YOUR CITY. YOUR VISION. YOUR PLAN!
Chicago SummerDance, photo by Patrick L. Pyszka.
As Mayor of the City of Chicago and Commissioner of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, it gives us great pleasure to present the Chicago Cultural Plan 2012.

Vision is defined as the act or power of anticipating that which will or may come to be. From Jean Baptiste Point du Sable’s small trading post at the mouth of the Chicago River to the monumental feat of reversing that same river’s flow; from the ashes of the Great Chicago Fire rose the birthplace of modern architecture; and from the imaginative business leaders that presented the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893 at the turn of the 20th century to a new generation of civic leaders that transformed a rail yard into Millennium Park at the start of the 21st century, Chicago is a city that has never lacked for visionary thinkers with big ideas.

This plan, too, was created by visionary thinkers - you, the citizens of Chicago. In February of 2012 we asked you to share with us your ideas for shaping a cultural vision for Chicago. Thousands participated in a series of community conversations and town hall meetings to share your thoughts, concerns and vision for the future of our city’s cultural life - a future where the arts are accessible to all, cultural activities are abundant in every neighborhood, and citizens and visitors alike can experience Chicago’s vibrant arts scene. The results: hundreds of recommendations identifying ways the arts can build community, stimulate economic development, create jobs, attract tourists, and foster innovation.

The Chicago Cultural Plan 2012 is filled with your recommendations on how we can continue to strengthen and expand Chicago’s cultural and creative capital. It’s bold, filled with actionable items that can be realized quickly and those that are aspirational and may take decades to complete. All are intended to support the breadth of arts and culture in Chicago from garage bands to symphonies; storefront theaters to mainstages; novelists to poetry slam performers; ballet to hip hop dance; world class museums to independent galleries; architecture to interior design; fashion to photography; culinary arts to sculpture; filmmaking to electronic media; neighborhood festivals to downtown spectacles; and the thousands of artists that make Chicago their home.

We encourage you to read the Plan, get inspired, and get involved. Your City. Your Vision. Your Plan.

Now let’s make it happen together.

Sincerely,

Rahm Emanuel  
Mayor  
City of Chicago

Michelle T. Boone  
Commissioner  
Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events
CULTURE IS...

Expression

Creativity

Community

Creativity & Expression

CULTURE IS THE SUM OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE

CULTURE IS THE NURTURE OF ONE'S SOCIETY, ECONOMY, POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

CULTURE IS THE FOUNDATION OF HUMAN SOCIETY

COLOR

Art + Food + History + Lived Experience
The vision comes from participation — Chicagoans participated by the thousands in town hall meetings, neighborhood cultural conversations, social media exchanges, arts sector workshops and priority-setting forums.

The journey undertaken to arrive at this vision has been a dynamic process of co-creation by a team of City staff and an advisory council, working with communities and cultural groups under the leadership of Michelle T. Boone, Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.

It was Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s inspiration to make a new Cultural Plan a key element in his transition plan.

It will chart a roadmap for Chicago’s cultural and economic growth and become the centerpiece for building Chicago’s reputation as a global destination for creativity, innovation and excellence in the arts.
Research conducted for the Plan demonstrates why Chicago’s cultural life is a cause for celebration: We have the third largest creative economy in the U.S., with 24,000 arts enterprises, including nearly 650 non-profit arts organizations, generating an economic impact of more than $2 billion a year and contributes to the employment of 150,000 people.

But the research also showed that we have challenges too: the arts are not present in all our schools; some of our local, talented artists and creative workers leave for other cities; all of our neighborhoods are not benefiting from the vibrancy and vitality that the arts can bring; and Chicago — despite our immense cultural riches — does not yet attract the magnitude of international tourists we seek and has room to grow its profile among the most celebrated and visited global cities.

The Cultural Plan gave Chicago the opportunity to use our collective imagination to construct a city based on arts and culture — a city that doesn’t
The Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events launched the Chicago Cultural Plan 2012 to identify opportunities for arts and cultural growth for the city. A comprehensive public engagement campaign with Chicagoans reaffirmed the role of culture in everyday life. The primary goal of the plan is to create a blueprint for Chicago to elevate its profile as a global capital for creativity, innovation and excellence in the arts.

The Chicago Cultural Plan 2012: fulfills initiatives identified in Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s Transition Plan; realizes the benefit of culture on broad civic goals like economic impact, quality of life, community development and cultural leadership; encourages cultural participation; and strengthens Chicago’s cultural sector. The citywide conversations resulted in over 200 proposed initiatives, ranging from solutions that can be achieved in the short-term all the way to the grand aspirations that our residents envision for Chicago’s cultural future. The plan outlines 10 priorities that will be addressed for the vision of culture in Chicago to be fully realized.

