



2016
2020

AURORA'S CULTURAL PLAN



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AUROMA'S CULTURAL PLAN

2016-2020

Prepared by the Aurora Cultural Affairs Commission 2014-2015

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Thanks to all the citizens who participated in this process and to the members of the Cultural Affairs Commission for the extra time and effort they devoted to the project.

Alice Lee Main

Cultural Services Division Manager



December 2015

CULTURAL SERVICES DIVISION



- Aurora Fox Arts Center
303.739.1970
 - Aurora History Museum
303.739.6660
 - Bicentennial Art Center
303.344.1776
 - Show Wagon-Portable Stage 303.739.6520
 - Summer Concerts in the Parks 303.739.6520
 - Art in Public Places Program
303.739.6747
 - Aurora Dance Arts classes
303.326.8308
 - Fine Arts classes
303.344.1776
 - Fine and Performing Arts Outreach 303.739.6520
 - Historic Preservation/
Historic Sites
303.739.6661
 - History Education Programs
303.739.6663
 - Music classes
303.344.1776
 - Theatre classes
303.739.6520
 - Pottery classes
303.344.1776
- auroragov.org/arts

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AURORA'S CULTURAL PLAN 2016-2020



INTRODUCTION

This plan was prepared by the City's Cultural Affairs Commission and Cultural Services Division staff over the past year and one half. The Cultural Affairs Commission started work on this plan in January 2014.

Since that time citizen surveys have been conducted online and in paper format. The surveys were analyzed, three community meetings were held, and information was obtained from various arts organizations in Aurora.

HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

The previous Community Arts Plan was approved by City Council in September 1993. A group of citizens spent two years with a professional consultant developing the twenty year Plan. It was common at that time for cities to develop long range plans. The 1993 Plan contained nine Goals that for the most part have all been achieved in some manner except for the one related to "Where the Arts Occur". The City does not have a centralized major arts facility where a number of arts and cultural activities can take place at the same time. Arts organizations still have difficulty finding a venue in Aurora that will accommodate their needs.

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AURORA'S COMMUNITY ARTS PLAN - SEPTEMBER 1993

The nine Goals in the September 1993 Plan cover a variety of the areas where a need existed.

One of the primary Goals was to create a citizens Arts Commission that would assure the City's commitment to the arts and create a City Cultural Arts Department.

- The Cultural Affairs Commission was created by City Council in 1994 to implement the Plan.
- The City also created the Cultural Services Division of the Library and Cultural Services Department in 2003 to provide a focus on the further development of the existing arts and cultural programs.

The number of arts programs has expanded as new arts organizations and artists have located in Aurora.

- This has allowed for collaboration and cooperation on programs that serve the citizens in the ever expanding City limits.
- Arts organizations are programming better to accommodate the citizens' needs as they respond to surveys and requests from the community.

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Another Goal that has been very successful was the adoption of an Art in Public Places Ordinance in 1993 and the creation of the City Council appointed citizens Art in Public Places Commission that implements the Ordinance.

- *Dawn Ring* in front of the Central Library was installed in 1982 before the Ordinance was approved. The art piece was selected by the Director of the Library and a few citizens.
- Since the installation of the first Public Art (under the 1993 Ordinance) in 1997 at the Saddle Rock Golf Course there are 240 plus pieces with a value of \$ 3 million in various parts of the City.
- The location of the City-owned Public Art is publicized in a *Collection Guide* and on Social Media sites.
- The *Art 2C on Havana* project is co-sponsored by the Havana Business Improvement District to place loaned art on the Havana St. corridor. It has been a great collaboration and an excellent way to promote art for all to enjoy in unique locations.

The main ways the City promotes the Arts and Cultural amenities available in Aurora are:

- The *Your Guide to Aurora's Cultural Events* published 5 times per year lists as many activities, programs, and events as possible. It is available in all City public facilities and on the City's Website.
- Many of the arts organizations share their information with each other and cross promote their events and programs.
- Social Media



Photo by Brian Molitoris



Photo by Brian Molitoris

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The Major Goal that has not been achieved is the development of a major centralized cultural arts facility capable of having several events occur simultaneously, and that has both indoor and outdoor areas for performing along with many appropriate classroom spaces for all the art forms. This Goal appears in the Plan in several categories.

- There was a six year professional study that lead to a Bond issue for a small arts facility that failed in 2002.
- The Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Business for the Arts Committee has gathered information periodically over the last 10 years from various organizations to assess their needs for such a venue so that it can be updated when needed.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goal was to prepare a five year Cultural Plan that would identify what the arts need now in Aurora and how they can grow and develop to become an even greater asset to the Aurora community. Hundreds of cities and counties across the country have prepared cultural plans as they have acknowledged how the arts help preserve a community's past, forge its present identity, enrich its quality of life, and enhance its economic vitality. The future of the arts and culture in a community is too important to leave to chance and planning is essential.

In recent years due to the fast changing technology and demographics, many cities are now doing three to five year plans instead of the long range plans.

