A CULTURAL PARADISE:
CELEBRATING CREATIVITY IN COLLIER COUNTY
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Community Vision: Creativity, Connection, Celebration, Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Why This Plan, Why Now?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>COLLIER'S CULTURAL LIFE: RESEARCH FINDINGS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>IMPLEMENTATION OF SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>THE PLAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>PLANNING TEAM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

Comprised of vibrant, diverse communities, Collier County is rooted in history, agriculture, arts, nature, preservation, culinary experiences, beaches, and more. The unique character of its places, people, and stories is essential to elevating the county as an arts and cultural destination for both visitors and residents.

Collier’s community of creative businesses, nonprofit organizations, artists, artisans, and creatives are the pulse of its creativity. The Collier County creative sector generates $681 million in economic activity, with the nonprofit arts community contributing at least $108 million. Supporting and nurturing the arts and creative sectors (for-profit and nonprofit) is critical to the overall cultural ecosystem and cultural tourism.

Collier is rich in world-class cultural opportunities, most of which are currently packaged and promoted for tourism centered around Naples. Collier, as a connected, collaborative community, holds something else valuable and compelling for visitors – authentic community and cultural experiences not available elsewhere. A vibrant scene of individual artists, studios and galleries, rich culinary experiences, budding arts districts, and local agriculture is ripe for development and elevation as a tourism draw. Genuine cultural events and places; soul-satisfying, homegrown culture; combining the familiar and unexpected; and creating opportunity for connection and cooperation between sectors is the future for tourism in the county.

These opportunities come with a set of challenges. A shortage of studio spaces, cultural spaces, and creative sector-specific policies is presenting challenges for arts organizations, artists and other creative workers. Less-than-affordable and accessible arts programming and events limit arts and cultural exposure for residents, and there is limited use of arts solutions for challenges such as the national issue of mental health. Another barrier to cultural participation is the lack of countywide transportation infrastructure for residents and visitors.

This plan is not the answer to these issues, although it can contribute to solutions for civic and social change. For example, exploring options for shared use spaces with arts businesses and other businesses in Collier is a creative solution for addressing space issues. Embracing and integrating artists, creatives, and the community as potential problem-solvers while creating vibrant arts and culture experiences for residents and visitors is a productive step.

This plan embodies two specific commitments. The first is a commitment to building the foundation for Collier to become an arts and cultural destination, telling the story of the genuine culture of Collier as an integral part of the visitor experience. Secondly, it is a commitment to celebrate, support, and build local arts, creativity, and culture to enrich the quality of life for all residents of all ages and backgrounds.

1 2018 Creative Vitality Index
COMMUNITY VISION: CREATIVITY, CONNECTION, CELEBRATION, COORDINATION

**CREATIVITY**
Collier communities are vibrant hubs for local culture, arts, heritage, and creativity - each providing unique and varied experiences for residents and visitors.

**CONNECTION**
Collier communities are connected and work together to promote their unique cultures to residents and visitors, building economic vitality for all.

**CELEBRATION**
Collier communities collectively celebrate their cultures, places, arts, and creativity as a hallmark of quality of life.

**COORDINATION**
Collier creative businesses, organizations, artists, and industries thrive through coordination with one other and partnerships with other economic sectors.
WHY THIS PLAN, WHY NOW?

THE ORIGINS

In 2016, the United Arts Council of Collier County announced the results of the Arts & Economic Impact 5 Study sponsored by Americans for the Arts, representing Collier County’s inaugural participation in the study. The study benchmarks the economic impact of nonprofit arts and cultural organizations and audiences. While the results were considered underreported, they illustrated to the Collier County Commission the economic value of arts and culture to the county and its communities – currently 3,000 full-time jobs and generating over $10.75 million in state and local government revenue.

The Commission decided it was time to expand and diversify tourism, with a long-term goal of making the county an arts and cultural destination for visitors and residents. This plan is a long-term collaborative effort of Collier County government, the United Arts Council, and the community. It establishes policies and strategies creating the foundation for enhancing cultural tourism and arts and cultural development of the community. The planning process, in itself, built significant community support, and a continued partnership-focused effort with the creative community, tourism industries, county and community leadership, and residents is vital for the plan’s success.

BUILDING THE CREATIVE ECONOMY AND CULTURAL TOURISM

A robust creative economy leads to infinite success in other economic sectors. As part of the economy, industries include arts, culinary, craft, agriculture, advertising, design, entertainment, architecture, books, media, software, and more. All are a vital force in individual and community development. They empower people to take ownership of their own development and stimulate the innovation that drives inclusive sustainable growth. When well-supported, the creative economy is a source of structural economic transformation, socio-economic progress, and job creation and innovation.

