks. Rather than create a new nonprofit, it is desirable to begin implementation of the District with management provided by an existing organization. Of all existing entities, Los Alamos MainStreet (and its related organizations within the Los Alamos Commerce and Development Corporation) has the greatest amount of the required experience, including program and event management, community event programming, marketing, economic development, visitor and tourism operations, real estate development, volunteer management, an extensive network of community relationships, small business counseling and training, and an acknowledged leadership position. While it is not a cultural organization, it can provide the necessary creative direction through collaboration with cultural organizations and by establishing the Creative Director position described below (strategy 5.3). After the start-up period, MainStreet's management role should be reevaluated in light of the needs of the Creative District.

- 5.2. Los Alamos MainStreet Program of LACDC should create a Programming Advisory Board to assist in developing programs and raising funds for the Creative District.

Program planning and development is by nature a collaborative process. MainStreet should create a Programming Advisory Board to initiate work with the Creative Director curator to develop, oversee, evaluate and assist with funding of Creative District programs.

- 5.3. The Creative District should install adequate staffing to support its operations and programming.

During the start-up period, management of the Creative District will require at least a full-time coordinator position and a part-time Creative Director. The Creative Director will serve the essential curatorial function described above (Programming strategy 1.4, page 20), which could be filled by a staff position, rotating curator, an artist-in-residence or a combination of these. It would be desirable for the Creative Director to have background and experience in the arts and science, as well as community programming.

- 5.4. The Creative District should consider the creation of a governing board overseeing policy and fundraising after the start-up period.

As part of reevaluating management structure after the start-up period, consideration should be given to the need for a governing body with policy and fundraising responsibility for the Creative District, to provide a vehicle for community leadership of the Creative District.

- 5.5. The Creative District should identify activities and programs that can engage community volunteers.

A corps of community volunteers will provide much-needed assistance, at low cost. Perhaps more importantly, a volunteer program will give citizens the opportunity to serve the community and generate increase community ownership of the Creative District.

- 5.6. The Creative District, in conjunction with the UNM-LA Small Business Development Center, should make available assistance for nonprofit arts and cultural organizations to increase their effectiveness.

Local arts and cultural organizations can often benefit from efforts to increase organizational effectiveness. Such capacity building can take the form of technical assistance, collaborations, funding and other activities designed to improve an organization's ability to fulfill its mission. This type of assistance can strengthen Los Alamos' cultural community and better equip it to contribute to development of the Creative District. Assistance can be provided directly, or access to other existing services might be provided.



MODEL PROJECT: EDGAR HEAP OF BIRDS
Contemporary Native American artist: *Day/Night*
(Strategy 1.7)

Heap of Birds's critical reputation has been established most by his political and site-specific public signage projects. One example is *Day/Night*. The artwork is installed in conjunction with a previously existing sculptural bust of Chief Seattle located at Pioneer Square in Seattle, Washington. With the sculpture *Day/Night* the theme of the porcelain panels seeks to proclaim that for many transient inter-tribal people the streets of Seattle are home. Secondly it is declared that although these tribal citizens have sought refuge in the urban centers which have sprung up on Indian Territory around them, the far rural tribal communities from which the originate hold each and everyone's memory in close and high regard.

Lushootseed (front) and English (back) text presented in porcelain enamel on steel panels, size 42' x 84".

English translation Panel on Left: *Chief Seattle Now The Street Are Our Home*

English translation Panel on Right: *Far Away Brothers and Sisters We Still Remember You*

◆ FUNDING

State cultural district programs around the US consider sufficient, renewable operating funds as critical to district effectiveness. Districts that receive start-up funding but do not have a viable long-term funding plan are handicapped in their ability to fulfill their missions, which are by nature long-term initiatives. In line with this reality, the New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Program views sustainable funding as a prerequisite for State funding. Moreover, the Creative District has ambitious goals for physical development, which will require substantial capital investments over time. This plan addresses the Creative District's need for start-up, ongoing operating and capital funds, as well as restricted, special purpose funding and other resources. Preliminary budget projections for the Creative District are provided in Implementation (page 40).

6. **Funding Goal:** to provide stable, long-term resources for the programming, operations, marketing and physical development of the Creative District.

Strategies

- 6.1. Los Alamos MainStreet Program of LACDC should request seed funding for the Creative District from the County for an initial two- to three-year period.

