Boston Creates Cultural Plan DRAFT

Please remember this document is still a draft. The final plan will incorporate public feedback, include some new sections, share more details about implementation, and bring everything together into a designed piece reflective of our vision for arts and culture in Boston.

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Preface: Plan Purpose, Values, and Vision

Boston is a city that expresses its creativity in many different ways. It is full of individuals whose inventiveness fuels our still-growing innovation economy. Its creativity is also evident in the city’s multitude of vibrant arts and culture organizations and in the number of Boston residents who participate in creative activities, as well as in the work of the many writers, visual and performing artists, designers, and other artistic and creative professionals who call Boston home.

Mayor Martin J. Walsh campaigned as a strong supporter of Boston’s arts and culture sector, promising to undertake a cultural plan for the city. The 2013 mayoral campaign took place amid a groundswell of enthusiasm for arts and culture—and of demands that the City place these in the forefront of its plans for the future. While extolling the great richness and diversity of the city’s arts and culture scene, Bostonians asked for more support for the sector and more access to opportunities for all of Boston’s people and communities to participate in it. They also expressed a desire to weave arts and culture into the whole fabric of the city’s life.

Since taking office, Mayor Walsh has been working to ensure that arts, culture, and creativity thrive as never before in Boston. The Boston Creates cultural plan is the product of one of the most extensive and thorough community engagement processes ever undertaken in the United States as part of cultural planning. It aims to align ideas, people, and resources around a shared vision and a comprehensive set of goals, strategies, and tactics for putting arts, culture, and creativity at the very heart of the life of the city.

Creativity in the life of great cities

Creativity is commonly associated with the arts, as writers, performing and visual artists, and designers bring entirely new objects, effects, and ways of thinking and perceiving into existence. Boston Creates posits that creativity is not just the preserve of artists, scientists and technologists, entrepreneurs, and designers but is something that everyone possesses.

In a great city, nothing succeeds without creativity. Great cities are complex, dynamic systems with many moving, interlocking parts. They bring together many different kinds of people pursuing a wide variety of aims. This complexity, dynamism, and variety constantly generate new ideas and modes of living that are often in tension—and sometimes in conflict—with one another as well as with existing ways and traditions.

Enabling a great city to work for all of its people requires creativity. There are no off-the-shelf solutions for the kinds of challenges Boston faces as we try to use our tremendous, ongoing growth for the benefit of all Bostonians. We have to create new solutions.
Innovation and creativity are part of Boston’s DNA. Taking a historical view of innovation in Boston, we must go back before the creation of the Route 128 technology corridor in the post–World War II era, and before the rise of Boston’s great research universities beginning in the late 19th and early 20th centuries—to some of the most consequential civic innovations in American history. Before the Civil War, for example, Boston had already established the first public park in America, the first public school system, the first public secondary school, the first public school for African-Americans, and the nation’s first large, free, publicly supported municipal library—to name just a few of the city’s many historic, creative firsts.

All these civic and social innovations, which responded to the needs of the times with ambitious but practical solutions, required creativity. Today, Boston’s challenges have multiplied and have increased in complexity. It is all the more important that we are acting now to foster, channel, and sustain creativity in Boston in ways we have never done before.

**Fostering creativity through arts and culture**

It is for good reason that the idea of creativity is so closely associated with the arts and artists. Artists are people who, above all, see the world in unique ways. Working with materials that might be words, paint, stone or metal, musical instruments, their voices, or even their whole bodies, artists translate their unique perceptions into work that, if successful, is not quite like anything else that has ever before existed.

Although a work of art arises out of an individual’s unique perceptions and takes the form of a unique object or performance, it has the power to convey experience and meaning to many other individuals, each with their own unique experiences and perceptions. This tells us that artistic creation—even if it takes place in the solitude of the studio or the practice room—has both an individual and a social dimension.

Enlarging our perspective to encompass “arts and culture”—with “culture” here meaning the ways in which communities give creative expression to their shared traditions, beliefs, and ways of looking at the world—shows us other ways in which artistic creativity can help promote creativity in civic life. For the activities we describe as “arts and culture” also have a unique power, in a diverse city, to foster pride within individual communities, understanding and respect between different communities, and a collective vision of what people value and wish to bring about in their shared life in the city as a whole.

The ways in which arts and culture both draw out an individual creator’s ability to make something new and enlarge an audience’s capacity to see and understand themselves, other people, and the world in new ways suggest that, to foster creativity in the life of the city, perhaps the most effective path we can take is to foster arts and culture. This means not just supporting artists but also maximizing opportunities for all Bostonians to engage with the arts and related creative activity.
A cultural plan for Boston: Values and vision

The Boston Creates cultural plan presents a ten-year roadmap for the City, the city’s arts and culture sector, and all Bostonians who want a culturally vibrant Boston. Guided by a broad and deep community engagement process, the plan examines the fundamental issues of infrastructure, equity and inclusion, and leadership in, and for, arts and culture in Boston.

The core values of the planning process include: openness and transparency, inclusiveness, collaboration, and a steadfast commitment to learning from Bostonians themselves. We designed the Boston Creates community engagement process to enable Bostonians to articulate a common vision for arts and culture, and we intend this plan to give voice to their aspirations as well as to present ideas about how to realize them. Through Boston Creates, as a community, we envision:

• A Boston in which arts and culture are not just part of a storied past and an attractive feature of the present but are at the heart of the city’s contemporary identity—powerfully expressing who Bostonians have been, who they are today, and who they hope to be.

• A Boston that shows in the most concrete possible ways how it values artists: by enabling them to live in vibrant and sustaining communities, do and showcase their best and most innovative work, continue to grow and develop throughout their careers, and be supported by the City in all the ways they need to survive and flourish in Boston.

• A Boston that celebrates diversity in all forms, inspiring and empowering all Bostonians to discover their creative capacities and pathways and to express their individual and cultural identities. We also envision a city where all Bostonians—residents, workers, students, and visitors—participate and take pride in the vibrant cultural life to be found in every corner of the city: at museums, on street corners, at neighborhood festivals and community centers; in parks, theaters, galleries, and stores; at artist studios, clubs, and concert halls. Arts and culture will be woven into the very fabric of urban living in Boston.

Under the leadership of Mayor Walsh, we will work together across social, cultural, geographic, and sector boundaries to bring the power of creativity to bear on the city’s challenges, great and small, and invent the Boston we want to live in for years to come. We know we can do this because Boston educates, innovates, incubates, celebrates, collaborates, and participates—but most all of all, Boston Creates.
Introduction

Arts and culture in Boston: Strengths, challenges, opportunities

Boston is a city of innovation, diversity, and collaboration and a place where creativity has always thrived. This creativity has long been expressed in ideas, inventions, and artistic and cultural achievements, many celebrated in history books, travel guides, and museums, while others have been left out of popular narratives about the city.

Throughout the city’s history, Bostonians have also exhibited a certain utopian streak, a restless drive to make things better. Today, that drive is expressing itself in a clear desire to make Boston an even better city—to make arts and culture as much a part of Boston’s identity as our history and traditions; our world leadership in education, research, and innovation; and our rich tapestry of neighborhoods, communities, and cultures. We are starting from a position of strength, as Boston is already a city with tremendous assets. We know we face significant challenges. Yet we also know we have the creative potential—in our arts and culture sector, our public- and-private sector institutions, and every community and neighborhood in the city—to turn these challenges into opportunities and create, as the Mayor has called it, an “arts and culture renaissance” in Boston.

Boston’s particular strengths, challenges, and opportunities are evident from a look at three areas that are key to a thriving arts and culture sector: infrastructure, equity and inclusion, and leadership and resources:

- **Infrastructure.** Supporting the arts and culture sector and creative life requires infrastructure. Infrastructure in the arts includes work, performance, and exhibition space; educational institutions and programs; arts service organizations; artists’ housing; private and public arts funders; and government entities that can provide artist certification and funding for public art.

- **Equity and inclusion.** Arts and culture not only enrich our individual lives but have enormous potential to strengthen bonds of community across a city and foster civic creativity. This means that equity and inclusion in arts and culture—the equal valuing of all cultural traditions and expressions, and equal access for all to arts and culture activity—are not just a matter of justice. They are also a necessity for creating a thriving, healthy, and innovative city. An arts and culture sector without equity and inclusion reinforces divides built on entrenched racism and exclusion, preventing us from drawing upon the creativity of all Bostonians to create a better civic future.

- **Leadership.** Just as nothing succeeds in a great city without creativity, the arts cannot thrive in modern cities—Boston most definitely included—without leadership. This is particularly true, perhaps, when a city requires not just planning and a marshaling of people and resources but also a fundamental change in attitudes in and toward its arts
and culture sector. And because the flourishing of arts and culture in a city requires both public and private infrastructure and resources, leadership and resources in support of the arts must come from both the public and private sectors.