“ART-FACTS”

- Of the nation’s 116 million workers, 3.4 percent of all workers are creative, 3.5 percent of workers in Chicago are in the creative industry.
- 500+ Festivals
- 43+ Million Domestic & Overseas visitors in 2011
- Nearly 200 Galleries
- Over 200 community arts partners, museums and cultural institutions in Chicago provide arts programming to Chicago Public Schools
- $1 billion in spending by nonprofit arts and culture audiences in Chicago
- $1.2 billion in direct spending by nonprofit arts and culture organizations in Chicago
- TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT: $2.2 BILLION
- 60,000 JOBS
- Generates $1.3 billion in household income to local residents and $214 million in local and state government revenue annually
- 8 in 10 Chicago Public Schools have at least one partnership with a community arts organization

THE CITY IS LISTENING!

- 2011
- 2012
- OCT
- NOV
- DEC
- JAN
- FEB
- MAR
- APR
- MAY
- JUN
- JUL
- AUG
- SEP
- OCT

- REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
- RESEARCH & ANALYSIS
- PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
- VISIONING & SETTING DIRECTION
- A PLAN

- 8 TOWN HALLS
- 20 NEIGHBORHOOD CONVERSATIONS
- 50 ADDITIONAL CULTURAL CONVERSATIONS & MEETINGS

- 1,500 FOLLOWERS
- 4,700+ IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENTS
- 16,000+ DOWNLOADS OF DRAFT PLAN
- 35,000+ PEOPLE REACHED ONLINE
Over 1/3 of initiatives cost less than $50K

What’s the What?

- Change Business as Usual (18%)
- Indirect Resources (16%)
- Collaborations (16%)
- Communication (14%)
- Direct Funding (11%)
- Programs (10%)
- Incentives (9%)
- Data & Metrics (6%)

The Chicago Cultural Plan 2012 is a CALL TO ACTION. It’s about neighborhoods, creatives, jobs, access and much more. Let’s make it happen!

What’s the $?

- Over 1/3 of initiatives cost less than $50K (34%)
- $50K to $250K (28%)
- $251K to $1 Million (21%)
- $1 Million+ (17%)

What’s Next?

- Creative Industries
- DCASE Creative Industries Unit
- Creative Industry Districts
- Cermak Creative Industry District
- Arts Alive/4S
- Bronzeville
- Logan Square
- Motor Row
- Uptown
- Chicago Public Schools Arts Education Plan

Tourism
Cultural Tourism Strategy

10 Priorities

1. Foster arts education and lifelong learning
2. Attract/retain artists and creative professionals
3. Elevate and expand neighborhood cultural assets
4. Facilitate neighborhood cultural planning
5. Strengthen capacity of cultural sector
6. Optimize City policies and regulations
7. Promote the value and impact of culture
8. Strengthen Chicago as a global cultural destination
9. Foster cultural innovation
10. Integrate culture into daily life

Sources: Arts & Economic Prosperity IV: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Culture Organizations and Their Audiences in the City of Chicago, Americans for the Arts; Census Occupational Data, 2000 Census; Choose Chicago, City of Chicago, Ingenuity Incorporated; Lord Cultural Resources
The Cultural Plan gave Chicago the opportunity to use our collective IMAGINATION to construct a city based on arts and culture

just have a “cultural plan” sitting on a shelf but “plans culturally” so that arts and culture are incorporated into all city initiatives from education to transportation!

Chicago — this is OUR plan. People voted in town hall meetings and online to clearly say the top three priorities are:

- Foster arts education and lifelong learning.
- Attract and retain artists and creatives.
- Promote culture as a fundamental driver of prosperity.

Read on to find out how the Chicago Cultural Plan 2012 will create more jobs, attract new businesses and more tourists to Chicago and improve quality of life in our neighborhoods, our schools and on our streets.
Every Chicago resident is a stakeholder in making this Plan a reality. A diversity of resources is required to address the broad array of initiatives to fulfill the vision for culture in our city. This Cultural Plan focuses on people, places, policies, and planning culturally.

**People**

Chicago’s strongest cultural assets are its people. In our city, over 60,000 jobs are in creative industries — everyday citizen-artists offering innovative models of bold creative expression. 4.3% of businesses are arts-related, including architecture, advertising, broadcasting, culinary arts, design, digital media, fashion, film, journalism, music, performing arts, publishing, public relations, toys and games, video gaming, educators and students, arts administrators and advocates, audiences and patrons all contributing to the ecosystem of our thriving cultural community.

As a city, we will address the needs of all citizens by fostering arts education and creating new opportunities for lifelong learning. Focusing on Chicago Public Schools, this priority addresses mechanisms for lifelong cultural learning and system-wide curriculum mandates.