The Creative District is in close alignment with all relevant County plans. It is appropriate for the County to fund the District as a partner in achieving its goals. It is especially strategic for the County to provide start-up funding, which is the most difficult to obtain.

- 6.2. Los Alamos County should pursue development of a Downtown Tax Increment Development District (TIDD) to provide a source of capital improvement funding for the Creative District and the overall downtown; a TIDD would require no change to tax rates or impose any additional tax burden on local individual taxpayers.

Creation of a TIDD Redevelopment District and Authority for downtown Los Alamos has been in discussion among the Mainstreet Futures Committee and other community leaders, and this funding approach makes sense for capital funding needs of the Creative District and the overall downtown area. Tax increment districts are a common funding mechanism for cultural districts, providing capital funding for facilities, venues and other improvements that form the basis of physical development of a district. This is true with the Los Alamos Creative District, whose plans include several recommended facility projects, a flexible meeting/event venue, parking, streetscaping and other urban design enhancements. Including the entire downtown including Trinity Place development in the TIDD will help finance capital improvements throughout downtown, including the Creative District, and promote cohesion and balance among the sub-areas of downtown. By State law, TIDD funding would not be eligible to use for operations, programming, or marketing costs of the district.

- 6.3. The Creative District and the County should pursue enactment of a Gross Receipts Tax (GRT) Quality of Life increment to support Creative District operations and programs, including arts and cultural grants.

State legislation allows, at the option of local government, enactment of additional GRT for the purpose of improving the community's quality of life. Multiple one-sixteenth of a percent (1/16%) GRT increments are available in Los Alamos County for such a tax. Enactment requires a ballot referendum and approval by a simple majority of voters. Each 1/16% GRT augmentation would yield approximately \$1 million annually in

additional revenues. This is an appropriate source of ongoing operating funds for the Creative District because, once approved by the voters, it carries the mandate of community consensus about its importance and provides accountability for the use of the funds. Quality of Life tax increments typically end, or sunset, after a period of ten years, and when they may be renewed by the voters. This allows the community to reevaluate the effectiveness and priority of such investment. The experience of many other communities that have authorized special use taxes for cultural purposes is that, not only do voters reauthorize these taxes after they sunset, but the margin of approval increases because of the manifest community benefits that arise from these taxes.

- 6.4. A portion of the Lodgers Tax Fund could be utilized to support Creative District marketing and branding.

The Lodgers Tax Fund and the Creative District share a core goal of increasing tourism and hotel stays. It is appropriate for the Lodgers Tax Fund to partner with the Creative District in financing the District's expenses for marketing and branding, which are essential components of achieving this goal.

- 6.5. LACDC, working with County staff, should explore Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) provisions to support development of local businesses and cultural organizations in the Creative District.

LEDA has provisions to support economic development that potentially overlap with goals of the Creative District, including its strategies for incentivizing small business development and supporting arts and cultural organizations.

- 6.6. The Creative District should explore investment tax credits, including those provided by the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division and Federal Rehabilitation Investment Tax credits, to support private development and redevelopment in the Creative District.

Historic tax credits are an important incentive and funding source for rehabilitation of historic structures. The State of New Mexico Investment Tax Credit program provides state tax credits to owners of historic structures who accomplish qualified, rehabilitation on a structure or stabilization or protection of an archaeological site. The credit is doubled from a maximum of \$25,000 to \$50,000 within the Creative District. Property must be individually listed in, or contributing to a historic district listed in the State Register of Cultural Properties. The property may be a personal residence, income-producing property (such as an apartment building or office), or an

archaeological site. Federal historic preservation tax incentives, administered by the National Park Service, provide 10% to 20% credits for historic



MODEL PROJECT: SIRACUSA AMPHITHEATRE
Siracusa, Italy (Strategy 3.4)

Architect Massimiliano Fuksas has created a Greek theatre set for the Fondazione INDA (Istituto Nazionale del Dramma Antico), which performs in the 1st Century Greek amphitheatre in Siracusa, Italy.