After sifting through all the data, the key issues were identified. The Cultural Affairs Commission and staff drafted Goals to respond to these issues. Objectives, or the general ways to achieve the Goals, were drafted. For each Objective the Commission determined Action Steps, Resources, and Potential Implementers. Then a Timeline was established.



Aurora

Wants To Hear From You!

The Aurora Cultural Services Division is developing a new Cultural Plan.

Please give us your opinions regarding the future of the Arts and Cultural Programs in Aurora.

You can access the survey online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/KCKHPP5>

Or fill out this paper copy.



City of Aurora, Cultural Services Division

Cultural Affairs Commission – 2014 Survey

On behalf of the City of Aurora, the Cultural Affairs Commission would like your opinions regarding Arts and Cultural Programs. Even if you don't consider yourself a user of these programs, we want to hear your thoughts to help us improve and shape programs to best serve the community.

1. Which of the following activities have you attended or participated in once or more within the last 6 months?

Check all that apply.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Music concerts | <input type="radio"/> Live Theatre performances |
| <input type="radio"/> Fine Art exhibits | <input type="radio"/> Museums/Zoos, etc. |
| <input type="radio"/> Dance performances | <input type="radio"/> Photography exhibits |
| <input type="radio"/> Fairs/Festivals/Parades | <input type="radio"/> Art classes |
| <input type="radio"/> Perform music/sing | <input type="radio"/> Display/Photography/Video |
| <input type="radio"/> Paint/sculpt/pottery, etc. | <input type="radio"/> Perform Dance |
| <input type="radio"/> Write stories/poetry, etc. | <input type="radio"/> Other, specify |

2. Check which, if any, of the following factors keep you from attending or participating in more cultural activities in Aurora.

Check all that apply.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> High cost | <input type="radio"/> Distance |
| <input type="radio"/> Location | <input type="radio"/> Lack of adequate parking |
| <input type="radio"/> Lack of transportation | <input type="radio"/> Poor facilities |
| <input type="radio"/> Quality programs | <input type="radio"/> Inconvenient scheduling |
| <input type="radio"/> Insufficient information/advertising | |
| <input type="radio"/> Other, specify | |

3. What Cultural Events do you generally attend?

A. Inside Aurora

B. Outside of Aurora

4. What sources do you use regularly to find out about Cultural Events and other activities?

Check all that apply.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> City of Aurora Recreation Guide | <input type="radio"/> City of Aurora website |
| <input type="radio"/> City of Aurora newsletter | <input type="radio"/> City of Aurora email list |
| <input type="radio"/> Aurora Fox Arts Center Website/posters/flyers | |
| <input type="radio"/> Aurora History Museum Website/posters/flyers | |
| <input type="radio"/> Aurora Sentinel | <input type="radio"/> Denver Post |
| <input type="radio"/> Social Media | <input type="radio"/> Word of mouth |

Radio Station _____

Television Station _____

Other, specify _____

5. What websites do you use regularly to find out about Cultural Events and other activities?

6. The City of Aurora does not have a multi-purpose facility where residents can gather for indoor concerts, large fundraising and community events, arts and cultural programs, or mid-size conferences. How important do you think it is for Aurora to have a multi-purpose facility for these activities?

Check one box.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Very important | <input type="radio"/> Important |
| <input type="radio"/> Somewhat important | <input type="radio"/> Not important |

7. How important is it to Aurora's economy, image, and quality of life to have such a multi-purpose facility?

Check one box.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Very important | <input type="radio"/> Important |
| <input type="radio"/> Somewhat important | <input type="radio"/> Not important |

8. Would it be better for the City of Aurora to put resources into developing:

Check one box.

- | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> One major cultural complex |
| <input type="radio"/> Several smaller cultural facilities throughout the City |

9. If the City was to develop a new facility/facilities for the cultural arts, which general location/locations would best serve the public?

Rate your choices 1, 2, 3 with 1 as your first choice

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

10. Have you heard of the Aurora Fox Arts Center?

Yes No

If Yes, how many plays have you attended in the Aurora Fox Arts Center in the last 12 months?

11. If you have not attended a play in the Aurora Fox Arts Center in the last 12 months, why?

Check all that apply.

- High cost
- Location
- Lack of transportation
- Not interested in the programs
- Not aware of the plays offered
- Other, comments
- Distance
- Lack of adequate parking
- Don't like the Facility

12. Have you heard of the Aurora History Museum?

Yes No

If Yes, how many times have you visited the Aurora History Museum in the last 12 months?

13. If you have not visited the Aurora History Museum in the last 12 months, why?

Check all that apply.

- Location
- Lack of transportation
- Exhibit selection
- Not aware of exhibits offered
- Other, comments
- Distance
- Lack of adequate parking
- Don't like the facility
- Not interested

14. The Aurora History Museum administers the Historic Preservation Program for Aurora that includes 26 historic landmark sites and 2 Historic Districts. How many historic sites in Aurora have you visited in the last 12 months?