Building and supporting Collier’s creative economy supports a vibrant community for residents and attracts diverse cultural tourists.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Collier County Arts and Culture Strategic Plan is the result of a long-term collaborative effort of Collier County Government, the Naples, Marco Island, Everglades Convention and Visitors Bureau, and The United Arts Council. Its mission is to evaluate, establish, and successfully promote Collier County as an arts and culture destination. We thank Collier County Government, the Community Foundation of Collier County, and Artis-Naples for funding the development of this plan.
COLLIER’S CULTURAL LIFE: RESEARCH FINDINGS

RESEARCH PROCESS

Over a span of six months, the planning team conducted a variety of community and stakeholder engagement activities, primary research, and secondary research. In addition to meetings with County Commissioners in each district and other related governmental leadership and staff, the team conducted individual interviews in person and by phone, held small group meetings, and facilitated community forums throughout the county between June and November 2019.

In summary, engagement and research included:

**ENGAGEMENT**
- Engagement Visits: 6
- Area Tours: 5
- Task Force Meetings: 4
- Individual Stakeholder Interviews: 35
- Community Forums: 6
- Topic Group Discussions: 8

**RESEARCH**
- Community Surveys: 777
- Organizational Surveys: 28

Additional research included: Creative economy analysis; Market demand analysis; Cultural asset inventory; Performing arts venue benchmarking study.
IMPLEMENTATION FOR SUCCESS

THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATIVE EXCELLENCE

Collier’s appeal as an arts and cultural destination to visitors and residents is founded on the excellent quality of its arts and cultural community. Offerings span the full range of artistic disciplines and types of experiences. Through the implementation of this plan, it is imperative standards of excellence are developed and observed for the strategies and actions. The terms quality and excellence hold different meanings in differing settings. What distinguishes a great opera performance may be different from excellence in a studio art class.

LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS

This plan is funded by Collier County, Artis Naples, and the Community Foundation of Collier County. Just as the development of the plan was partnership-funded, the implementation should follow suit. The plan will provide opportunities for public-private partnerships in the areas of funding and implementation, while also providing numerous opportunities for the County to lead in its cultural development over the next seven years. The plan identifies partnerships with Collier’s cities, the tourism industry, local businesses, nonprofit arts and cultural organizations, higher education institutions, and others. It is imperative the plan be supported by County leadership and the broader community.
CULTURAL TOURISM: METRICS AND DATA COLLECTION

The Naples, Marco Island, Everglades Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) currently conducts comprehensive research on visitors and measures the impact of tourism strategies. An expansion of the data to specifically track a cultural tourist based on the goals and strategies in this plan will help to fully understand the impact on cultural tourism and return on investment (ROI). Cultural tourists choose to visit Collier County primarily to attend particular arts and cultural events and organizations, or to visit the County specifically because it has arts and cultural opportunities as a supplement to other vacation amenities and experiences. Enhancing the current research will help specifically identify cultural tourism motivations and the financial impacts.

This data can be extracted from current tourist data collection conducted by the CVB – which is very cost effective – and/or be conducted as an independent research process. The data will provide essential information for decision-making by the Tourist Development Council (TDC), County leadership, and partner organizations to report arts and culture ROI and to inform marketing efforts specific to arts and culture. The data would report economic and fiscal impacts for the County and organizations, comparing results between resident audiences, cultural tourists, and other county visitors participating in the county’s cultural amenities.

Specific strategies and actions for measuring the success of cultural tourism development strategies and initiatives are addressed explicitly in Goal 1.5.

COMMUNITY ARTS AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: MEASURING SUCCESS

Communities across the nation increasingly recognize that creative and cultural sectors provide social and cultural benefits, improved quality of life for residents, and economic benefits. Local investments in arts and culture can address community social challenges, revitalize neighborhoods, attract workers, businesses and new residents, and create jobs.

To track and measure the success of community-focused strategies in Collier, enhancing the current data collection practices is essential. Indicators of success may include the number of creative sectors businesses and arts and culture sector organizations (demonstrating impact), cultural facilities, attendance at arts and cultural events, number of people employed by the industry, and economic indicators such as direct spending, indirect spending, grants, donations, community development measurements and more.

Specific strategies and actions for measuring the success of the community arts and cultural initiatives are addressed explicitly in Goal 1.5.

PLAN TIMEFRAME

The plan’s timeframe is 5-7 years. During the coming seven years, conditions will undoubtedly change. It is expected that as the economy shifts, and as new challenges and opportunities arise, the recommendations of this plan can and should be adjusted to best fulfill the community vision.

An annual review of the plan and its accomplishments is recommended.
THE PLAN

1

GOAL
Build the foundation for cultural tourism and cultural development.

STRATEGIES

1.1 Establish arts and culture representation on the Collier County Tourist Development Council.

1.2 Designate lead organizations in Collier County for arts and culture.

1.3 Update the Tourist Development Council (TDC) grant program guidelines to encourage more cultural programs designed to attract tourists and market cultural programs to visitors from out of the county.