MODEL ART PROJECT: PAINTED STREETS
Vercorin, Switzerland (Strategy 3.1)

A beautiful encounter between the traditional world and contemporary art. The streets of Vercorin, a small ski town in Switzerland, were painted by Lang Baumann, the creative design duo of Sabina Lang and Daniel Baumann. Vercorin wanted something outrageous to distinguish their town fair. The painted streets were intended to be a powerful juxtaposition against the old world feel of the

structures that meet certification requirements. The 10% rehabilitation tax credit applies only to non-historic buildings first placed in service before 1936 and rehabilitated for non-residential uses. The 20% rehabilitation tax credit applies only to certified historic structures, and may include buildings built after 1936. The Fuller Lodge Historic District Advisory Board can serve as a partner in exploring the use of these benefits in the Creative District.

- 6.7. The Creative District should pursue technical and marketing funding and assistance from state agencies, including New Mexico MainStreet, New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs, New Mexico Department of Tourism and the Museum of New Mexico Foundation.

These agencies provide a variety of programs that may be applicable to support for the Creative District as it implements this plan. The District should explore these possibilities during the start-up period and remain informed about these options on an ongoing basis. While the State currently faces significant fiscal challenges, the District should pursue available funding for which it is eligible.

- 6.8. Los Alamos MainStreet Program of LACDC should explore the New Mexico Finance Authority and other state funding as potential sources of support for public and private development in the Creative District.

These agencies provide support for development that aligns with the goals for physical development in the Creative District. LACDC and MainStreet should make initial efforts to explore these possibilities. As with the previous strategy, the State currently faces significant fiscal challenges but the District should pursue available State funding.

- 6.9 The Creative District should pursue funding from federal agencies such as the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Science Foundation.

The National Endowment for the Arts has expressed an interest in these types of projects and can award grants of \$10,000 to 100,000 through its new Innovations initiative. Likewise, the National Science Foundation has funded planning efforts and conferences focused on the intersections between art and science.

♦ *ADDITIONAL COUNTY ACTIONS*

There are several additional steps that county can take that would enhance the development of the Creative District and the community.

7. **Additional Goal:** to strengthen the community impact of the Creative District through related County actions and plans.

Recommended Actions

- 7.1. The County should adopt this plan for the Creative District, including an ordinance establishing its physical boundaries.

County adoption of this plan for the Creative District and its physical (geographic) boundaries are a requirement of the New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Program. Such adoption not only enables implementation of the District's plan but also qualifies it for State support for designated districts.

- 7.2. The County should incorporate this plan for the Creative District as a part of its Los Alamos Downtown Element, and by reference, a part of the County's Comprehensive Plan.

These three plans are all in close alignment, so adopting this Creative District plan, as a part of the Downtown Element and the Comprehensive Plan will formalize that relationship and reinforce implementation efforts.

- 7.3. The County should proceed with its plans to develop a comprehensive community cultural plan.

County Councilors have identified development of a comprehensive community cultural plan as a priority for 2011. This Creative District plan is an excellent first step in identifying and meeting the cultural needs of Los Alamos' citizens. Preparing a cultural plan for the entire community will, at the critical starting point of the Creative District, align and coordinate downtown and communitywide cultural efforts. A communitywide cultural plan will investigate and identify a full range of arts and cultural experiences for Los Alamos citizens, including arts education in the schools and lifelong learning in the arts. It will identify public and private revenue sources and ways to support local arts and cultural organizations, inside and outside the Creative District.

- 7.4. The County should develop and adopt a public art master plan.

The field of public art has evolved substantially in the past decade and has developed diverse approaches for providing community benefit from this public investment. The County's art in public places program has never been guided by a public art master plan and would benefit from consideration of these new possibilities. The Art in Public Places Board intends to develop a master plan and should proceed with this effort. The County can also achieve significant savings and efficiencies by incorporating public art master planning into a comprehensive community cultural plan.



MODEL PROGRAM: WATERFIRE *Providence, Rhode Island (Strategy 1.2)*

WaterFire is a free public arts event held several times a month between May and October downtown Providence, Rhode Island. It draws 40,000 to 60,000 people each time. Its marriage of fire, water, music and performance has become one of the most popular arts events in New England since the first fire was lit more than 10 years ago. It is estimated the WaterFire generates \$43 million in economic impact for Providence annually.

◆ *MEASURING SUCCESS*

The Los Alamos Creative District represents a major and long-term community investment, one that requires accountability through success measures. Measuring success during implementation of this plan means regular assessment, or examination of implementation-in-progress for the purpose of enhancing it.