Check one box

- 0
- 1-3
- 4-6
- 7 or more

15. The City has approximately 240 permanent artworks in the public art collection and fine art exhibit galleries in some City buildings. Do you think that art in public places enhances the beauty and image of the community?

Yes No

16. Do you have a favorite public art piece in Aurora?

(use location or description if necessary)

17. Home Zip Code _____

18. Gender

Female Male

19. Age Range

- 16-18
- 19-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- Over 65

20. Education

- High School/GED
- Some College
- College/University Degree
- College/University Advanced Degree

21. Household Income

- \$ 25,000 or less
- \$ 25,001-\$ 45,000
- \$ 45,001-\$ 65,000
- \$ 65,001-\$ 85,000
- \$ 85,001 or more

The Cultural Affairs Commission thanks you for your participation that will guide the Commission in the development of Aurora's Arts and Cultural Programs/Events.

Please complete all parts of the survey by **Friday, March 28** in order to be included in the survey results.

Please return all responses by mail, email, FAX, or in person to:
City of Aurora, Cultural Services Division
14949 E. Alameda Parkway, 2nd floor Aurora, CO 80012
By email: amain@auroragov.org • FAX: 303-739-6586

To receive information about Aurora's Arts and Cultural Programs and the Cultural Plan provide contact information.

Name _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

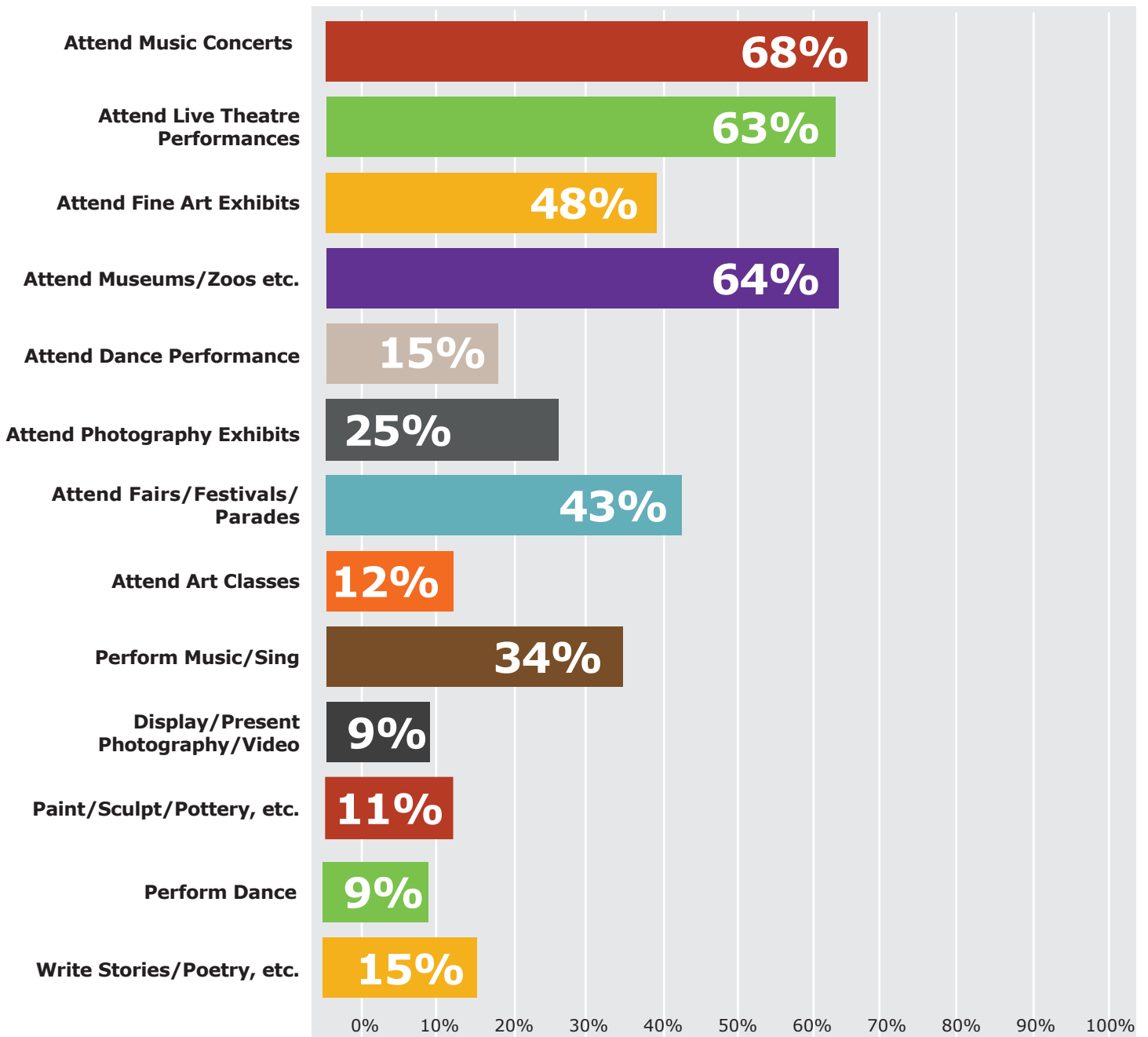


SOME SURVEY RESULTS

Q1

Which of the following activities have you attended or participated in once or more within the last six months?