Some of the issues we face in these three areas are interrelated. Taken together, they suggest that the city’s greatest challenge and opportunity may lie in bringing about a culture shift (using the word “culture” here to mean something like “the way we think about and do things here”) that is already underway but needs to be articulated and deliberately pursued. We now examine each of these four areas—infrastructure, equity and inclusion, leadership and resources, and the need for a culture shift—to give us an overview of the state of arts and culture in Boston today.

**Infrastructure**

Boston has a remarkably vibrant and varied arts and culture sector that reaches deeply into individual lives, neighborhoods, and communities. It is home to more than 1,500 nonprofit arts and culture organizations, giving it one of the highest per capita concentrations of such groups among major American metropolitan areas. From renowned anchor institutions with many layers of programs and activities, to small organizations often serving specific neighborhoods and communities, these organizations play a central role in Boston’s creative life.

Boston is also a place where arts education thrives. Artists come to learn and train in the city’s prominent art schools. Our valuing of arts education as a fundamental component of public education is evident in both the Boston Arts Academy—a high school within the Boston Public Schools (BPS), cofounded by a consortium of art schools and colleges, that has received both national and international awards for excellence—and the BPS’s Arts Expansion, which has gained national recognition for its success in increasing quality arts education in schools across the district.

Despite such strengths, the Boston Creates community engagement process (described in detail on p. TK) found strong consensus around the view that Boston’s infrastructure for arts and culture seems deficient in key respects. Critical issues include:

- a need for new, affordable cultural spaces and facilities, and difficulties in meeting the costs of and maintaining existing spaces and facilities;
- an acute and increasing lack of affordable housing and work space for Boston artists;
- significant imbalances and gaps in funding for Boston arts and culture organizations.

These factors make themselves felt in very concrete ways. Although many artists come to Boston for education and training, and often get their professional start here, they lack many support structures and resources that are necessary for successful careers—and that exist in several peer cities. As a result, some artists leave Boston. Moreover, important organizations in Boston’s arts and culture sector face uncertainty as they strive to place themselves within a
rapidly changing real-estate landscape. Other organizations struggle to support critical ongoing maintenance needs for their cultural facilities.

One overarching weakness in the infrastructure of Boston’s arts and culture sector threatens the city’s ability to respond effectively to the needs of that sector. Artists, arts organization leaders, arts funders, and community leaders find the Boston landscape dotted with arts and culture silos isolating neighborhoods, artistic disciplines, and various key participants—including City departments and offices—from one another. This isolation obstructs the relationship between arts and culture and such allied sectors as design, tourism, and commercial arts. Too many of the people whose joint efforts could strengthen the infrastructure for arts and culture in Boston say that they have never been in a room together.

This kind of insularity has been pervasive in the Boston arts and culture world. There is now a tremendous opportunity to break down these silos and foster relationships between people and institutions that have never existed before.

**Equity and inclusion**

In Boston Creates’ community engagement process, Bostonians spoke loudly and clearly about a lack of both the equity and inclusiveness that a city with Boston’s diversity—and with all its arts and cultural assets—needs to have. While many Bostonians feel immense pride in, and connection to, their cultural heritage, they very often do not see their communities or artistic traditions represented or supported in the larger landscape. Particularly among the city’s communities of color, residents report difficulty in accessing Boston’s arts and culture riches. Youth, especially, are unsure at which institutions they are welcome, or in which creative settings (e.g., community centers, galleries, libraries) they are meant to be included. Many feel that certain cultural venues and events in the city are “not for them.”

The issue of equity and inclusion also arises when we consider the differences across neighborhoods in access to offerings such as arts and culture classes, events, and programs. Or the fact that the arts and culture organizations outside of downtown are likely to be small and underfunded. Boston residents need and want access to arts and culture opportunities close to home, but such opportunities, and the resources that make them possible, are unevenly distributed across the city.

Boston has the good fortune to have arts and culture institutions—some known around the country and the world—that bring students and visitors into the city. The Fenway/Kenmore neighborhood alone includes Huntington Avenue, Boston’s “Avenue of the Arts”—home to Symphony Hall, the Huntington Theatre, and the Museum of Fine Arts. Such assets do much to elevate Boston’s profile as an arts center.

Valuable as these prestigious institutions are, however, they do not begin to encompass the full spectrum of arts and culture in Boston. The city’s many neighborhoods—the vast majority, in fact—that lie beyond the well-known arts areas are home to artists and to arts and culture
organizations, programs, and events that most visitors to Boston (as well as many who live or work in the city) may know nothing about or never have thought about engaging with. This speaks to a failure on the part of the city as a whole to recognize and value all communities and cultural expressions equally.

The existence of inequity and exclusion, real and perceived, in Boston arts and culture is more than an injustice. It is also a tragedy in a city where all must feel welcome and empowered to develop and express their creative selves if we are to create the Boston we want to live in. At the same time, like the issue of silos in the city’s arts and culture infrastructure, it is a problem that we can solve: it presents us with an opportunity to unleash our creativity by unblocking and widening all the channels in which it can flow.

**Leadership and resources**

Strengthening Boston’s arts and culture infrastructure by addressing critical needs and forging interconnections, making this crucial sector of the city more equitable and inclusive—this requires leadership.

The Boston Creates planning process, which Mayor Walsh is leading, represents an important first step toward a much more active role for municipal government in fostering a thriving arts and culture sector than Boston has seen in decades. Many individuals in leadership positions in Boston’s arts and culture, philanthropic, and corporate sectors have helped lead this planning process, as have community members who have chaired Boston Creates’ seventeen community engagement teams representing every neighborhood in the city.

Leadership in the arts and culture sector also entails marshaling and contributing resources, yet in this area Boston has significant gaps.

Mayor Walsh has made great strides in using the limited tools at the City’s disposal to increase funding for arts and culture in Boston. The Mayor’s proposed FY17 budget for the Mayor’s Office of Arts and Culture is $2.3 million (which includes a $1 million contribution from a community benefits fund of the Boston Redevelopment Authority), representing a sevenfold increase over funding in the years that preceded the Walsh administration. Mayor Walsh has repeatedly expressed the desire to identify a dedicated revenue stream for the arts. However, within our current system the possibility of further increases is severely limited. The City faces increasing fiscal pressure from different sources, including statutorily limited revenue tools, rising fixed costs, underfunding of charter school reimbursement, decreasing local aid, and the growing need for a wide range of city services. It is in this context—with the City trying to rectify an inherited structural deficit while advocating for further investment from other public partners—that we affirm the need for greater investment in arts and culture.

Boston’s limited tools for increasing its own fiscal capacity have serious implications for the City’s contributions to arts and culture funding. Under Massachusetts law, municipalities cannot levy taxes without express state authority. What this means in practice is that Boston,
like other Massachusetts municipalities, relies heavily on a limited number of revenue sources—most notably, property taxes.

Boston currently depends on property taxes for 67 percent of its total revenue. This overreliance on a single source of revenue is compounded by two additional factors: Proposition 2 ½ and the tax-exempt status of most land within the city. Proposition 2 ½ is a Massachusetts statute that limits cities and towns to a 2.5 percent increase in levied property taxes each year. This means that Boston cannot raise its total levy limit above that amount without a citywide referendum. It becomes even more challenging to identify new sources of revenue when one considers that over 50 percent of land in Boston is exempt from property taxes—the great majority being land owned publicly or by religious, educational, or medical institutions.

One program that helps ameliorate Boston’s funding challenges is Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT), in place since 2012. Under PILOT, the City requests voluntary contributions from tax-exempt organizations with land holdings valued in excess of $15 million. While other American cities negotiate PILOT payments with hospitals and universities, Boston is unique in that its largest cultural organizations are also included. Throughout the Boston Creates community engagement process, we heard that the arts and culture sector believes the PILOT program should not include cultural institutions—the reason being that these institutions rely for funding on individual donors, and individual donors are reluctant to provide funding for PILOT payments.

In order to sustainably raise the funding necessary to accomplish the goals of Boston Creates, we will need to identify new sources of revenue and form strategic partnerships with our state and federal counterparts, as well as with local private, foundation, and corporate supporters. While the city’s arts and culture sector is notable for its committed individual donor base, the primary beneficiaries of this support tend to be large organizations. Compared with other cities, Boston has limited foundation, corporate, and municipal support for the arts, especially for small and mid-sized organizations and individual artists. In other cities, municipal and institutional funding sources level the playing field and bring critical dollars to those small and mid-sized organizations. Boston’s smaller organizations have sustained themselves through their fundraising efforts, yet they lack the stability and flexibility that institutional dollars can provide.

The City’s identification of a sustainable revenue stream for arts and culture must be strategic, and will take time. And the City will need help advocating for increased arts resources from a wide range of sources.