There are two relevant areas of measurement for the Creative District. The first is compliance with State requirements as a member of the New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Program. Ongoing compliance is highly desirable because it makes the Creative District eligible for state funding, tax incentives, and use of LEDA provisions, and it provides additional opportunities for resources and networking with other districts.

The second area of measurement is local. Through this plan, the Creative District formalizes its existence, establishes its goals and strategies, and marks its start as a member of the New Mexico Arts and Cultural District (the Creative District has been “designated” by the State but must complete certain requirements to “graduate,” as detailed below). The Creative District will develop annual and long-term success measures to track its progress in fulfilling its purpose. These local success measures are self-defined and should assess what is most important to the local community.

State Compliance and Success Measures

Membership in the New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Program involves compliance with relevant State standards:

- “Graduation” Requirements: While the Creative District has been “designated” as a cultural district, it must fulfill the State’s requirements for establishing an arts and cultural district, or “graduation” requirements. For Los Alamos this means 1) County adoption of physical boundaries of Creative District, 2) adoption of a master plan, which is presumably satisfied by the current Downtown Element of the County’s Comprehensive Plan, and 3) adoption of this Creative District plan (the “cultural plan” mandated by the State). The State Arts and Cultural District Council, composed of representatives of the agencies that comprise this inter-agency collaboration, will judge fulfillment of these requirements.
- State Funding: After graduation, the Creative District becomes eligible for funding from a new State fund for New Mexico Arts and Cultural Districts intended to be created in the coming year (a bill is pending in the legislature). Capitalization of this fund is anticipated by sources other than State funding. Permissible uses of this funding are broad, including programs, capital and re-granting. A key element of competitive applications to this funding program will be the existence of sustainable local funding for Creative District operations; districts in the program are highly encouraged to

develop their own ongoing funding sources, and state funding is intended to be for project development, not operations.

- Annual State Reporting: The Creative District will make annual reports to the New Mexico Arts Commission to demonstrate compliance with program standards and remain in good standing as an arts and cultural district. Annual reports include a financial report and progress reports in four areas: 1) cultural planning, 2) marketing and promotion, 3) planning and design, and 4) capacity building and sustainability. Each district, based on its plan, establishes individual program standards. While goals can be long-term, the district must establish annual performance measures and report on outcomes in the annual State report.

Local Success Measures

Local success measures focus on the Creative District's progress in achieving its vision, rather than compliance with external requirements. There are no generally accepted success measures for US cultural districts but two frequent areas of measurement are: 1) economic impact, and 2) property values.⁹ These are relevant measures for Los Alamos, since economic growth and improving the built environment are essential components of the Creative District's vision, mission and goals.

A matrix of performance measures for economic development and property values can be developed from the following:

Los Alamos Creative District Success Measures

Creative District Goal	Desired Outcome	Measure	Indicator
Economic Impact <i>Goal 4: Economic Development</i>			
Increase economic activity	Increased economic impact from Creative District programs	Direct spending Indirect spending Job creation	Increased GRT receipts Increased downtown spending New jobs
Support the development of diverse creative businesses	Location of arts-related businesses in the Creative District	Start-ups and relocations	New business licenses New participation in available incentive programs
Provide needed retail services	Location of needed retail businesses in the Creative District Enhancement of hours, products and/or services by existing businesses	Fulfillment of 10/10/10 goal	New business licenses New participation in available incentive programs New availability of desirable new hours, products and/or services
Increase patronage by residents and visitors in the downtown area	More residents coming to the Creative District More visitors coming to the Creative District	Total visitation in the Creative District Total attendance at events Total hotel stays	Increased business receipts Increased GRT receipts Increased hotel occupancy Increased event attendance

⁹ Source: Texas Cultural Districts: Indicators for Measuring Success, commissioned by the Texas Commission on the Arts (2010).