Answered: 182 Skipped: 21

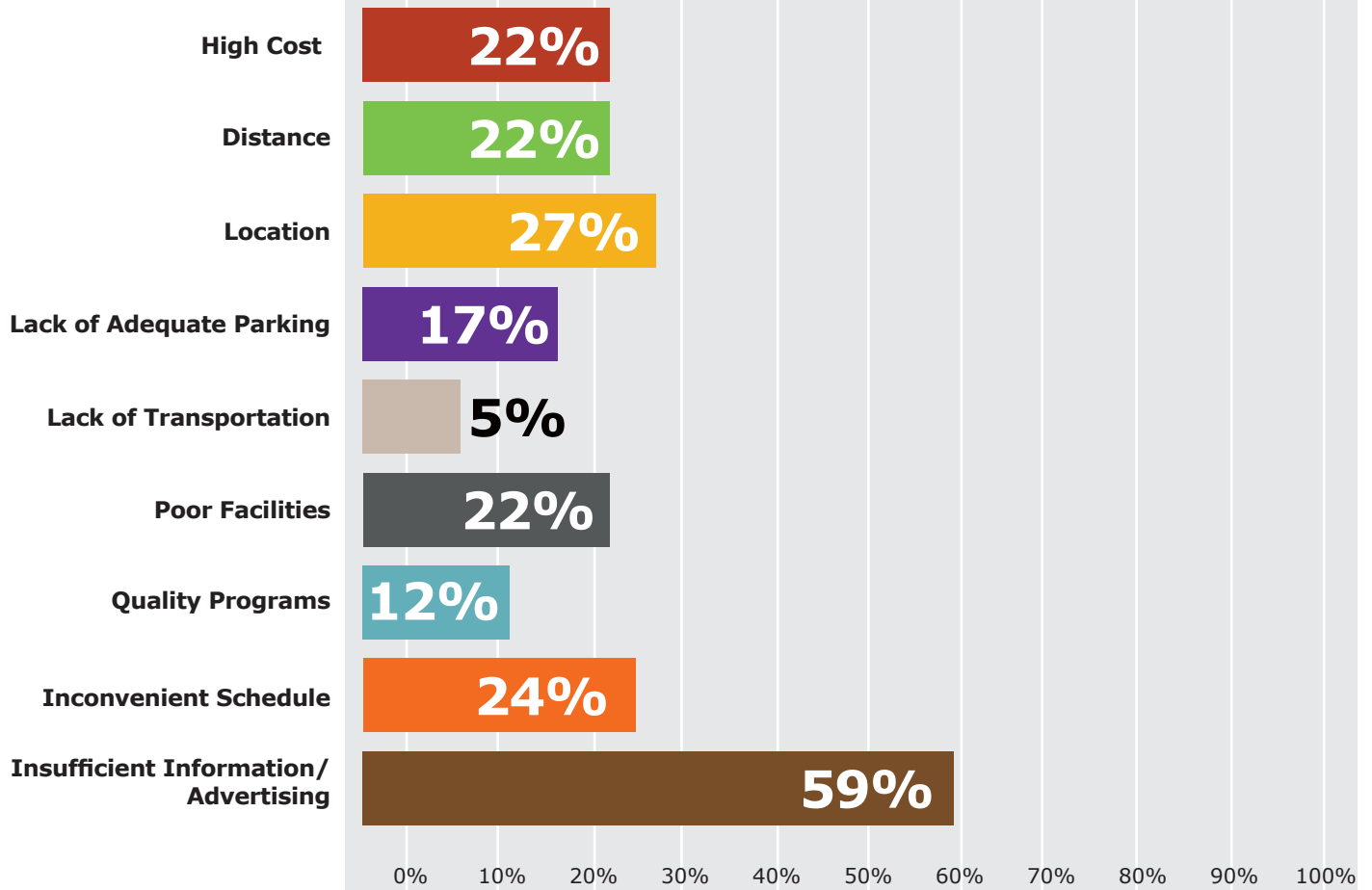


SOME SURVEY RESULTS

Q2

Check which, if any, of the following factors keep you from attending or participating in more cultural activities in Aurora.