For some of the other tasks—set out in this cultural plan—that Boston must accomplish to strengthen its arts and culture sector, it is, and will be, indispensable to have leadership from the top. City government, with its legal authority and convening power, has a major role to play, as do Boston’s leading private institutions in the corporate, foundation, and educational sectors as well as in the arts and culture sector itself. At a moment of new leadership for the
City and for many of these private institutions—a “changing of the guard,” as it has been called—we have an opportunity, which we are now seizing, to set a new course and dedicate new efforts to making Boston a truly great city for arts, culture, and creativity.

Yet not all of the necessary leadership must, should, or even can come from the top or from citywide institutions. As the Boston Creates planning process has made clear, Boston has strong arts and culture leadership at the community and neighborhood levels. For much of what Boston needs to do to strengthen its arts and culture sector, the City and prominent citywide institutions can spark or catalyze change—but the leadership for it can and must come from the larger Boston community.

Need for a culture shift

When it comes to issues such as Boston’s arts and culture silos, the need for greater equity and inclusion, or the way Boston has traditionally funded organizations in this sector, many of our greatest challenges do not really arise from the external environment. Although such pressures as rapid development and economic factors are very real, some of the primary challenges facing the city’s arts and culture sector come from outmoded mindsets and ways of doing things. Today’s diverse and dynamic Boston demands new ways of seeing and acting that amount to a culture shift in how we approach the sector.

Take the issue of institutional infrastructure. In a city where the past is always visible and often palpable, the shadow cast by some of the larger, older, more prestigious arts and culture institutions can obscure the fact that arts and culture in Boston is more than just these major players—valuable as they are. As a result, arts and culture in Boston can seem to belong to a privileged few rather than to all Bostonians. It will take a shift of perspective for the city to begin valuing all of its arts and culture institutions equally.

Distinctions between formal art and informal art, fine art and folk art, sanctioned art and outsider art, also create and reinforce parallel divisions across lines of race, ethnicity, and geography in the city’s arts and culture sector. By viewing these divisions as hard and fast boundaries, we end up denying ourselves and one another what the great American writer Ralph Ellison called “one of the most precious of American freedoms, which is our freedom to broaden our personal culture by absorbing the cultures of others.”

Finally, Boston’s distinct culture of leadership, grounded in our history, keeps us from being as innovative as we could be—and need to be—in the arena of arts and culture. Newcomers to Boston have observed that our city—a world-class generator of path-breaking ideas, inventions, and enterprises—remains oddly hierarchical in where it looks for civic leadership. At the same time, until recently we have had no expectation that City government and our city’s major foundations and corporations will support arts and culture the way that Boston’s individual patrons have long supported them. This makes Boston unlike other American cities, where arts and culture benefit greatly from public- and private-sector support.
The good news is that culture—in the sense of attitudes and behavior—is something we can, as a city, change once we become aware of how it can limit us and our capacity for collective action. Boston Creates’ cultural plan will have notched its first important achievement if we can learn from this process of reflection on the present about how we can act more effectively, as a city, in the future.

**Why cultural planning—and why now?**

Throughout the 2013 mayoral campaign, the transition period, and his first months in office, Mayor Walsh heard repeatedly from Bostonians about the need to strengthen Boston’s already vibrant arts and culture sector, help it become more integrated into the lives of residents and visitors, and ensure that all Bostonians can fully experience and benefit from the city’s rich cultural offerings. Recommendations included increasing arts education in schools, improving access to the arts, and making Boston a more affordable place for artists to live and work.

To address these recommendations, Mayor Walsh has taken the initial strategic steps of creating a Cabinet level Chief of Arts and Culture for the first time in decades and launching the Boston Creates cultural planning process.

*Cultural planning* is an inclusive process for engaging city residents, visitors, and representatives of various sectors to help local government identify cultural needs, opportunities, and resources and think strategically about how these resources can help a community to achieve its civic goals. In recent years, major U.S. cities including Austin, Berkeley, Chicago, Denver, Houston, Minneapolis, San Antonio, San Jose, and Raleigh have all created cultural plans.

The Boston Creates planning process has two essential goals. The first is to expand and deepen the public conversation—already underway when the Mayor launched the planning process in April 2015—about arts and culture in Boston. The second is to create a long-term plan for addressing needs, identifying and taking advantage of opportunities, and deploying both existing and new resources to make Boston’s arts and culture sector stronger—by making it more diverse, accessible, and sustainable, among other means.

As the Boston Creates community engagement process has made clear, our arts and culture sector, for all of its current strengths and future potential, is now at a critical juncture. Bostonians themselves—inside and outside of the arts and culture sector—have told us that the time is right for envisioning and articulating the role arts and culture can and should play in Boston’s future, and beginning to bring this future about. The challenges and opportunities this sector faces also present themselves at a unique moment of new leadership in Boston—at City Hall, in the corporate and foundation sectors, and in the city’s arts and culture institutions.

Finally, we have carried out the Boston Creates planning process at a time when, through Imagine Boston 2030, the City is undertaking its first comprehensive planning process in fifty years. At this forward-looking moment, the Boston Creates cultural plan aims to provide a
detailed roadmap for how—with leadership and participation from institutions, groups, and individuals from across the city—we can begin acting now to create a brilliant future for arts and culture in Boston.

The Boston Creates process: Who we heard from and what they said

Community engagement

Boston Creates undertook an extensive community engagement process that opened with a Town Hall on June 2, 2015, and ended on October 15, 2015, with the close of a citywide online survey. The mixed-method research process included:

• 3 town hall meetings;
• 118 community conversations;
• 35 stakeholder focus groups and 50 one-on-one meetings;
• a creative engagement participation survey in 4 languages; and
• crowd-sourced mapping of cultural assets.

Efforts to ensure the widest possible range of responses included translating the survey materials into multiple languages and advertising opportunities for engagement in culturally specific news outlets. We designed the process to be accessible to a broad cross-section of residents and visitors, sector participants, and stakeholders, including:

• Boston residents and visitors – arts consumers and participants;
• Boston artists – creators, makers, performers;
• The nonprofit arts sector – producers, presenters, programmers, teachers;
• Supporters – donors, trustees, foundations, corporate givers;
• Emergent artists and consumers – Boston youth, young adults;
• Allied sectors – tourism, design, digital arts, architecture, higher education, health care, regional planning, etc.; and
• Catalysts – City government, public and private partners.

To identify stakeholders from whom to seek input, Boston Creates used a “Creative Capital” framework. Developed specifically for Boston and based on research attempting to measure the “cultural vitality of cities,” the Creative Capital framework posits that a culturally vibrant city requires:

1. Creatively engaged youth, families, individuals, and communities;
2. A strong pool of artists and creative entrepreneurs;
3. An active marketplace for arts, culture, and creativity;
4. Sustainable arts and cultural institutions and venues;
5. Supportive civic/municipal policies and goals; and
6. Active use of the arts and creative enterprises to animate and problem-solve in all aspects of public life.

Through its various outreach and engagement methods, Boston Creates involved more than 5,000 residents and visitors to Boston, gaining a broad and detailed perspective on the city’s arts and culture sector.

**Community Teams**

Volunteer-led community teams were at the heart of the community engagement process. Their charge was to connect neighborhoods and population groups to the process, lead community conversations, and encourage participation in Boston Creates. The intent was to gather ideas for the plan, empower neighborhood cultural leaders, and foster a sense of cohesion among local cultural organizations and artists. The team chairs are trusted leaders in their respective communities who helped elicit a broad range of voices from those communities. The City recruited additional team members through an open application process. A youth team, composed of volunteer high school students, led conversations with young residents in all the city’s neighborhoods.

The community teams reflected the city’s diversity in terms of culture, neighborhood, background, language, and age, and included the voices of youths as well as of many artists and creatives. The teams had high levels of participation and energy and a strong sense of camaraderie. Each team collected information from its community in slightly different ways and created its own unique story about its community’s experience with Boston’s arts and cultural life. Participants also built relationships, formed collaborations, and generated a shared awareness of the possibilities for cultural development that is reverberating throughout Boston.

**Department of Play**

The Department of Play (DoP)—a Boston-based collective that makes temporary play zones in public areas—assisted the community engagement process. The DoP aims to create moments of rupture from people’s everyday life through collective experiences in public spaces, where residents can pause, take a break, and reflect on their relationship with the city and with one another. We invited DoP to serve as a creative resource for the Boston Creates team and to engage a broader cross-section of the public.

Using the Boston Creates logo, DoP designed jumbo foam blocks that interlink to build structures. They used these blocks at public festivals and at several youth meetings, inviting people to build their visions for the future of Boston’s arts and culture. DoP also worked with the Mayor’s Office of New Urban Mechanics to add an “I imagine something here” tab and icon to the asset map on Boston Creates’ website. Using text and/or images, people could pin their ideas for art amenities to specific locations on the map. DoP contributed to the creative
engagement of Boston residents during the planning process and facilitated the work of the Boston Creates artist-ethnographers.