Creative District Goal	Desired Outcome	Measure	Indicator
Property Values			
<i>Goal 3: Physical Development and Facilities</i>			
Improve physical development and facilities in the Creative District	New multi-use facility New high-end resort New artists' live/work Urban design improvements New parking structure	Property valuation in the Creative District Property tax receipts	Increased value of individual properties Increased total valuation Increased property tax receipts Increased TIDD receipts
Quality of Life and Participation			
<i>Multiple Goals</i>			
Enhance the quality of life for Los Alamos residents and visitors of all ages	More residents coming to the Creative District More resident participation More visitors coming to the Creative District Improved aesthetic environment downtown Resident and visitor satisfaction Volunteerism and contributions Successful programming available to public	Total visitation in the Creative District Total attendance at events Total hotel stays Repeat visits Amount of programs, events and activities Involvement of partners, such as schools, businesses, 'outside' partners Active volunteer program Annual contributions Public attention and awards	Increased business receipts Increased GRT receipts Increased hotel occupancy Increased event attendance Increased number of programs, events and activities High resident and visitor satisfaction Increased visitation (residents and visitors) Increased participation in programs, projects, etc. Increased volunteerism Increased financial and in-kind contributions Press articles, online notice, awards, other recognition/attention



Art photos inspired by science imagery (Strategy 1.2)

IMPLEMENTATION

SUMMARY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Los Alamos Creative District is a long-term initiative that is near the starting point of its existence. Therefore, this plan balances the bold and visionary with the practical and immediately achievable. It builds on the current people, organizations and conditions in Los Alamos. It is important to provide first steps and visible gains, as well an ambitious definition of purpose and identity. To ground implementation in reality, the implementation plan provides guidance for each recommended strategy:

- The lead agency or agencies responsible for implementation.
- Timeline for beginning implementation, with the understanding that many strategies will last for more than one year.

Note that the Creative District is the recommended lead agency for many strategies. As described in *Vision and Vision for the Creative District* (page 16) and the *Management* recommendations (page 32), the Creative District is a program of work to be implemented by LACDC's MainStreet, often in partnership with others, and that may eventually become an independent agency.

In addition, a detailed implementation grid is attached in a separate, large format document that includes the above, plus (page 50):

- Preliminary operating cost estimates during the first five years, to the extent possible at this time, with notes where costs are to be determined at a future time.
- Capital costs are noted, where they will be incurred, while specific amounts are left to be determined.
- Initial steps

To clarify starting points and milestones in implementation, a list of recommended strategies by start year is also provided on page 47.



MODEL PROJECT: WIND-ACTIVATED SCUPLTURE
Exploratorium, San Francisco (Strategy 7.4)

Peter Richards, artist

Creative District Summary Implementation Plan

GOALS/Strategies	Lead Agency	Timeline
GOAL 1: PROGRAMMING		
TO PROVIDE ONGOING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS THAT REFLECT HIGH CREATIVE AMBITIONS, THE CHARACTER OF LOS ALAMOS, DRAW ON LOCAL AS WELL AS OUTSIDE RESOURCES, ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY AND EXPAND VISITORSHIP.		
1.1 Provide programs for both residents and visitors, including programs for youth.	Creative District	Year 1 and ongoing
1.2 Focus programs on Los Alamos' themes of the arts, science and technology, history and the natural environment and outdoor recreation.	Creative District	Year 1 and ongoing
1.3 Include a participatory element to programs, where appropriate to the program.	Creative District	Year 1 and ongoing
1.4 Curate a season of programs and activities, employing an artistic director and involving local cultural organizations and businesses.	Creative District	Year 2 and ongoing
1.5 Create a grants program to support local cultural groups' operations and programs in the Creative District.	Creative District	Year 2 and ongoing
1.6 Develop the Next Big Idea Festival into a signature event, encompassing art, science and the environment with a participatory "fringe" festival involving local residents.	Creative District	Year 1
1.7 Provide a regular schedule of activities to animate the streetscape, including:	Creative District	
An artist-in-residence program.		Year 3 and ongoing
An annual exhibition of contemporary Native American artists.		Year 3 and ongoing
Collaborations with national arts/science/technology institutions.		Year 1 initial planning Year 2+ implementation
A busker program of street artists and performers.		Year 2 and ongoing
1.8 Consider the creation of an educational institute focusing on art and science learning.	Creative District	Year 3 planning Year 4+ implementation
1.9 Continue to explore locating of the Manhattan Project National Park visitors' center in Los Alamos.	LACDC	Ongoing
1.10 Build on the Science and Math Competition by including commissioned projects and encouraging community participation.	MainStreet	Year 1 and ongoing

GOALS/Strategies**Lead Agency****Timeline****GOAL 2: MARKETING/BRANDING**

TO COMMUNICATE AN AUTHENTIC AND COMPELLING IDENTITY FOR THE CREATIVE DISTRICT, ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION BY RESIDENTS AND VISITORS OF ALL AGES, MAINTAIN POSITIVE COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS, AND INCREASE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY DOWNTOWN.