Answered: 162 Skipped: 41

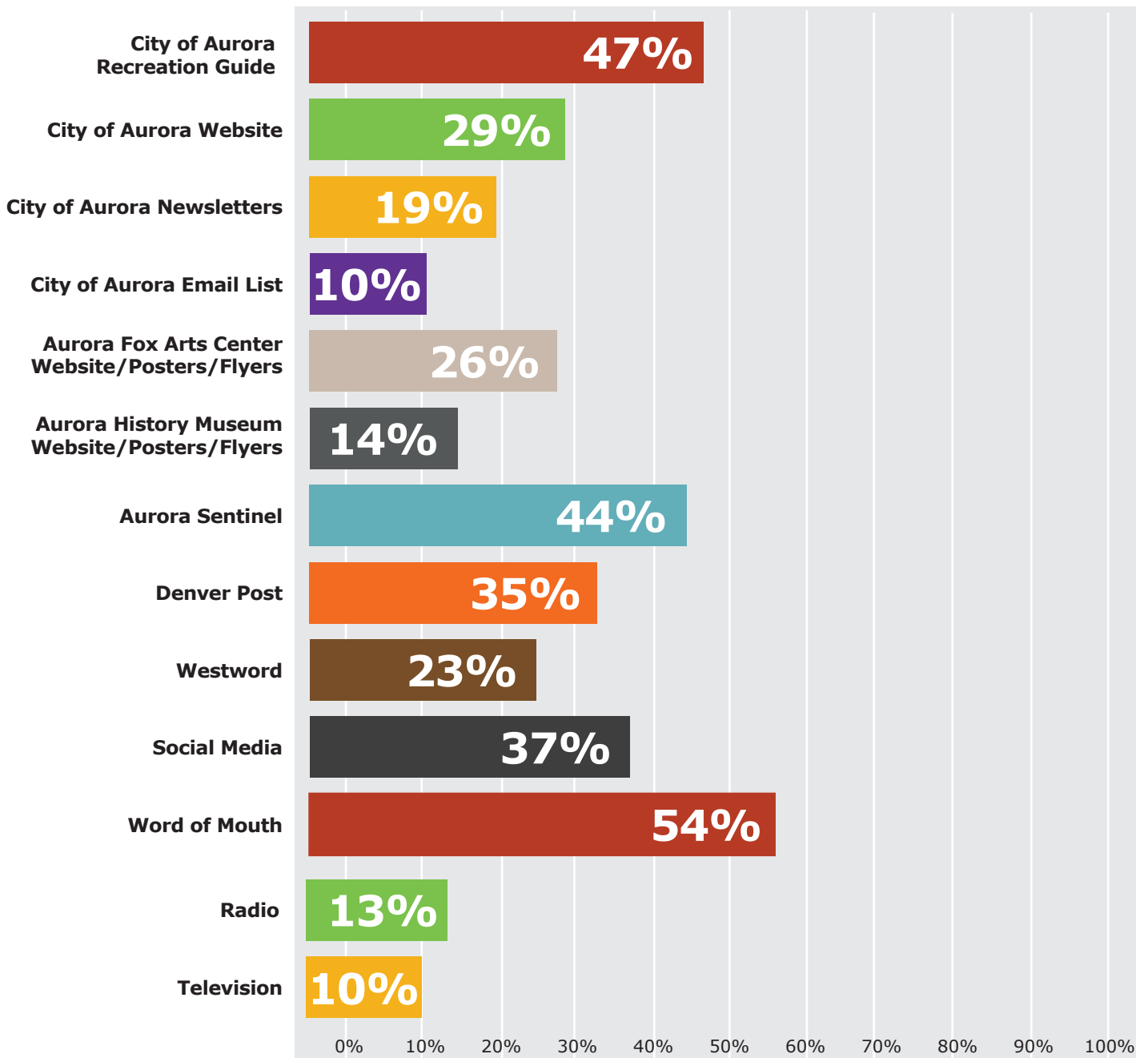


SOME SURVEY RESULTS

Q4

What sources do you use regularly to find out about Cultural Events and other activities?