1.4 Develop metrics and systems for tracking a baseline and trends regarding cultural tourists and their economic and fiscal impacts on the County.

1.5 Develop and maintain standards of artistic and creative excellence throughout implementation of this plan.

1.6 Remove barriers to inclusive cross-cultural, cross-geographic Collier County cultural experiences.
GOAL

Establish all of Collier County as a cultural destination.

STRATEGIES

2.1 Identify, develop, and promote unique and distinctive arts and cultural experiences throughout the county.

2.2 Enhance and expand the current development of cross-over experiences connecting arts experiences with other cultural and creative sectors.

2.3 Connect the unique cultures of Collier through community wide events.

2.4 Create and enhance vibrant arts and cultural hubs throughout the County.
GOAL

Broaden and diversify the visitor base through cultural tourism.

STRATEGIES

3.1 Market Collier County as a unique art and cultural destination to discrete target markets outside of the county within a three-hour drive.

3.2 Expand group business by connecting with national, regional, and state arts and cultural membership organizations that host conferences and network meetings.

3.3 Enhance current marketing principles to target and welcome diverse populations to visit Collier County.
4
GOAL
Enhance the cultural vitality of Collier County for residents and local businesses.

A Cultural Paradise: Celebrating Creativity in Collier

STRATEGIES

4.1 Augment current marketing to promote and market Collier County’s arts and cultural experiences to residents.

4.2 Expand the existing Collier Creative Forum led by the State Designated Local Arts Agency, the United Arts Council, to serve as a cross-sector forum of art, cultural and creative businesses, educational leaders, health and wellness leaders, residents, and other stakeholders.

4.3 Support the capacity building and cooperative development of local nonprofit arts and cultural organizations.

4.4 Support the development of cultural facilities that address identified community needs for performing, exhibition, rehearsal, and educational spaces.

4.5 Develop arts and cultural programs and activities reflecting the interests of all residents.

4.6 Develop and promote arts and health programming, including mental health, through partnerships connecting arts and cultural organizations and artists with health agencies and medical facilities.
## GOAL

Provide necessary public and private resources for arts and culture.

### STRATEGIES

5.1 Cultural Tourism Funding: Allocate TDC funds for the tourism-related strategies in this plan.

5.2 Public/Private Cultural Trust Fund for the Arts: Establish a fund to leverage both public and private dollars in meeting compelling community needs.

5.3 Contract for Services: Create a County contract for services with the State designated Local Arts Agency which is currently the United Arts Council.

5.4 Potential Partner Resources: Seek additional financial and in-kind resources from partners for specific strategies within the plan.
PLANNING TEAM

CULTURAL PARADISE TASKFORCE

• Penny Taylor
  Commission Liaison to the Task Force
• Laura Burns, Chair
  United Arts Council of Collier County
• Bryce Alexander
  The Naples Players
• Paul Arsenault
  Arsenault Gallery
• Paula Brody
  Naples Arts District
• Kristen Coury
  Gulfshore Playhouse
• Hyla Crane
  Marco Island Center for the Arts
• Michael Dalby
  Naples Area Chamber of Commerce
• Debrah Forester
  Bayshore Gateway Triangle and Immokalee CRAs
• Jennifer Fox
  Norris Community Center
• Muffy Clark Gill
  Muffy Clark Gill Gallery
• Patty Huff
  Everglades Society for Historic Preservation
• Marianne Kearns
  Pace Collier at Immokalee, Pace Center for Girls
• Vincent Keeyes
  NAACP Collier County
• Jennifer Leslie
  Collier County Business & Economic Development
• Chris Lombardo
  Woodward, Pires & Lombardo
• Donna McGinnis
  Naples Botanical Garden
• Jackie Obendorf
  Big Cypress Gallery
• Tina Osceola
  Seminole Tribe of Florida, Artist
• Maria Pizarro
  Collier County Community Relations
• Aimee Schlehr
  Naples Art Association
• Dana Souza
  City of Naples Community Services
• Amanda Townsend
  Collier County Museums
• Kathleen Van Bergen
  Artis-Naples
• Frank Verpoorten
  The Baker Museum
• Brian Zepeda
  Seminole Tribe of Florida

NAPLES, MARCO ISLAND, EVERGLADES CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

• Jack W. Wert
  Executive Director
• Maggie McCarty
  Film Commission Director

THE CULTURAL PLANNING GROUP

• Linda Flynn
  Partner
• David Plettner-Saunders
  Managing Partner
• Surale Phillips
  Decision Support Partners

WILSON CREATIVE GROUP

• Peggy Wilson
  President & CEO
• Jama Dock
  Public Relations Director

PARADISE ADVERTISING

• Barbara Karasek
  CEO & Co-Owner
• Amber de Lisser
  Account Director

Photos courtesy of United Arts Council and Naples, Marco Island and the Everglades CVB