2.1	Articulate a brand identity based on the themes comprising Los Alamos' cultural identity: arts, science and technology, the natural environment, and outdoor recreation.	Creative District	Years 1 and 2
2.2	Create a comprehensive, multi-year marketing plan.	Creative District	Year 2
2.3	Enhance existing marketing to local residents by:		Year 1 and ongoing
	Expanding e-mail lists.	Creative District	Year 1
	Continuing development of the website.	Creative District	Year 1 and ongoing
	Exploring collaborations with the Lodgers Tax Advisory Board, the County and others.	Creative District	Year 1 and ongoing
	Capitalizing on cross-promotion opportunities among businesses & arts groups.	Creative District	Year 1 and ongoing
	Developing a social media marketing initiative.	Creative District	Year 1 and ongoing
	Developing a Smart Phone application to access amenities & activities in downtown		Year 1 and ongoing
	Increasing newspaper and other marketing.	Creative District	Year 1 and ongoing
	Expand The Essence with increased frequency and distribution.	Creative District	Year 1 and ongoing
2.4	Enhance marketing to visitors by:		
	Providing hospitality training for local hotels and businesses.	Creative District	Year 2 and ongoing
	Improving collateral materials for placement in hotels.	Creative District	
	Installing electronic information kiosks that could double as platforms for art displays.	County	Year 3 – 4
	Developing package programs, combining science, arts & outdoor recreation.	Creative District	Year 2 and ongoing
2.5	Explore marketing collaborations with other NM Arts and Cultural Districts, with funding from the Regional Development Corporation	Creative District	Year 3 and ongoing

GOALS/Strategies**Lead Agency****Timeline****GOAL 3: PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND FACILITIES**

TO CREATE A MORE WAKABLE, PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY DOWNTOWN ENVIRONMENT, ENLIVEN THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING DOWNTOWN, PROVIDE VENUES FOR PUBLIC GATHERINGS AND EVENTS, PROMOTE DOWNTOWN RESIDENTIAL LIVING, AND ELEVATE THE AESTHETIC QUALITY OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT.

3.1	Enhance Creative District visibility early by: Placing temporary artworks along Central Avenue.	Creative District Public Art Advisory Board	Year 1 - planning Year 2+ implementation
	Encouraging the county to adopt a public art in private development requirement.	Creative District	Year 2 - as part of County public art master plan
	Providing Creative District signage and wayfinding.	Creative District	Years 2 & 3
	Creating a strong visual identifier for the Creative District.	Creative District	Year 1 - planning Year 2+ implementation
3.2	Encourage County to implement zoning/building codes that create pedestrian-friendly environment.	County	Year 1 and ongoing
3.3	Plan and develop a multi-use performance/meeting facility, in conjunction with a high quality hotel/resort development.	County and LACDC	Year 3 or 4 and beyond
3.4	Identify a site for and develop a small outdoor public performance/gathering place, such as Ashley Pond, the Civic Center or in association with the multi-use facility recommended in Strategy 3.3.	Creative District	TBD
3.5	Plan and build an artist live-work/studio facility.	County	TBD
3.6	Develop a downtown parking garage to replace off-street parking that is located between downtown buildings and the public right-of-way.	County	TBD
3.7	Develop a program of grants and other incentives to encourage innovative architecture.	Creative District	Year 2 and ongoing
3.8	Create a focal point for welcoming and reception of visitors and residents to the Creative District and area attractions.	Creative District	Year 2 and ongoing

GOALS/Strategies**Lead Agency Timeline****GOAL 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

TO INCREASE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF DIVERSE CREATIVE BUSINESSES, PROVIDE NEEDED RETAIL SERVICES AND INCREASE DOWNTOWN PATRONAGE BY RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

4.1	Provide grants, loans and other incentives to attract arts-related businesses.	Creative District	Year 3 planning Year 4+ implementation
4.2	Promote implementation of the proposed 10/10/10 program.	MainStreet	
4.3	Work with the County and private developers to explore the development of an "educational resort facility" providing experiential learning, like mini-TED conferences.	LACDC	TBD
4.4	Convene downtown property owners to explore common interests and to define projects needed for continued development of the Creative District.	MainStreet	Year 1 and ongoing

GOAL 5: MANAGEMENT

TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT FOR THE CREATIVE DISTRICT, BUILDING ON THE CAPACITIES OF EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS AND PEOPLE.