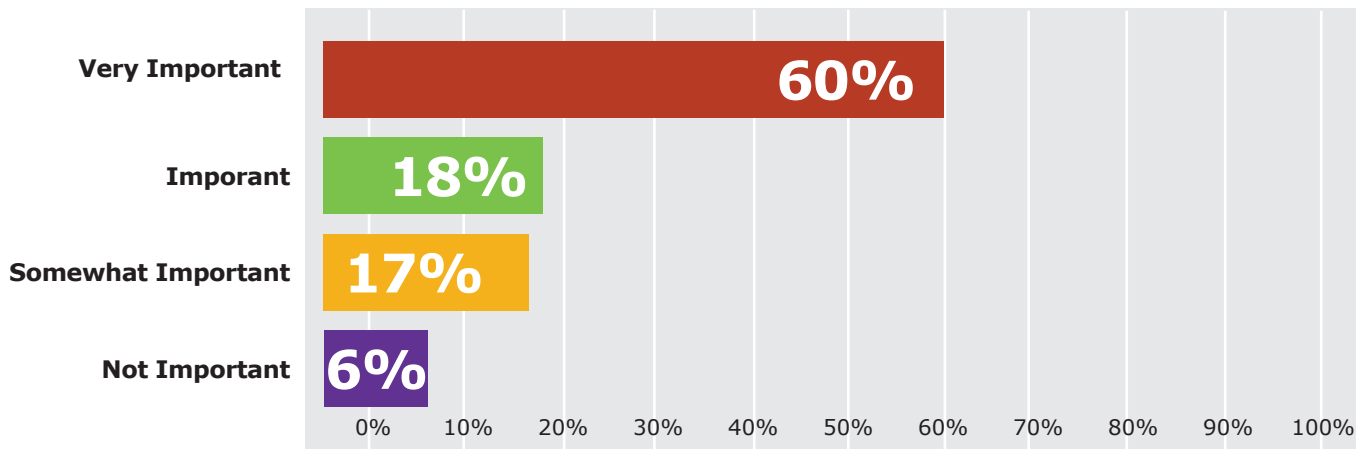
Answered: 188 Skipped: 15



SOME SURVEY RESULTS

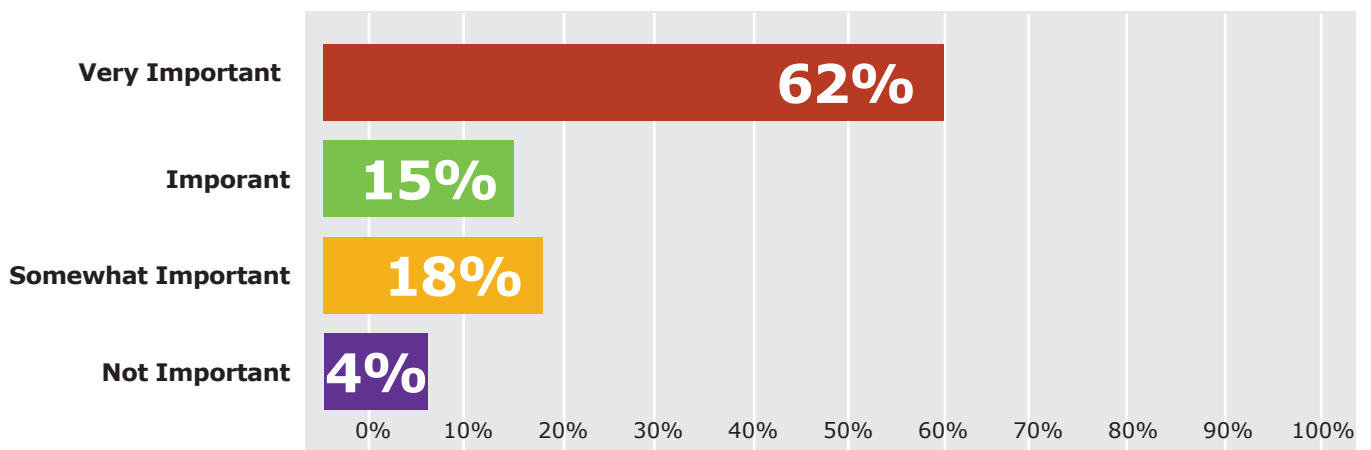
Q6

The City of Aurora does not have a multi-purpose facility where residents can gather for indoor concerts, large fundraising and community events, arts and cultural programs or mid-size conferences. How important do you think it is for Aurora to have a multi-purpose facility for these activities? Answered: 196 Skipped: 7



Q7

How important is it to Aurora's economy, image and quality of life to have such a multi-purpose facility? Answered: 196 Skipped: 7



SOME SURVEY RESULTS

Q8

Would it be better for the City of Aurora to put resources into developing.

Answered: 192 Skipped: 11

One Major Cultural Complex

76%

Several Smaller Cultural Facilities Throughout The City

24%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%



AURORA'S CULTURAL PLAN 2016-2020

We need to include the community's ideas for Aurora's Cultural Plan. Citizens have an opportunity to learn about the proposed Five-Year Plan and to provide additional suggestions on the Goals and Objectives.

Please join one of the Public Meetings and let your voice be heard. Light refreshments will be served.

Wed., Sept. 24, 2014 • 6 p.m.

Martin Luther King Jr. Library
9898 E. Colfax Ave.

Sat., Oct. 18, 2014 • 2 p.m.

Tallyn's Reach Library
23911 E. Arapahoe Road

Sun., Oct. 19, 2014 • 2 p.m.

Aurora Central Library
14949 E. Alameda Parkway

Information: 303-739-6670 and
amain@auroragov.org



**City of Aurora
Cultural Services Division
Cultural Affairs Commission**

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PUBLIC MEETING QUESTIONS

1

What is the best way to inform you of the arts and cultural activities in Aurora?

2

What types of arts and cultural classes, programs, and performances should the City's Cultural Services Division offer that are currently not offered?

3

Since facility space for arts and cultural classes, programs, and performances is scarce in Aurora should the City build a multi-purpose arts facility to accommodate the population growth? If yes, what are your creative ideas about how to fund it?

4

Only some schools in Aurora provide arts classes for all grade levels to encourage creative thinking and problem solving skills? Who should advocate for all schools to incorporate the arts into the curriculum?



PUBLIC MEETINGS

Wednesday,
September 24, 2014
Martin Luther King
Jr. Library Meeting
Room



PUBLIC INPUT - SYNOPSIS

It was suggested that there should be 7 points of contact to get the word out about Cultural Arts in Aurora.

