

## **ACCF Cultural Affairs Committee Report**

**March 11, 2022**

**Tina Worden, chair**

### **Public Art**

Bozeman Public Art Community Technical Advisory Panel: ACCF was invited in November 2021 to participate. ACCF president, Allan Gajadhar approved Tina Worden, chair of the Cultural Affairs Committee to serve in this role. The county has not yet finalized the details of the advisory panel and will be shared with the board at a later time.

### **Lee Arts Center**

Background: The issues around this facility, the arts studio program and the impact to the professional artist community in this program are complex. The LAC is a fully equipped professional studio for artists working in ceramics & printmaking that has been closed since March 2020. This 40 year program reopened conditionally last month. The building built in 1925 is in failing condition and due to the levels of asbestos and lack of ADA compliance, the county is unwilling to make repairs that would trigger an expensive remediation. County staff estimates \$10-\$12 million for remediation and modifications. The county has stated that should the HVAC or other major system fail, the facility will close indefinitely.

Since the facility is no longer shared with the Department of Parks and Recreation, the County Manager has proposed in the FY23 budget that LAC artists pay 100% of recovery costs to deliver program services. It will be an increase of more than 200%. With the creative industry especially hard hit during the pandemic, the professional artists and community stakeholders are voicing their disapproval of this substantial fee increase.

Attached to this report are two documents that will provide additional details: the first is a message from Cultural Affairs Director to LAC artists and the 2nd is a document from the Lee Arts Center Artists asking supporters to share the letter.

### **The organizational stakeholders involved:**

#### **Lee Arts Center Arts Community**

This is a grass roots movement of artists and stakeholders bringing awareness to the community on this topic and appealing to Arlington communities for support by asking that letters of support be sent to the county board and attend the county public hearing on March 29

#### **Arlington County Cultural Affairs**

The county values the program and proposes to continue it by providing space in the Cultural Affairs facility located at 3700 Four Mile Run Dr. Due to the unique equipment and needs of program, this building can be modified to host the program if funded. The director is prepared to request \$5 million to modify the facility from the FY 2023-2032 Capital Infrastructure Plan.

#### **Leeway Overlee Civic Association**

In speaking to Mike Weinstein, civic association president, where the facility is located, their community is concerned with the future of this building including the artists being without a contingency plan should the aging facility close.

#### **Plan Langston Boulevard**

PLB is in Phase 2 of the Planning Process with a goal to adopt their plan in the 2nd quarter of 2022. It is a study that will establish a high-level framework for the planning of the corridor. The LAC is within the plan's study area.

### **Arlington Commission for the Arts**

The commission places a priority on continuing its work on equity. They are using this lens to illuminate and advise the board on the county's arts and culture policy supporting artists and our creative community. Part of this work requires prioritizing equitable access to county resources and Anika Kwinana, commission chair expressed at the board's budget work session that the 100% fee recovery is an impossible ask for our professional artists and encourages the board to consider reducing the artist fees.

### **Embracing Arlington Arts**

**EAA** is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to advance the vibrancy of arts and culture in Arlington through advocacy and awareness programs. It is focused on an initiative to create a flexible and quality performing arts center built in Arlington. Janet Kopenhaver and president of EAA is urging her community to appeal to the County Board and Manager to reconsider the LAC fee increase and provide a contingency plan for these working professional artists.