5.1	MainStreet to manage the Creative District for an initial two- or three-year start-up period, after which the need for a new separate nonprofit management entity should be evaluated.	MainStreet	Years 1 - 3
5.2	Create a Programming Advisory Committee to assist in developing programs and raising funds for the Creative District.	Creative District	Year 1 and ongoing
5.3	Install adequate staffing to support Creative District operations and programming, including: Full-time Creative District Coordinator. Part-time guest curator, transitioning into permanent Creative District Creative Director.	Creative District	Year 1 and ongoing Year 1 and ongoing
5.4	Consider creation of a Governing Board overseeing policy and fund-raising after start-up.	MainStreet	Year 3
5.5	Identify activities and programs that can engage community volunteers.	Creative District	Year 1 and ongoing
5.6	Make available assistance for nonprofit arts and cultural organizations to increase their effectiveness.	MainStreet	Year 2 and ongoing

GOALS/Strategies**Lead Agency****Timeline****GOAL 6: FUNDING**

TO PROVIDE STABLE, LONG-TERM RESOURCES FOR THE PROGRAMMING, OPERATIONS, MARKETING AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CREATIVE DISTRICT.

6.1	Request initial seed funding from the County for an initial two- or three- year period.	MainStreet	Years 1 - 3
6.2	Pursue creation of a downtown TIDD to fund capital improvements in the Creative District.	Creative District	Year 1 and ongoing
6.3	Pursue enactment of a "Quality of Life" GRT increment to support Creative District operations and programs.	Creative District	Year 1 planning Year 2 implementation
6.4	Utilize a portion of the Lodgers Tax Fund to support Creative District marketing and branding.	Creative District	Year 1 and ongoing
6.5	Explore LEDA provisions to support business and cultural organization development.	MainStreet	Year 1 and ongoing
6.6	Explore investment tax credits, including those provided by the Federal Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit program and New Mexico Historic Preservation Division to promote private development and redevelopment.	LACDC	Year 1 and ongoing
6.7	Pursue technical assistance and marketing funding from state agencies.	MainStreet	Year 1 and ongoing
6.8	Explore NM Finance Authority and other state agencies to support public & private development.	LACDC	Year 1 and ongoing
6.9	Pursue funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Science Foundation.	Creative District	Year 1 and ongoing

GOAL 7 - ADDITIONAL COUNTY ACTIONS

7.1	Adopt this plan for the Creative District, including an ordinance establishing its physical boundaries.	County	Year 1
7.2	Incorporate this plan for the Creative District as a part of the Los Alamos Downtown Element, and by reference, a part of the County Comprehensive Plan.	County	Year 1
7.3	Proceed with County plans for creation of a comprehensive community cultural plan.	County	Years 1 & 2
7.4	Develop a Countywide public art master plan.	County	Years 1 & 2

IMPLEMENTATION PHASES: STARTING POINTS AND BEYOND

With an ambitious, long-term plan, it is helpful to provide starting points and a sequence for implementation. The summary implementation grid, above, identifies the starting year for each recommended strategy. In addition, the following list identifies milestones for implementation.

Implementation Milestones

Year 1

- Secure adoption of County ordinance establishing District
- Secure adoption of District plan as part of the Downtown Plan
- Advocate for County community comprehensive cultural plan
- Advocate for County public art master plan
- Secure seed funding from County
- Hire District Creative Director
- Convene District programming advisory committee
- Expand Next Big Thing Festival
- Build on Science and Math Competition
- Develop plans for temporary public art along Central Avenue
- Develop District programming plan
- Develop marketing strategies for local residents
- Seek Lodgers' Tax funding to support enhanced marketing
- Planning for enhance signage and wayfinding
- Pursue creation of downtown TIDD
- Continue pursuing Manhattan Project National Park in Los Alamos

Years 2 & 3

- Present full year of curated programs in District
- Implement grants program to support local nonprofit cultural groups
- Pursue collaborations with national arts/science institutions
- Develop program of activities to animate streets in District
- Develop comprehensive, multi-year marketing plan
- Implement program of temporary public art in District
- Advocate for County requirement for public art in private development
- Implement plans for signage and wayfinding in District
- Provide leadership training for local nonprofit cultural groups
- Pursue enactment of a "Quality of Life" GRT increment to support District
- Begin planning for a multi-use performance/meeting facility