Suggestions - banners, create a recognizable symbol to draw people to the event, speak with members of other committees to keep them informed, create some type of coupon that could be used to help introduce the public to different events such as combine dinner with a show, or give away 1 ticket with the purchase of 1, use print and social media. Do outreach to some of the churches, Homeowners' Associations, etc.

Most of these suggestions have been used in the past.

Determine the resources needed – staff time, funding, etc.

Set-up an Advisory Committee to evaluate the effectiveness of the Marketing and Public Relations methods.

An Arts and Cultural Facility has been an issue that needs to stay in the plan. Maybe one site could be converted into a Cultural Facility. It's important for a facility to be easy to find and have good parking. Several studies with private consultants have found that there is a need for people with money in Aurora as well as private/public collaborations to make this a possibility. Educate City Council on the Arts/Cultural programs to put together in one major venue. Set up sub-committees to refine the discussion.

Encourage businesses to sponsor and donate. Provide them with benefits for sponsorships.

There is a need to re-energize the Arts community.

A goal may be how to better engage City Council and community organizations to see enhancement in the Arts, the value of Arts venues, the opportunities the Arts brings to the communities.

An Arts/Cultural Website is needed for information about Arts and Cultural programs that would be a calendar listing of all these programs and events in Aurora (Denver and other cities have one). Each organization would be responsible for entering their information. But who will monitor the Website for updates?

A task force is needed to see which goals are possible and which ones should wait.

Alice Lee Main, Cultural Services Division Manager, gave the attendees her contact information if they have further input or ideas.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Saturday,
October 18, 2014
Tallyn's Reach
Library Meeting
Room



PUBLIC INPUT - SYNOPSIS

It was suggested that different methods of communication work for different audiences. Families get information at children-related activities. Empty nesters rely on community organizations such as churches. Twenty to thirty year olds rely heavily on social media. Most of these suggestions have been used in the past.

Send Aurora arts activities information to Colorado Public Radio and Colorado Matters that provide a weekly run down of upcoming events in the Metro area. The lack of entertainment reporters in the local media is an issue for all Metro arts and cultural organizations. Include a statement in the Objectives about continuing to send the *Aurora Recreation Guide* to every home in Aurora as it is a proven method of reaching potential audiences.

There were no ideas for any new classes, programs, etc. It was suggested to have the Poet Laureate provide programs in the schools.

Facility space is an ongoing struggle to meet the needs for appropriate adequate space for arts activities. Because there is no single large facility or group of smaller facilities devoted exclusively to arts classes, the Aurora Cultural Services Division relies heavily on recreation centers as venues for holding classes, programs, etc. The recreation centers are already bursting with their own activities and classes. The cost of arts classes is more due to the need to pay for the evening staff in the recreation centers when there are no other classes scheduled. The City has so many other needs for facilities such as indoor sports facilities that any arts facilities in the near future is very unlikely.

In order to provide programs to the schools it is necessary to rely on grants to fund these programs.

The City needs some fresh leadership at the top level of City Council and City Management to spearhead arts activities.

Alice Lee Main, Cultural Services Division Manager, gave the attendees her contact information if they have further input or ideas.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Sunday,
October 19, 2014
Aurora Central
Library Small
Community Room



PUBLIC INPUT - SYNOPSIS

It was suggested by the founder of a Charter School that flyers and the *Cultural Events Guide* should be printed in Spanish because there are so many Spanish speaking parents in Aurora. But it was also noted that there are hundreds of other languages spoken in Aurora and that only selecting one language could become a political issue. Word of mouth and Social Media were both suggested as a means to communicate arts activities to the public. The City Website should have a link where bi-lingual information can be found by citizens.

An Arts and Cultural Facility is an issue that needs to stay in the plan. But it was suggested that it include space for artists, engineers, and other creative groups to lease space and have the ability to collaborate and connect. It should have enough lease space to expand and become a place to foster creative industries. The facility and creative space should be in southeast Aurora near the Buckley and Alameda/Mississippi area.

Alice Lee Main, Cultural Services Division Manager, gave the attendees her contact information if they have further input or ideas.



GOALS

1

Sustain and maintain the existing communications already in place and improve communications to the public about the availability of Arts and Cultural activities in Aurora.

Objectives

- A. Use appropriate social media to advertise arts and cultural programs, activities, and events.
- B. Provide information about the arts and cultural programs, activities, and events at the Aurora FasTracks (Light Rail) stations in Aurora and in the FasTracks Light Rail cars.
- C. Dedicate, create, and maintain a Website to provide information about all the arts and cultural programs, activities, and events in Aurora.
- D. Encourage cross promotion among the arts and cultural organizations in Aurora.

Action steps

1. The Cultural Affairs Commissioners should attend Neighborhood Association meetings, Ward meetings, etc.
2. Establish an Arts and Cultural Marketing Advisory Task Force of Aurora's Arts and Cultural organizations to discuss current marketing efforts and share techniques. Evaluate the results.