**Boston Creates Artist-Ethnographers**

To extend and enrich the community engagement process, Boston Creates employed three ethnographers: two artist-ethnographers, Heather Kapplow and Shaw Pong Liu, and a photographer-ethnographer, Leonardo March. Selected from a pool of thirty-two applicants, these Boston artists invited Bostonians to connect with one another—sometimes in surprising ways—and, through shared experiences with art, to reflect about their city and the future of arts and culture here.

Heather Kapplow, a self-trained conceptual artist, creates engagement experiences designed to elicit unexpected intimacies. “In addition to being an artist,” she writes, “I’ve been documenting public debate/discussion and art/performance, and/or facilitating it in various ways, for a living and as a volunteer for most of my adult life.” In her culminating project for Boston Creates, *Driving Culture*, Heather created what she describes as “a design for a city vehicle using the actual handwritten desires expressed by citizens of greater Boston at Boston Creates meetings” to enable Bostonians’ “exact words, and the nuances of people’s individual voices” to be heard.

Shaw Pong Liu, a classically trained violinist and composer, and a teaching artist, connects people of diverse ages, backgrounds, cultures, disciplines, and ideas through the transformative power of music, stories, and interactive art-making in what she calls “genre-defying performances.” For Boston Creates, she created *What Artists Knead*, a series of bread-making parties in five Boston neighborhoods, at which artists baked bread and discussed their ideas for Boston’s creative future. In a current project as one of three artists-in-residence for the City of Boston for 2106, Shaw Pong is exploring “how music can support healing and dialogue around challenging topics of gun violence, race, and law enforcement practices.”

Leonardo March, whose job was to document in photographs the listening phase of Boston Creates and make a photographic portrait of Boston’s creative life, became interested in the people behind the landscape he photographed, including what they do in their free time and how they invest their creative energy. He sees his work for Boston Creates as “expanding the image of the city in the minds of the people who live here, incorporating images of ethnic festivals, religious festivals, various entertaining events, and political protests.”

**Lessons from the community engagement process**

Throughout the community engagement process, a number of needs, concerns, and challenges around infrastructure, equity and inclusion, and/or leadership and resources rose to the top as priorities. Issues that arose most often—most, though not all, mentioned above—include:
1. **Silos in Arts and Culture**: Bostonians experience the city’s arts and culture sector as vibrant but also full of silos that isolate neighborhoods, artistic disciplines, and individuals and organizations both inside and outside the sector from one another. Boston residents, artists, and members of the nonprofit and for-profit arts and culture communities experience these silos and expressed a desire to break them down. Participants in the engagement process seek opportunities for increased partnership with City government, with other sectors, and within the arts and culture sector to work collaboratively on creative ways to address the needs of the sector.

2. **Barriers to Attendance and Engagement**: Barriers to attending cultural events are complex and differ according to neighborhood and income level. The obstacles cited most commonly by households with incomes under $25,000 included transportation challenges, lack of social support (e.g., no one to go with), and lack of time due to work obligations. Respondents living in households with incomes over $100,000 also identified work and family commitments as barriers to attendance at cultural events. Barriers to such personal creative engagement as drawing, sewing, or gardening are more generally shared, but still differ according to income level. The most prevalent barrier to participation in creative activities is work commitments, cited by 43 percent of all respondents, followed by affordability (i.e., couldn’t afford materials or instruction), cited by 28 percent of respondents overall but predominantly by those with household incomes under $25,000.

3. **Equity and Opportunity**: Participants in the engagement process seek equitable recognition and respect for diverse cultural heritages and artistic practices in Boston. They articulated a number of multifaceted issues related to equity within the arts and culture sector. These included: insufficient funding opportunities for small organizations and community-based activities; a desire for recognition of neighborhood cultural assets; a desire for greater exposure to artwork representative of diverse cultures; and a desire for all cultural expression to be weighted equally within Boston’s cultural landscape.

4. **Cultural Spaces and Facilities**: The engagement process revealed a deep and widespread need for affordable cultural spaces for people to gather, create, collaborate, and participate in the arts. Participants would like to see the use of more spaces for the arts beyond the downtown core, including libraries, the Boston Centers for Youth and Families, and public spaces. Within the nonprofit sector, access to facilities that are affordable and appropriate for performance and the visual arts disciplines emerged as a common theme, especially from small and mid-sized organizations. Large arts and culture organizations described challenges related to the cost of maintaining physical spaces and facilities. Performing arts organizations are experiencing a number of acute difficulties involving space.

5. **Youth Arts and Education**: Bostonians called for more comprehensive arts education programs and more equitable access to arts education and participation both in and out of school. They also expressed a desire to support the efforts of the Boston Public Schools to expand its arts education offerings. Boston youth and arts service providers voiced a need for more youth leadership opportunities across arts education programs and activities.
Boston youth seek opportunities to create and socialize around arts activities, and wish to enliven public spaces in creative and innovative ways.

6. **Access to Information**: Nearly every stakeholder group articulated the desire for a more robust and accessible information network, although for varying reasons. Boston residents and visitors described a need for better ways to learn about opportunities to participate in arts and culture offerings, while Boston artists and the nonprofit arts sector seek an effective platform for citywide and regional marketing to augment their individual and collective efforts. Boston’s emergent artists and individuals working with youth also stated the need for a one-stop source of information for youth-focused arts activities and opportunities.

7. **Systemic Dollars for Change**: Participants identified a need for greater investment in Boston’s arts and culture sector through increasing public funding and through spurring private, corporate, and foundation investment. They evinced a nearly unanimous hope that City government can serve as a catalyst for public and private resources in support of arts and culture. Moreover, participants across stakeholder groups widely recognized that systemic change will require a collective and concerted effort.
Plan Recommendations

The Boston Creates community engagement process revealed people’s concerns about, and aspirations for, the arts and culture sector in Boston, and produced a huge trove of artists’ and residents’ observations, insights, and ideas for strengthening the sector, making it more equitable and inclusive, and giving it a truly central role in the life of the city. After closing the process in October 2015, the City spent three months digesting this input and identifying and understanding the highest-priority issues and themes.

Once the City completed this work of analyzing and understanding the community’s input, working groups made up of members of the Boston Creates Steering Committee, Leadership Council, special affinity groups, and Greater Boston Arts Funders Group (see Appendix TK), along with staff members from the Mayor’s Office and the Mayor’s Office of Arts & Culture, met frequently in the early months of 2016 to create a draft framework for the cultural plan. They used the input from the community engagement process, new and existing research on arts and culture in Boston, and their own experiences with Boston’s arts and culture sector to make recommendations. These fall into three categories: goals, strategies, and tactics.

Definitions

Goals: What we need to do, in the broadest terms, to realize our vision for arts and culture in Boston over a 10-year timeframe.

Strategies: Proposed ways of meeting the plan’s goals, responding to the highest-priority needs identified in the Boston Creates community engagement process. (Note: strategies may change over the course of the plan’s implementation in response to changes in the environment.)

Tactics: Proposed programmatic interventions, advocacy, research, or other commitments to act to support the strategies, based on the current environment, existing partners, and our current knowledge of the sector.

City and community roles

The City launched Boston Creates in response to Bostonians’ clear desire for City government to step up and play a much more active role in supporting and promoting arts and culture than it has in the past—a role that the City is already embracing. But throughout the community engagement effort, while calling for City leadership, participants also acknowledged that, for the plan to succeed, the City could not go it alone – especially considering Boston’s unique public-funding constraints. In reviewing the tactics to support the goals and strategies in the cultural plan, the working groups came to realize that the City will play different roles in the
implementation of the various tactics, and that some work ought to sit outside the formal role of government, depending on the particular tasks involved:

• Some proposed tactics will be **City-owned**, with City government both leading and implementing the required actions.

• The implementation of other tactics will be **City-led**, with City government sharing ownership and implementation with partners in arts and culture and/or other sectors.

• Still other tactics will be implemented in a **City-catalyzed** process in which City government endorses ideas and convenes stakeholders, but for which it may be more appropriate for other partners to own and lead implementation because of their mission, strategic priorities, or current programing.

**Goals overview**

The following goals represent the five core areas of focus for Boston’s cultural plan. The numbering of the goals does not indicate order of priority. Taken together, these goals serve as an organizing set of actions that the City and its partners must undertake to achieve Bostonians’ vision.

1. Create fertile ground for a vibrant and sustainable arts and culture ecosystem.

2. Keep artists in Boston and attract new ones here, recognizing and supporting artists’ essential contribution to creating and maintaining a thriving, healthy, and innovative city.

3. Cultivate a city where all cultural traditions and expressions are respected, promoted, and equitably resourced, and where opportunities to engage with arts and culture are accessible to all.

4. Integrate arts and culture into all aspects of civic life, inspiring all Bostonians to value, engage in, and reap the benefits of creativity in their individual lives and in their communities.

5. Mobilize likely and unlikely partners, collaborating across institutions and sectors, to generate excitement about, and demand and resources for, Boston’s arts and culture sector.