- Promote implementation of the 10/10/10 program
- Promote development of an outdoor performance/festival facility

Years 4 & beyond

- Explore creation of an educational institute focusing on art and science
- Install electronic kiosks in District, doubling as arts display platforms
- Support construction of a multi-functional performance space, in conjunction with private development of an educational resort/hotel
- Provide grants/incentives to attract arts-related businesses

**MODEL PROJECT:
PLAY ME, I'M YOURS**
01SJ Festival, San Jose and various public spaces (Rec. 1.3)

Touring the globe since March 2008, 'Play Me I'm Yours' is an artwork by Luke Jerram. Street pianos are appearing in cities across the world in skate parks, industrial estates, laundrettes, precincts, bus shelters and train stations to act as a catalyst for strangers who regularly occupy the same space, to talk and connect with one another.



CREATIVE DISTRICT SUMMARY OPERATING BUDGET

The following budget presents a preliminary *pro forma* operating budget for expenses in the first five years of the Creative District. Under the recommended strategies of this plan, operating revenues are to come from several sources, including County General Funds, a proposed GRT Quality of Life Tax Increment, the Lodging Tax District, various state agencies, and other sources (Funding, page 34). As with all preliminary budgets, these projections are estimates, based on existing information and circumstances. Figures may grow or change, for example, with the addition of a resource development department and other functions, should the Creative District decide to become a separate, spin-off nonprofit organization. Also, many of the needed resources may already be included into the County's existing budget and plan, since this Creative District plan has sought to build on existing programs and activities.

Preliminary Operating Expense Projections (2011 – 2015)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 & beyond
Programming	\$35,000	\$150,000	\$305,000	\$405,000	\$380,000
Marketing/Branding	\$97,500	\$97,500	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Physical Development		\$95,000	\$95,000	\$45,000	\$45,000
Economic Development		\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Management	\$80,000	\$90,000	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$140,000
Other	\$75,000	\$75,000			
Total Expenses	\$287,500	\$537,500	\$580,000	\$630,000	\$605,000

Note: amounts are not indexed for inflation or cost of living.

Capital expenses are not included here, since they will require additional planning and development during implementation of this plan. However, several sources of potential capital revenues are identified in the Funding section (page 34).



MODEL PROJECT: SKATEBOARD DESIGN COMPETITION 01SJ (Zero One Festival, San Jose) (Strategy 1.1)

The biennial 01SJ Festival is a multi-disciplinary, multi-venue event of visual and performing arts, the moving image, public art, and interactive digital media. 01SJ is about how powerful ideas and innovative individuals from around the world can make a difference and come together to build a unique and distributed city-wide platform for creative solutions and public engagement.

01SJ includes a skateboard design competition open to the community, attracting many teens and 20-somethings. Riders participate in the community parade.

APPENDICES

DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION GRID

In addition to the Implementation Plan provided on page 42, a detailed implementation grid is attached in a separate, large format document. The detailed implementation grid includes a list of all goals and recommended strategies, and provides for each:

- The lead agency or agencies responsible for implementation.
- Timeline for beginning implementation, with the understanding that many strategies will last for more than one year.
- Preliminary operating cost estimates during the first five years, to the extent possible at this time, with notes where costs are to be determined at a future time.
- Capital costs are noted, where they will be incurred, while specific amounts are left to be determined.

ADDITIONAL STUDIES, PLANS AND REPORTS

The Los Alamos Creative District has benefited from several related plans, studies and reports, which have provided essential background information for development of this plan and are incorporated by reference as appendices.

An Inventory and Assessment of Los Alamos Arts and Cultural Assets, University of New Mexico Bureau of Business and Economic Research (2009)

Downtown Los Alamos Element of the Los Alamos County Comprehensive Plan (2009)

Los Alamos Creative District Application (to the New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Program; 2009)

New Mexico Arts and Cultural Districts Marketing Standards and Toolkit (2009)

Los Alamos County Economic Vitality Strategic Plan (2010)

Los Alamos Arts and Cultural District Resource Team Assessment Report (2010)

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These documents, and additional resources, are found in the online library of the Creative District's website: <http://lamainstreet.com/creative-district.htm>.