By attracting and retaining artists and creative professionals, we can invest in the vitality of Chicago’s culture, while maximizing opportunities for artists and creative professionals in Chicago. The focus is on job creation, attracting businesses to the city, and leveraging the creative assets within people. We can help by addressing the pressing needs of creatives, like for space and professional development.
Places

Chicago is a city of neighborhoods, each distinctive and beloved. The fabric of this city’s cultural heritage comprises community art centers and major cultural institutions, transit stations, parks and public spaces, street corners and squares, landmarks, and major gathering spaces. The recognition of, and enhancement to, arts and culture, and unique cultural heritage in neighborhoods results in stronger communities and local pride.

We will encourage cultural discovery and exchange in daily life by elevating and expanding neighborhood cultural assets. Through culture, this priority will celebrate Chicago through its diverse experiences and identities. By linking neighborhoods to each other and to downtown, through the arts, we will allow all of Chicago to experience the best of the city’s festivals and cultural offerings.

We will strengthen the role of residents in ongoing cultural planning by facilitating neighborhood planning of cultural activity and districts. Creating tools for effective neighborhood event and district planning; establishing criteria and new approaches to support existing cultural districts; and fostering the growth of new vibrant cultural districts are some examples of what can be accomplished.

Policies

Modern business models and sustainable practices are integral to cultural vitality. In our city, efficient permitting systems can make cultural initiatives more feasible. Therefore we will optimize City policies and regulation that impact the arts and creative industries. Our regulatory process should aid and inspire cultural vitality, innovation, and participation citywide. We will streamline City processes and engender “pro-culture” government agencies.

We will also strengthen capacity within the cultural sector. By focusing on appropriate funding strategies for the cultural sector, capacity building, and coordinating, we will align funding and support to the needs of the cultural sector.
Planning Culturally

Our city effectively communicates the impact of culture on Chicago’s vitality across civic goals by promoting culture’s value on Chicago’s economy and our quality of life. Economic development, public safety, public health, strong neighborhoods and communities, and early learning can all benefit from a strong cultural sector. Mapping culture’s reach demonstrates culture’s positive impact across Chicago. Proactive advocacy of Chicago’s cultural vitality helps promote Chicago to global corporations as a potential location for doing business and to people as a great place to live and visit.

Planning culturally helps to strengthen Chicago as a global cultural destination citywide. We can leverage the City’s cultural assets and identity as a way to further position and grow Chicago as a regional and international destination for tourists and business visitors, as well as artists, students, residents, investors and new businesses.

By fostering cultural innovation, we will leverage the power of culture to bring new ideas to all sectors of the City and into market-ready products and initiatives. This will propel the city into leadership in the development of new products and patents, technology applications, and create more sustainable businesses and operating models.

Finally, we will integrate culture into daily life — across public, nonprofit, and private sectors — across all that the City does and into the workplace of the private sector. That means an interdepartmental cultural resource liaison with the ability and knowledge to link initiatives and projects citywide with cultural tools, assets, resources, and providers.
CALL TO ACTION

THIS CULTURAL PLAN IS A CALL TO ACTION FOR ALL CHICAGOANS

CITY HALL AND BEYOND

For this vision to be realized, the Cultural Plan depends on a collective ownership of culture. Culture’s broad civic impact depends on the investment of resources from City Hall and well beyond. City departments and agencies, colleges and universities, schools, small businesses and major corporations, individual residents, as well as the entire cultural sector both non-profit and for profit have all been partners in creating a vision for this Plan and have expressed the desire to get started realizing the recommendations. You, the citizens of Chicago, are the source for the Plan’s inspiration and its implementation and, of course, for our city’s ongoing cultural vitality.

Chicagoans are proud of those initiatives already underway, ones that have recently emerged, like the Chicago Public Schools Arts Education Plan and those with strong roots in communities for years. This Cultural Plan is a call to action: for neighbors partnering with organizations to be their own cultural planners; for the use of existing resources to activate spaces citywide for culture; and for easier navigation through regulations and applications. Over one-third of the initiatives proposed in the Plan have an annual operating cost of less than $50,000, and many can be accomplished by simply changing the way we do things.

To make this plan reality, it will take Chicagoans working together to harness the power of community transforming our city into a Global leader of cultural innovation, economic development, and high quality of life.
A special thanks to The Chicago Community Trust who, in addition to providing generous financial support, also provided the Cultural Vitality Indicators and Community Profiles and Maps featured throughout the planning process at the Town Hall Meetings and Neighborhood Cultural Conversations. For more information, please go to www.culturalindicators.org.

*The inside front and back covers are a compilation of thousands of images of Chicagoans participating in the Cultural Plan.*
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