



# Arts and Culture Framework for Development

## Creativity | Well Being | Prosperity



### What makes residents love where they live? What draws people to a place and keeps them there?

Cities with the highest levels of citizen attachment to community, an emotional connection culturally and creatively manifested, have been found to also have the highest rates of gross domestic product growth. How can we work together to increase our citizen's attachment to Moorhead, to strengthen our city, and ensure a brighter future?<sup>i</sup>

**755** ARTISTS &  
CREATIVE WORKERS  
IN CLAY COUNTY

**159,357**  
ATTENDEES FOR ARTS AND  
CULTURE EVENTS OFFERED BY  
NONPROFITS IN CLAY COUNTY

**\$9.6** MILLION  
ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT  
FROM ARTS & CULTURE SECTOR

**\$4** MILLION  
ANNUAL DIRECT SPENDING FROM  
NONPROFIT ARTS & CULTURE  
ORGANIZATIONS

**\$3** MILLION  
ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT  
OF INDIVIDUAL ARTIST SPENDING

**\$2.6** MILLION  
ANNUAL AUDIENCE SPENDING  
ON ARTS & CULTURE

### We Envision Moorhead Building on Its Rich Assets

**Best Small City in America.**<sup>ii</sup> Moorhead is a micropolitan urban area with a small town feel. With both city amenities and affordability, it is an appealing place to live. In 2015 Moorhead was the top national winner of the Best Small City in America award, citing its good work-life balance and livability.

**Moorhead is an exceptionally young city.** Literature on micropolitan urban areas cites that those that attract youth are in the strongest position for a successful future. Moorhead's economy thrives thanks to excellent transportation assets, an educated workforce, affordable cost of living, and progressive community.<sup>iii</sup> With a median age of 29, Moorhead's youth, young families and emerging professionals are the city's future.

**Stunning natural environment.** Moorhead is a city of parks, a stunning river corridor, and a deep commitment to enjoying the environment. The 2017 winner of the national Best City for Outdoors Lovers award<sup>iv</sup>. Moorhead's more than 46 regional, community, and neighborhood parks are an attractive lure to the city and bring neighbors together.

**Significant creative and cultural presence.** Moorhead has an impressive number of artists, creative individuals, organizations and activities that give the city a unique character. A nationally recognized cultural center, a visual arts museum, a performing arts school and concert venue, among other sites, invite residents and visitors to immerse in the area's history and culture.

**Leader in lifelong learning.** Moorhead is known for its deep commitment to lifelong education. The city's public schools have a reputation for excellence. High expectations of parents, dedication of teachers and staff, visionary leadership, and the influence of several colleges in the area have made the schools among the best in Minnesota.



## We Envision Moorhead Becoming...

**...a city in which citizens find pride of place;** a community with a positive and forward-looking momentum in which the next generation is invited to put down roots and create a meaningful life. We value the role that arts, traditional craft, creativity and innovation play in contributing to an excellent place to live and a unique regional destination.

**...a city rich with businesses that celebrate arts and cultures,** providing markets for local artists and craft artisans; becoming known as a community that celebrates local entrepreneurship, including locally sourced foods and brews. We value the rich diversity of our business community, embracing and supporting our artists, small local businesses and creative start-ups.

**...a city that builds community cohesion** through nurturing connections among people and organizations; one that celebrates our life together, both through development of downtown as a core place of connection, as well as a community that embraces its unique neighborhoods. We value

both our individualism as well as our communal spirit as it is expressed through our arts and culture.

**...a city respected as a great place to learn**—at any age—and pursue personal growth through lifelong learning. We value the key role arts and culture plays in lifelong learning and celebrating what it means to be human.

**...a city known for embracing and celebrating its diversity,** heritage, work ethic, and strong sense of home, from First Peoples to settlers and now to new immigrant cultures. We value Moorhead becoming known for creating opportunities for its “culture keepers.”