Resources

Volunteer Task Force Coordinator needed
Website leadership needed from Visit Aurora or the Aurora Chamber of Commerce
Liaison with the Regional Transportation District (RTD) as policies are developed
City Cultural Services Division staff
City Communications Department staff
Aurora Cultural Arts District

Potential Implementers

Aurora Chamber of Commerce
Visit Aurora

Suggested Timeline

Begin in 2016 and ongoing



GOALS

2

Encourage and enhance the development of Arts and Cultural businesses and organizations in current and future commercial developments.

Objectives

- A. Collect information from various sources to determine current available and possible future locations.
- B. Identify current arts and cultural businesses and organizations in need of a business location.

Action steps

1. Develop a marketing brochure about the benefits of arts and cultural businesses in commercial developments.
2. Share the marketing brochure with the appropriate agencies.

Resources

City Planning Department
City Urban Renewal Division
Aurora Chamber of Commerce
Visit Aurora
Aurora Cultural Arts District
National Endowment for the Arts research
Americans for the Arts research

Potential Implementers

Aurora Chamber of Commerce
Visit Aurora
Aurora Economic Development Council, Inc.

Suggested Timeline

Begin in 2016 and ongoing



Photo by Brian Molitoris

GOALS

3

Continue to develop a comprehensive plan for a major, multi-purpose, centralized Arts and Cultural facility capable of having several events occur simultaneously.

Objectives

- A. The facility should include both indoor and outdoor areas for performing arts and cultural programs, activities, and events.
- B. The facility should include appropriate classroom space for all arts and cultural classes, workshops, etc. and have gallery space.

Action steps

1. Research other like facilities in cities with similar demographics.
2. Research the process used in other cities to fund facilities.
3. Develop and secure private and public funding.
4. Acquire land and start the design.

Resources

Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Business for the Arts Committee
Citizens Cultural Complex Committee research from 1996 – 2002
Research and determine the private and public funding methods.

Potential Implementers

Aurora Chamber of Commerce
City of Aurora, Cultural Services Division
Aurora Economic Development Council, Inc.
Visit Aurora

Suggested Timeline

- No. 1 and 2 - one year from start time
- No. 3 - 2 years from start time
- No. 4 - 2 years from start time



GOALS

4

Establish an Aurora's Cultural Plan Implementation Task Force.

Objectives

- A. Include interested citizens and representatives of local arts and cultural organizations with at least one Cultural Affairs Commissioner on the Task Force.
- B. Establish the process and criteria for measuring the implementation progress with the approval of the Cultural Affairs Commission.
- C. Report the progress to the Cultural Affairs Commission.

Action steps

1. Establish Task Force Structure and Policies and Procedures.
2. Solicit applications from interested citizens.
3. The Cultural Affairs Commission selects the Task Force members and schedules the initial meeting.

Resources

Promote in all media.
Determine the meeting location.
Cultural Affairs Commissioners select the Task Force representatives.

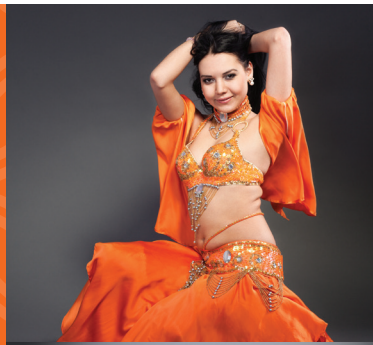
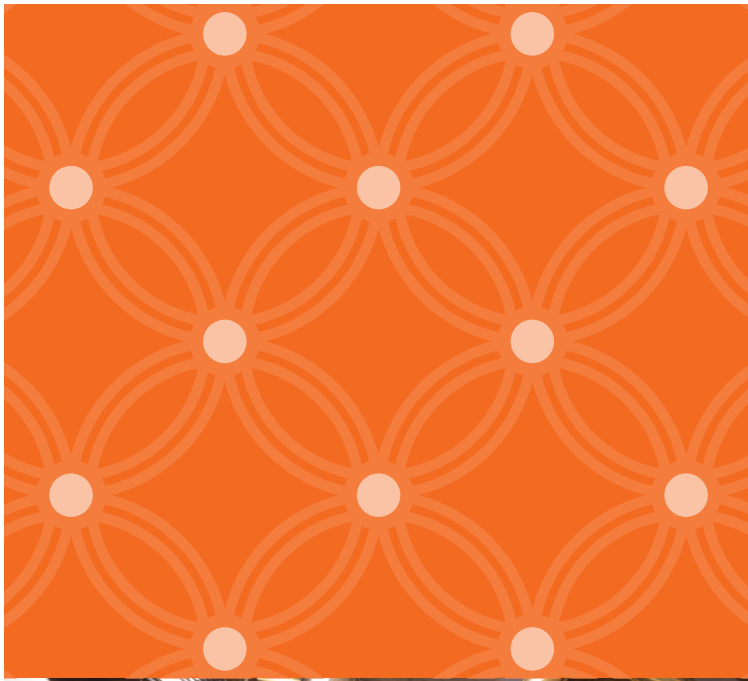
Potential Implementers

Cultural Affairs Commission members

Suggested Timeline

Start in 2016 and continue through the duration of this Plan in 2020.





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