



2021 Arts Agenda

Arts and culture define today's Dallas. Historic arts institutions and iconic venues, vibrant and emerging cultural organizations, and a diverse collection of artists, both home-grown and transplants, have made our city a cultural capital and destination. In late 2018, the Dallas City Council unanimously approved a new Dallas cultural plan. This reaffirmed decades of visionary civic and philanthropic investment and set new goals to achieve more equity and support for a diverse and growing cultural community.

Today, a pandemic has derailed momentum and threatens the future of many organizations. To protect, sustain and grow this ecosystem during the pandemic and beyond, the **Dallas Area Cultural Advocacy Coalition** (DACAC) has developed this agenda for 2021.

1. **Recognize arts and culture as a vital part of Dallas's economic recovery.**
 - a. Pre-COVID, the Dallas arts engine had an economic impact of almost \$1B impacting 33,000 full-time equivalent jobs in direct spending and employment, restaurants, retail, hotels, tourism, and more, generating at least \$45M in local tax revenue.¹
 - b. Our creative economy includes more than 100 nonprofit organizations - small businesses - that employ thousands of people, many are Dallas residents and constituents.
 - c. Since COVID, Dallas arts organizations have lost more than \$95.5 million, over 1,000 jobs, and attendance exceeding 3 million. Many remain unable to reopen or perform and have been without earned revenue since March of last year. The few able to reopen are at greatly reduced capacity.
 - d. Supporting this creative economy helps sustain and restore jobs, audiences, economic vitality, healing, neighborhoods, tax revenue, and more. It puts culture front-and-center making Dallas the first choice for arts-hungry tourists ready to get out of their homes and travel again.

2. **Continue support for Office of Arts and Culture funding through *both* the General Fund and Hotel Occupancy Tax:**
 - a. Minimize budget cuts – don't balance the budget on the back of the arts.
 - b. Stay the course on prescribed HOT funding levels for the arts (going to programmatic funding, repair/maintain historic arts venues, and for cultural tourism marketing.)
 - c. Continued support goals of equity and diversity established in the Dallas Cultural Plan including increased support for ALAANA organizations.
 - d. Reopen City-operated venues and cultural centers as soon as safely able.

¹ 2015 Arts and Economic Prosperity Study – City of Dallas, Americans for the Arts

3. **Include significant funding for City-owned arts and cultural facilities in the next bond program.**
 - a. The needs and repair list for the City's arts venues is growing. While HOT funding will help with ongoing maintenance at historic venues, significant repairs and upgrades are long overdue. The longer maintenance is deferred, the worse and more expensive it becomes. This request does not include new venues. It's fixing and maintaining the cultural assets we already have.

4. **Advocate for the arts.**
 - a. Commit to knowing the arts groups in Dallas and visiting and/or attending cultural programs, events, and venues on a regular basis.
 - b. Encourage constituents to attend and support the arts.
 - c. Encourage businesses to sponsor and adopt arts organizations or donate to the arts.

5. **Encourage city departments to partner with the arts in creating solutions to challenges facing our city.**
 - a. Replace urban blight with community art.
 - b. Engage arts organizations in education, after-school and weekend programs to reduce crime and recidivism.
 - c. Incentivize developers wanting taxpayer support for projects in underserved areas.
 - i. This could include affordable artist housing and arts spaces, community art, murals, workshops, galleries, performance and rehearsal spaces.

6. **Ensure arts and culture are part of the City's legislative agenda.**
 - a. Support for **Texas Commission on the Arts.**
 - i. Protect and grow TCA's funding (Texas ranks 46th in state arts funding per capita².)
 - ii. Protect **TCA's Cultural District Grant Program** funding at the current level of \$10M per biennium.
 - b. Protection of the current state-designated uses for the Hotel Occupancy Tax (Arts, VisitDallas, tourism, historic preservation of cultural venues, and destination marketing, etc.)
 - c. Support federal funding for **National Endowment for the Arts** and **National Endowment for the Humanities** and any additional COVID-relief funding for the arts.

² National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, FY 2020 Report