**Boston Creates’ goals, strategies, and tactics**
GOAL 1: Create fertile ground for a vibrant and sustainable arts and culture ecosystem.

Creating “fertile ground” for arts and culture in Boston involves strengthening infrastructure such as facilities, organizations, programs, funding, etc., and the networks and relationships that make everything else in the arts and culture sector work. Although Goal 1 responds to, among other things, concerns expressed in the community engagement process about Boston’s small- and mid-sized organizations, this is not meant to diminish in any way the importance of the city’s larger arts and culture institutions. Our large organizations remain crucial to the ecosystem—they create thousands of jobs for artists, administrators, and countless other industry workers; drive arts-related philanthropy and tourism; and provide large-scale opportunities for participation in the arts. Strategies and tactics for implementing this goal respond to their needs as well.

Building networks and partnerships is another crucial component of creating fertile ground for Boston’s arts and culture ecosystem. Boston Creates itself is one of the most significant steps for the City in its vital role as a network builder for arts and culture.

- **Strategy 1.1:** Create partnerships to develop platforms, funding streams, and networks that encourage risk-taking and innovation across the arts and culture sector.
  - **Tactic 1.1.1:** Bring together members of the arts and culture community to catalyze discussion about risk-taking and innovation across Boston and provide guidance for the creation of a new grant program in support of innovation.
  - **Tactic 1.1.2:** Convene funding partners and advocate for a fund for innovation to support arts and culture organizations in the creation of new work.

- **Strategy 1.2:** Support the availability, affordability, and sustainability of cultural spaces and facilities for arts and culture organizations of all sizes in Boston.
  - **Tactic 1.2.1:** Complete a study of Boston performing arts venues to understand the current and anticipated venue needs of local performing arts and cultural organizations, followed by an implementation phase for recommendations; provide for periodic assessment of needs based on study findings.
  - **Tactic 1.2.2:** Identify how land-use tools and other policies, including financing strategies, can provide incentives and requirements for creating new cultural spaces in connection with real-estate development or sustained support for existing cultural spaces.
  - **Tactic 1.2.3:** Convene funding partners to create a reliable and predictable source of pooled funding to mitigate depreciation costs and/or to invest in facilities reserves for organizations operating arts and cultural spaces and facilities in Boston.

- **Strategy 1.3:** Strengthen small- and mid-sized arts and culture organizations in Boston.
o **Tactic 1.3.1**: Develop a citywide funding initiative to provide more general operating support for small- and mid-sized arts and culture organizations.

o **Tactic 1.3.2**: Develop strategic partnerships with arts service organizations, foundations, and universities to implement capacity-building programs for arts and culture organizations in response to the needs of the sector.

• **Strategy 1.4**: Enact and coordinate municipal policies to better support creative expressions and endeavors citywide.
  
  o **Tactic 1.4.1**: Review and streamline municipal policies and procedures affecting arts and cultural uses, including permitting, zoning, and licensing.
  
  o **Tactic 1.4.2**: Simplify the Boston Art Commission application process for permanent and temporary public art on City property by creating a more user-friendly application process and an insurance waiver for small-scale/low-risk projects.

**GOAL 2: Keep artists in Boston and attract new ones here, recognizing and supporting artists’ essential contribution to creating and maintaining a thriving, healthy, and innovative city.**

Goal 2 reinforces the importance of artists in Boston. Given that resources for individual artists in the city have been extremely limited, this goal strives to help artists do their best work by providing essential means of support. While Goal 1 addresses needs for cultural spaces and facilities for arts organizations, this goal addresses the spaces that are most important to individual artists: affordable housing and work space. The City understands that meeting artists’ space needs requires innovative approaches to housing and facilities, especially in today’s aggressive real-estate market.

• **Strategy 2.1**: Invest in individual artists in Boston.
  
  o **Tactic 2.1.1**: Make grants to individual artists living in Boston.
  
  o **Tactic 2.1.2**: Encourage professional-development opportunities for teaching artists or artist educators, by partnering with higher education and arts colleges.
  
  o **Tactic 2.1.3**: Provide continuing-education opportunities, including high-quality and affordable business and career-development training, for early- to mid-career arts and cultural professionals through partnerships with higher education institutions, arts colleges, and arts service organizations.
  
  o **Tactic 2.1.4**: Encourage developers to incorporate work and presentation space for artists into their developments.

• **Strategy 2.2**: Make City government more accessible, welcoming, and responsive to artists.
  
  o **Tactic 2.2.1**: Create an Artists Resource Desk within City Hall, centralizing staff support for: permitting, zoning, and other regulatory requirements for arts and
cultural uses; communicating professional opportunities; navigating other municipal services and departments.

- **Tactic 2.2.2:** Facilitate exhibition, performance, and convening opportunities for artists in City Hall, libraries, and other municipal-owned spaces in neighborhood settings.

- **Tactic 2.2.3:** Facilitate guest curation of local artists’ work in City Hall, libraries, and other municipal-owned spaces by partnering with arts and cultural organizations, local galleries, and others.

- **Tactic 2.2.4:** Recognize and promote the significant contributions of Boston artists by expanding on the cultural honors Boston currently bestows (such as Poet Laureate, Emerging Artist, and City Proclamations recognizing such contributions).

- **Strategy 2.3:** Identify and pursue opportunities for affordable artist housing and affordable presenting and production spaces.
  - **Tactic 2.3.1:** Increase the supply of affordable artist live/work spaces by developing strategic partnerships with the Department of Neighborhood Development, Boston Redevelopment Authority, Boston Housing Authority, Boston Society of Architects, and the real-estate development community.
  - **Tactic 2.3.2:** Create an inventory, and promote the use, of existing City-owned and privately owned spaces and buildings that can be made available for individual artists creating and presenting work in Boston.
  - **Tactic 2.3.3:** Explore new housing models supporting artists, such as mixed-constituency housing, artist cooperatives, and university partnerships, in collaboration with the Department of Neighborhood Development.

**GOAL 3:** Cultivate a city where all cultural traditions and expressions are respected, promoted, and equitably resourced, and where opportunities to engage with arts and culture are accessible to all.

Goal 3 responds to a clear consensus in the community engagement process that many kinds of barriers to full inclusion and participation exist in Boston’s arts and culture sector, and that the most pressing are entrenched, systemic inequities around race, class, geography, and ability. The cross-cultural exchange envisioned in this goal involves more than the promotion and enjoyment of diverse cultures. It is about creating a two-way street for genuine learning, so arts and culture organizations of all kinds can better serve their audiences and all residents by learning from and understanding each other.

- **Strategy 3.1:** Address cultural disparities across race, class, ability, and geographic lines by intentionally bridging divides and promoting cross-cultural exchange.
• **Tactic 3.1.1:** Advocate for the development of a cultural equity study in Boston as a complement to the disparity study being conducted by the Mayor’s Office of Economic Development.

• **Tactic 3.1.2:** Explore how to use arts and culture as a vehicle for dialogue within the citywide conversation about historic race and class divisions in Boston, in partnership with the City’s Chief Resilience Officer.

• **Tactic 3.1.3:** Advocate for the establishment of a fund to support creation and/or presentation of artwork addressing disparities or deepening understanding across divides.

• **Strategy 3.2:** Advance equity by facilitating creative, cultural, and artistic opportunities in historically underserved communities.

  o **Tactic 3.2.1:** Increase municipal resources for grassroots arts or cultural projects by individual artists, community members, and unincorporated groups.

  o **Tactic 3.2.2:** Create a responsive capacity-building program for community arts and culture organizations, cultural festivals, and projects, in partnership with community leaders, the Mayor’s Office of Tourism, Sports, and Entertainment, Office for Immigrant Advancement, and the Office of Neighborhood Services.

  o **Tactic 3.2.3:** Ensure that City funding opportunities are accessible to individuals of multiple abilities and for whom English is not a first language, and that diverse voices are included in funding decisions.

  o **Tactic 3.2.4:** Determine strategies for better serving community arts in historically underserved communities by facilitating strategic partnerships among arts service organizations, advocacy partners, and community-based leaders.

• **Strategy 3.3:** Use City departments, resources, and facilities to embed arts and culture opportunities in every neighborhood, opening access to creative engagement and arts participation citywide.

  o **Tactic 3.3.1:** Identify opportunities for embedding arts and cultural programs, classes, and activities in municipal spaces by developing strategic partnerships between City agencies and neighborhood facilities or programs.

  o **Tactic 3.3.2:** Research systemic barriers to participation and engagement in arts and culture activities for persons with disabilities and identify solutions and opportunities for change by partnering with the Commission for Persons with Disabilities and VSA Massachusetts.

• **Strategy 3.4:** Increase cultural competency (i.e., fluency in relating across cultural divides) within the arts and culture sector, facilitate learning opportunities among
diverse populations and cultures, and promote diverse and inclusive participation in the sector.

- **Tactic 3.4.1**: Provide learning opportunities for the arts and culture sector on demographic changes in Boston, cultural competency, and development of cultural spaces and events that are welcoming to individuals of diverse backgrounds, through partnerships with arts service organizations and funders.

- **Tactic 3.4.2**: Support the efforts of Boston arts and cultural organizations to better serve and engage diverse audiences and visitors through programming and marketing.

- **Tactic 3.4.3**: Clarify career pathways in the sector and determine avenues for stronger recruitment efforts and development of professional networks across specializations and for diverse candidates, by convening arts and cultural organizations and arts service organizations.

- **Tactic 3.4.4**: Increase awareness of the challenges experienced by persons with disabilities seeking to participate in arts and cultural events and activities, and introduce the tenets of universal design, through conversations with arts and cultural organizations.

**GOAL 4: Integrate arts and culture into all aspects of civic life, inspiring all Bostonians to value, engage in, and reap the benefits of creativity in their individual lives and in their communities.**

Arts and culture should inform our approach to any issues that we face. Creativity should be present in every aspect of our lives, from our hobbies or activities for enjoyment to creative problem solving in the civic sphere.

Boston has an ideal opportunity to act on this goal in the creation of Imagine Boston 2030 and the several other City plans currently in the works. The City wants to incorporate Boston Creates in all planning efforts and citywide visions for the future. An area of special concern that arose from the planning process is art in the Boston Public Schools. Arts education needs to be available in all Boston’s schools, through partnerships between arts organizations and schools, as well as outside of school (whether for recreation or for helping young people find career pathways in the arts).

The City aspires to fully integrate arts and culture into the public realm. This includes a range of actions, from improving City processes in order to better support artists and the arts to commissioning iconic public art created specifically for Boston’s neighborhoods. Such an effort will require increased investment, and the City will take a leadership role in developing new resources for arts and culture in Boston.
• **Strategy 4.1:** Change City policymaking and practice to integrate creative thinking into the work of every municipal department and all planning efforts.
  - **Tactic 4.1.1:** Ensure the vision, values, and goals of Boston Creates are embedded in Imagine Boston 2030, the City’s first comprehensive plan in 50 years.
  - **Tactic 4.1.2:** Building on the Mayor’s elevation of Chief of Arts and Culture to a Cabinet-level position, nurture cross-departmental collaboration and the inclusion of an arts voice on each internal task force or working group.
  - **Tactic 4.1.3:** Use the Boston Artists in Residence Program to embed working artists in City departments and agencies to promote creative thought in municipal problem-solving and project implementation.

• **Strategy 4.2:** Harness the power of arts and culture to engage Bostonians in civic discourse, planning, and creative problem-solving.
  - **Tactic 4.2.1:** Communicate and promote the City’s integration of arts and culture into municipal decision-making as a model for the private sector, and enable each sector to learn best practices from the other.
  - **Tactic 4.2.2:** Encourage and support arts advocates in assuming leadership roles in their broader communities by serving on City-convened boards, commissions, and task forces across policy areas, as well as in grassroots and community-based civic organizations.
  - **Tactic 4.2.3:** Promote the creation of arts districts and creative development opportunities within and across Boston’s neighborhoods by partnering with neighborhood, community development, and other civic organizations.

• **Strategy 4.3:** Make Boston a place where arts education and arts-enhanced learning are available citywide and through all stages of life.
  - **Tactic 4.3.1:** Expose families to the benefits of the arts in child and family development and identify access points for participation, by partnering with universities, hospitals, neighborhood health centers, libraries, and early childhood education and preschool provider networks.
  - **Tactic 4.3.2:** Ensure arts education is a fundamental function of the Boston Public Schools (BPS) as a foundational element of the City’s commitment to youth arts. Communicate the value of in-school arts education for all of Boston’s schools through strategic partnerships among the schools, the Mayor’s Office of Education, the Boston Public Schools, EdVestors, and in-school arts providers.
  - **Tactic 4.3.3:** Revise and implement the current BPS Arts Education Policy to build and sustain BPS arts education and to promote collaborative arts education discussions for all Boston schools.
• **Tactic 4.3.4:** Enhance and expand arts education for Boston youth and develop opportunities for youth leadership and youth-led creative activities, by means of strategic partnerships with schools in Boston and out-of-school youth arts organizations.

• **Tactic 4.3.5:** Promote pathways to creative careers, and support Boston youth and young adults in pursuing them, by developing strategic partnerships with the arts and cultural community, higher education institutions, and technical skills and apprenticeship programs, including the Office of Workforce Development.

• **Tactic 4.3.6:** Building on the existing Mayor’s Mentoring Movement and My Brother’s Keeper initiative, develop an arts and culture mentorship program for youth and young adults, creating a pipeline of future leaders in the arts and culture sector.

• **Tactic 4.3.7:** Build on the arts and cultural offerings and opportunities available to seniors by developing strategic partnerships with the Elderly Affairs Commission.

• **Strategy 4.4:** Integrate arts, culture, and creativity into the public realm and urban environment.

  • **Tactic 4.4.1:** Encourage designers and developers to embrace the transformative power of public art and the more imaginative architecture the Mayor has called for, by partnering with the Boston Art Commission, Boston Civic Design Commission, Boston Parks and Recreation, Boston Redevelopment Authority, Boston Society of Architects/AIA, Boston Landmarks Commission, and A Better City.

  • **Tactic 4.4.2:** Promote the development of public art and performance opportunities in neighborhood settings through partnerships with Boston Main Streets, community development corporations, and other community organizations.

  • **Tactic 4.4.3:** Create a map and inventory of cultural assets across Boston to document and understand the landscape and assess changes over time.

  • **Tactic 4.4.4:** Promote the city’s rich cultural festivals, in partnership with Boston Parks and Recreation and the Mayor’s Office of Tourism, Sports, and Entertainment.

**GOAL 5:** Mobilize likely and unlikely partners, collaborating across institutions and sectors, to generate excitement about, and demand and resources for, Boston’s arts and culture sector.

Goal 5 is intended to acknowledge, support, and increase the many cross-sector efforts that are necessary for arts and culture to thrive in Boston. Many sectors already understand or are shaped by arts and culture. For example, Boston has a consortium of arts and health
organizations, Boston Arts Consortium for Health (BACH), made up of hospitals, teaching artists, medical professionals, and arts-therapy programs and practitioners working to advocate for the arts and health sector. These institutions and individuals recognize the importance of the arts for wellness, and that Boston’s confluence of hospitals, educational institutions, and the biotechnology and life sciences industries position us to be a leader in this field. Cross-sector partnerships like this expand the definition of the arts and culture sector and help to ensure the full integration of arts, culture, and creativity into public life. This expansive definition is part of an inclusive approach to developing public support and advocacy for arts and culture in Boston.

- **Strategy 5.1:** Cultivate and mobilize public support and advocacy for the arts and culture sector.
  - **Tactic 5.1.1:** Activate the Mayor’s Office to generate public support for Boston’s arts and culture sector through active engagement in the sector.
  - **Tactic 5.1.2:** Advocate on behalf of the arts and culture sector with state and federal policymakers, emphasizing the need for sustained support for arts and culture and their integration into other sectors.

- **Strategy 5.2:** Use the convening power of City government and partners to motivate and assist other sectors and professional groups in advocating for arts and culture in their respective domains.
  - **Tactic 5.2.1:** Use the leadership of the Mayor’s Office to ensure that arts and culture have a seat at the table when other sectors—such as higher education, science, healthcare, and regional planning—are brought together to develop cross-sector approaches to major issues.
  - **Tactic 5.2.2:** Model successful integration of arts and culture within private-sector organizations and fields by recognizing the contributions of individual arts advocates and champions within business, finance, and other domains.
  - **Tactic 5.2.3:** Maximize opportunities for collaboration across the nonprofit and for-profit sectors by developing strategic partnerships with creative industries such as technology, design, and commercial arts.

- **Strategy 5.3:** Develop the partnerships and tools necessary for making Boston a leading cultural destination.
  - **Tactic 5.3.1:** Develop strategic partnerships with the Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau, Boston Landmarks Commission, and Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism to improve coordination and collaboration in support of cultural tourism, increased tourism revenues from arts and culture, and greater inclusion of arts and culture in Boston’s brand and identity.
  - **Tactic 5.3.2:** Develop strategic partnerships with arts service organizations and media outlets to create an information network for visitors and residents,
incorporating event listings, arts learning opportunities, and community-based activities.

• **Strategy 5.4:** Cultivate greater foundation, corporate, and individual philanthropy, and advance public-sector and public-private partnerships, in support of the City’s ambitious goals for the arts and culture sector.
  
  o **Tactic 5.4.1:** Engage civic, business, and philanthropic leaders to create a pooled fund to address critical sector needs identified through the Boston Creates planning process.
  
  o **Tactic 5.4.2:** Ensure that Boston arts and culture, and the expansive vision for them developed through the Boston Creates planning process, are at the forefront of city and state policymaking by developing strategic partnerships with advocacy groups.
Next Steps for Implementation

Ongoing Work and Implementation

Implementation planning began months ago with an assessment of tactics, taking into consideration whether they would be City-owned, City-led, or City-catalyzed. These are important distinctions, because some tactics require nothing more than a slight change in policy while others require research, broad consensus, funding, and a wholesale shift in thinking. In a reflection of these varied requirements, the City has already acted on some tactics, while others will take years.

Boston Creates has been an expansive, multiyear process in which the City worked with the community to identify goals and aspirations. As we wait for the ink to dry on the final plan, the City has already begun to implement ideas coming out of this process. In his first and second budgets, the Mayor tripled funding for the Boston Cultural Council, which makes grants to a wide variety of arts organizations. The Boston Art Commission, which oversees public art, has created a streamlined application that removes many barriers. Interagency collaborations have become the norm in City Hall, with arts voices present in all internal planning and task forces. The Mayor has appointed arts and culture advocates to boards and commissions, including three recent appointments to the five-member Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) board, which stewards most of the development in the city. With a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, the City launched Boston AIR, a program designed to inject creativity into municipal problem-solving. These are just samples of the initial steps the City is taking to implement the cultural plan.

In his State of the City Address in January 2016, the Mayor announced a $1 million investment in the arts, using BRA community benefits funds. This was a direct result of the feedback received during the Boston Creates community engagement process. This money, to be used in FY17 (beginning July 2016), will fund a full-time employee in the Mayor’s Office of Arts and Culture, working closely with the Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Services and dedicated to helping artists navigate City Hall—from permitting to housing to small business advice and all other City services. In addition, the money will fund unrestricted individual-artist grants and an expanded second round of the Boston AIR program, which will work with the Boston Centers for Youth and Families.

Earlier this year, in response to both the Boston Creates planning process and the acute space needs felt by the performing arts community, the City announced a Cultural Facilities Study. This study is underway, with results due this summer. This report will help us understand the current facilities landscape and determine the best next steps for advocating for, developing, and sustaining performing arts spaces.

Looking to the future, we are approaching implementation as follows.
Governance and Administration
The City will design the governance structure for the Boston Creates cultural plan in consultation with a range of partners. Mayor Walsh feels strongly that Boston Creates belongs to the whole city, not just the government, and should be built to withstand changes in leadership and administrations as well as economic downturns. This means looking at a variety of governance structures, some of them outside of city government. We must also design an accountability system for the plan, thinking about both qualitative and quantitative measures. Because we will seek funding from a variety of sources, we must design and coordinate the plan’s donation mechanisms, which will require governance and oversight.

Fundraising
Achieving the goals in this plan requires funding, and we continue to cultivate relationships with potential funders in the philanthropic and corporate worlds. In the long term, we will work to identify and advocate for a sustained public-funding stream for arts and culture.

Planning
Some parts of the Boston Creates cultural plan call for further study; once this research is funded, we will take the lead on working with appropriate partners. In the meantime, we continue to work with City Hall departments on broader initiatives like advocating for artist housing and for performance and work space. We are also integrating the Boston Creates goals into other planning processes, including working with the Imagine Boston 2030 team to ensure that arts and culture are represented.

Program Design
At the same time as we work to secure funding for some programs that emerged as priorities, we are working collaboratively on program design. Hearing the need for further engagement and a desire for regular convening around a variety of issues, we are committed to answering this need. We also continue to cultivate external partners to work with us and with each other to achieve some of the goals of the plan.

The City takes responsibility for the implementation of much of this plan, but some elements require stewardship from other members of our community. While the City will convene, promote, and support, the Mayor asks that all who feel, as he does, that arts and culture are critical for the future of our city think about how they can help advance the work.

*Of all the parts of this draft plan, this one is the most difficult to write at this stage, as we try to manage all the moving pieces and emerge with commitments. It is a work in progress. We are grateful for the goodwill the Boston Creates process has generated, and we are optimistic about our ability to garner some early successes.*
Appendix: The Boston Creates Team

Leadership Council

Mayor Martin J. Walsh, Honorary Chair
Jim Canales, President, Barr Foundation (Co-Chair)
Lee Pelton, President, Emerson College (Co-Chair)

Nicole Agois Hurel, COOL Schools Director, VSA Massachusetts
Loreto P. Ansaldo, Community Organizer, Arts Planner and Educator; Founding Member, Mass. Creative Workers
Maure Aronson, Executive Director, World Music/CRASHarts
Jonathan Bays, Executive Director, Sound Postings LLC
Thomas Blumenthal, Partner, The Baupost Group
Adrian Budhu, Managing Director, The Theater Offensive
Gregory Bulger, Trustee, Gregory E. Bulger Foundation
Paul Buttenwieser, Trustee, Boston Symphony Orchestra and American Repertory Theatre
Miles Byrne, Development Director, Corcoran Jennison Company
Jay Calderin, Executive Director, Boston Fashion Week
Cassandra Cato-Louis, Outreach Coordinator, Mattapan Cultural Arts
Roxann Cooke, Senior Vice President and Regional Manager, Eastern Bank
Elizabeth de Montrichard, Trustee, The Lynch Foundation
Shaumba-Yandje Dibinga, Executive Director, OrigiNation Dance
Rick Dimino, President & CEO, A Better City
Cathy Edwards, Executive Director, New England Foundation for the Arts
Barbara Erickson, President & CEO, Trustees of Reservations
Bridgitt Evans, President, VIA Art Fund
Hanah Fadrigalan, Board Member, Asian American Journalists Assoc.
Padriac Farma, Director, Real to Reel Filmschool, Raw Art Works
Grace Fey, President, Grace Fey Advisors
Tracey Flaherty, Senior Vice President, Natixis Global Asset Management
Aisha Francis, Director of Development, Harvard Medical School
Mindy Fried, Principal, Arbor Consulting Partners
Erica Gervais Pappendick, Founder, Gervais + Co Advisors
Susan Goganian, Director, Beverly Historical Society
Emily Grandstaff-Rice, Executive Director, Boston Society of Architects
Barbara Wallace Grossman, Professor, Tufts University
William Guenther, Chairman & CEO, Mass Insight
Linda Pizzuti Henry, Managing Director, Boston Globe
Betty Hillmon, Founder/Director, Boston City-Wide String Orchestra
Betsy Hinkle, Founder and Artistic Director, musiConnects
Cerise Jacobs, Creator and Librettist, The Friends of Madame White Snake
Patricia Jacobs, President, AT&T New England
Mark Kates, Founder, Fenway Recordings
Gretchen Keyworth, Director Emerita, Fuller Craft Museum
Dumas Lafontant, Director, Lower Roxbury Coalition
Keith Lockhart, Conductor, Boston Pops
Philip Lovejoy, Executive Director, Harvard Alumni Association; Board Member, Boston Center for the Arts
Juan Maldonado, Director of Arts, Culture, and Civic Engagement, Sociedad Latina
Allyson Esposito, Director, Arts and Culture Program, The Boston Foundation
Marlee McDonald, Orchestra Program Director, Josiah Quincy Elementary School
Victor Negrete, Regional Planning Director, Mass. Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development
Peter Nessen, President, Nessen Associates
Stephanie Nikolaou, Theater and Dance Teacher
Laura Perille, President & CEO, EdVestors
Catherine Peterson, Executive Director, ArtsBoston
Veronica Robles, Executive Director, Veronica Robles Cultural Center
Ashley Rose, Artist and Arts Program Manager, Lena Park CDC
John Rosenthal, President, Meredith Management
Eve Rounds, Independent Arts Advocate, Boston Ballet and Boston Arts Academy
Bianca Sigh Ward, Paralegal, Nystrom Beckman & Paris LLP
Maguire Skaza, Youth Leadership Council
Jodi Solomon, President, Solomon Speakers Bureau
Matthew Teitelbaum, Director, Museum of Fine Arts
Bridgette Wallace, Founder, SkyLab
Michael Winston, President, Humble Hues; Bay Village Executive Committee
Lisa Wong, Pediatrician/Musician, Harvard Medical School, President, Longwood Symphony Orchestra
Michelle Wu, City Councilor At-Large, City of Boston

Steering Committee

Julie S. Burros, Chief of Arts and Culture, City of Boston
Carole Charnow, President and CEO, Boston Children’s Museum
Silvia Lopez Chavez, Interdisciplinary Working Artist
Christopher Cook, Commissioner, Boston Parks and Recreation; and former Director, Mayor’s Office of Arts, Tourism, and Special Events
Michael Evans, Developer & Designer, Mayor’s Office of New Urban Mechanics
Eve Ewing, doctoral candidate, Harvard Graduate School of Education; Outreach Coordinator, Mass LEAP
Vineet Gupta, Director of Policy and Planning, Boston Transportation Department
Ted Landsmark, President Emeritus, Boston Architectural College; Board Member, Boston Redevelopment Authority
Joyce Linehan, Chief of Policy, Mayor’s Office of the City of Boston
Anne-Marie Lubenau, Director, Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence at The Bruner Foundation
Michael Maso, Managing Director, Huntington Theatre Company
Myran Parker-Brass, Executive Director for the Arts, Boston Public Schools
Miguel Rodriguez, Executive Director, Boston Baroque
Laura Sherman, Director, Greater Boston Grantmaking, The Klarman Family Foundation
Abi Vladeck, Special Assistant, City of Boston Capital Planning
San San Wong, Senior Program Officer, Barr Foundation

City Community Engagement Taskforce

Arreen Andrew, Director, Boston Cultural Council (former)
Andrea Burns, Age Friendly Director
Jordan Deasy, Sr. Advisor to Chief of Civic Engagement
Joy DePina, Director of Outreach & Engagement
Jessica Doonan, Program & Policy Specialist
Abigail Furey, Neighborhood Business Manager
Stephen Gilman Program Director, Boston Main Streets
Deron Jackson, Youth Outreach Coordinator
Christina Kim, Research Manager
An Le, Community and Public Affairs Advocacy Coordinator
Alvaro Lima, Director of Research
Elizabeth O'Brien, Education Advisor to the Chief of Education
Ramon Soto, Director of External Relations & Opportunity Gap Initiatives
Francesco Tena, Mayor's Youth Council Manager
Community Team Chairs

**Allston/Brighton**  
Ben Hires  
Eva Rosenberg  
John Quatrale

**Mattapan**  
Cassandra Cato Louis  
Keke Fleurissaint  
Charlot Lucien

**Back Bay/Beacon Hill**  
Jen Matson  
Lindsey Noecker

**North End/West End/Downtown**  
Douglass Bowen-Flynn  
Emily Curran

**Charlestown**  
Joseph Caruso  
Jennifer Johnson

**Roslindale**  
Jocelyn Hutt  
Glenn Williams

**Chinatown**  
Susan Chinsen  
Debbie Ho  
Leverett Wing

**Roxbury**  
Olawumi Akinwumi  
Ramona Alexander

**Dorchester**  
An Duong  
David Day

**South Boston/Fort Point**  
Michael Dowling  
Emily O’Neil  
Suzanne Taylor

**East Boston**  
Veronica Robles  
Madeleine Steczynski

**South End/Bay Village**  
Cynthia Woo  
ED Vanessa Calderon-Rosada

**Fenway/Mission Hill**  
Kelly Brilliant  
Juan Maldonado

**West Roxbury**  
Margaret Winikates  
Clare Adala-Clark

**Hyde Park**  
Helga Felleisein  
Tommey Seggers

**Jamaica Plain**  
Randace Raucher-Moore  
Brenda Rodriguez-Andujar
City and Consultant Team

The City of Boston
Mayor Martin J. Walsh
Joyce Linehan, Chief of Policy
Danny Green, Deputy Chief of Policy
Julie S. Burros, Chief of Arts and Culture
Kara Elliott-Ortega, Director of Planning & Policy
Thomas Johnston, Director of Programs
Kenya Beaman, Staff Assistant
Dylan Hurwitz, Project Coordinator
Michael Evans, Program Director, Mayor’s Office of New Urban Mechanics

The Cultural Planning Group
David Plettner-Saunders, Partner
Martin Cohen, Partner
Jerry Allen, Partner
Linda Tara Flynn, Ph.D., Partner

WolfBrown
Alan Brown, Principal
Dr. Dennie Palmer Wolf, Principal
Marc Goldring, Associate Principal

Archipelago Strategies Group
Josiane Martinez, Founder and Principal
Athena Laines, Community Engagement Director
Carol Leon, Community Engagement Coordinator
Lydia Vega, Community Engagement Coordinator
Ana Karina Vivas, Communication Coordinator

Callanan and Klein Communications
Erin Callanan, Principal
Adam Klein, Principal
Tori Wenzel, Assistant Account Executive

Minelli, Inc.
Mark Minelli, President, Creative Director
Becca Mayfield, Strategy & Design
Sebastian Kineke, Designer
Rebekah Leiva, Designer

Department of Play
María L. Vidart-Delgado, Partner
Katarzyna Balug, Partner

Artist Ethnographers
Leonardo March, Photographer
Heather Kapplow, Conceptual Artist
Shaw Pong Liu, Violinist, Composer and Teaching Artist
### Stakeholder Interview and Focus Group Participants

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Ray Fahrner    Miguel Gomez-Ibanez    Mary Jaffee
Elaine Fallon  Denise Gonsalves    Kate James
Emily Fayen    Hannah Goodwin    Jude James
Fabio Fernandez Jim Grace    Stephanie Janes
Moises Fernandez Via Nia Grace    Meri Jenkins
George Fifield Melissa Graham    Kieran Jordan
Jessica Finch Jennifer Gresham Ning Jun Yuan
Donna Finnegan Eve Griffin    Dennis Kaiser
Dennis Fiori Sarah Grosvenor    Justin Kang
Patricia Flaherty Max Gruner    Hannah Kanstroom
Mary Flannery Neena Gulati    Kristi Keefe
Charlotte Fleetwood Kimberly Haack    Rachel Keeler
Peggy Fogelman Catherine Halpin    Jim Keenan
Donna Folan Sarah Hamblin    Barrie Keller
Paul Fontaine Sarah Hannan    Dorothy Keller
Cheryl Forte Marianne Harkless    Catherine Kernan
Ricardo Foster Chantal Harris    Philip Khoury
Ena Fox David Hartman    Kathy Kiely
Anara Frank Susan Hartnett    YeSeul Kim
Jascha Franklin-Dodge Robert Hayes    Tom Kingdon
Scott Fraser Nancy Hays    Leila Kinney
Alison Frazee Lajos Heder    Gavin Kleespies
L'Merchie Frazier Dawn Heinen    Jim Klocke
Katherine French Sean Hennessey    Daniel Koh
Sarah Fujiwara Julie Hennrikus    Lynne Kortenhaus
Deb Fung Nigella Hillgarth    Veronica Koven-Matasy
Ty Fung Hamilton Ho    Charles Kravetz
Helena Furscio Courtney Ho    Joe Kriesberg
Tony Fusco Gail Hobin    Matt Krug
Gerald Gabeau Max Hodges    Richard Kuhn
Kay Gallaher Patrick Hollenbeck    Ed Lambert
Bridgit Ganson Ekua Holmes    Ted Landsmark
Monica Garza Andrea Howard    David Lapin
Ed Gaskin David Howse    BJ Larson
Philip Giffee Elizabeth Hudson    First Last
Kelly Gifford Jennifer Hurley-Wales    Gail Latimore
Kate Gilbert Michael Ibrahim    Ann Lawson
Sharon Glennon Michael Iceland    Malia Lazu
Donna Glick Jazmin Idakaar    Van Le
Stacen Goldman Jen Inglis    Veronique Le Melle
Danielle Goldschneider Laura Irmscher    Michelle LeBlanc
Brian LeMay
David Leonard
Jane Leung
Maggie Levine
Barbara Lewis
Naraya Ligouri
John Linehan
Walter Little
Lori Lobenstine
Timothy Loew
Silvia Lopez-Chavez
Sujei Lugo
Derek Lumpkins
Michael MacPhail
Tanya Maggi
Tani Marinovich
Kaki Martin
Barbara Martin
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Michael Maso
Jose Mateo
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Rita McAteer
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Sarah McDermott
Stella Aguirre McGregor
Sarah McKinnon
William McLaughlin
Ann McQueen
Jen Mecca
Rafael Medina
Jill Medvedow
Jack Megan
Cecilia Mendez
Marissa Molinar
Luis Montalvo
Beverly Morgan-Welch
Ann Moritz
Katrina Morse
Pat Moscaritolo
Jason Moschella
Mohsen Mostafavi
Maria Muller
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Shelley Neill
Jeanette Neill
Susan Nelson
Ester Nelson
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Wendy Nicholas
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Abigail Norman
Diane Norris
Carin O’Connor
Steve O’Shaughnessy
Chika Offurum
Alexandra Oliver-Davila
Alana Olsen
Richard Ortner
Meaghan Overton
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Panos Panay
Diana Parcon
Myran Parker Brass
Brent Parrish
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Giogia Perugini
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Caitlin Peterson
Tina Petigny
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Marilyn Plotkins
Elijah Plymesser
Sheryl Pollard-Thomas
Deborah Porter
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Beth Prindle
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David Pruett
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Gerald Robbins
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Martha Robinson
Susan Rodgerson
Brenda Rodriguez-Andujar
Priscilla Rojas
Bruce Ronkin
Beto Rosa
Caren Rosales
Richard Rouse
Andrew Russell
Amy Ryan
Abe Rybeck
Robert Sabal
Alberto Salvatore
Edward Saywell
Gabrielle Schaffner
Jessica Schmidt
Jennifer Schmitt
Dan Schmunk
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