**...a city celebrating its natural environment,** offering a pedestrian and bicycling scale, responding to a youthful culture, integrating arts and culture into its riverfront and green spaces. We value the importance of our beautiful natural setting, our Red River corridor, our exceptional park system, and our commitment to preserving, protecting and restoring the environment for the health of future generations.

### Why Arts and Culture

Creative expression is intrinsic to what it means to be human. There is, in addition, a robust literature documenting arts and culture as a partner in community vitality and revitalization. Research accentuates the value of creativity in building a distinct local character and story, a distinct pride of place. One source<sup>7</sup> refers to arts and culture as the Soul of the Community, naming the key importance of arts and culture in inviting strong emotional connection, offering aesthetics/physical beauty, inviting offerings and places to gather and find belonging together.

The research further shows clear benefits in terms of openness to embrace differences, civic engagement, willingness to actively contribute to a community's growth, and economic

success. What follows are some of the key findings within the literature regarding the importance of arts and culture to community development.

- **Essential to community vitality:** Arts and culture are the invitation to gather, to connect, to be drawn into and become attached to community. Arts and culture create a community aesthetic that attracts both visitors and new residents. Through culture communities celebrate and invite authentic participation and attachment to place.
- **Catalyst for growth:** Arts and culture are a catalyst for both cultural and economic growth. They enhance pride of place and invite us to celebrate a community as a great place to live as well as a great place to visit.

■ **Cultural inclusion:** Welcome of the individual; inclusivity and diversity. Arts and culture invite each person to see themselves in a place. Through culture we grow a safe and accessible city where many new people want to live.

■ **Draw skilled workers:** Through arts and culture we invite, retain and grow families and businesses; people want to live where they have a sense of place, of “their people.” Skilled workers and millennials are drawn to communities with a strong cultural and creative presence.

■ **Civic engagement:** The literature frequently cites that the citizen engaged in arts and culture is also the citizen that is significantly more civically engaged. Building understanding of ourselves and finding creative expression creates better citizens locally and globally.

# CREATIVITY + CULTURE ROADMAP

**This framework is an invitation for the community, whether in the public, business, nonprofit, education or arts and culture sector, to find common ground in accelerating the role of arts and culture in creating well-being and prosperity for Moorhead. It is a tool inviting multiple approaches for involvement and implementation in the spirit of innovation and creativity that it celebrates.**

IF WE INVEST DOLLARS AND EFFORT HERE...	...AND ACCOMPLISH GOALS SUCH AS...	...WE WILL ULTIMATELY ACHIEVE MEASURABLE, LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES
<p><b>PLACEMAKING</b></p> <p>Create places where people want to gather</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use arts and cultural elements to bring soul, life and people to a revitalized downtown core. Create elements that position downtown as a core gathering place.</li> <li>2. Work with neighborhoods, each with its unique cultural identity gathering locations, to develop a strong sense of neighborhood, ensuring that arts and culture are integrated as a key vehicle for defining neighborhood identity.</li> <li>3. Enhance Moorhead's visual appeal through streetscapes, murals, greenspace development, and arts and culture to modernize the look, feel, and accessibility of the city.</li> <li>4. Develop new and enhance the vitality of existing formal and informal gathering places; utilize arts and culture to inspire, bring people together, and create a sense of place.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Downtown:</b> Moorhead will have revitalized urban center, a downtown where people want to gather, known for its beauty and cultural vitality.</p> <p><b>Neighborhoods:</b> Moorhead will be known for its cohesive and attractive neighborhoods that offer unique ways in which communities gather.</p> <p><b>Public Art:</b> Moorhead will have united the city into a working whole with a refreshed sense of pride. It will become known as a city of streetscapes, murals, and artistic / cultural features that draw the community as well as the tourist.</p> <p><b>Gathering Places:</b> Moorhead will be known as a place with distinctive and fun public and private places where people naturally gather, including key cultural centers and a performance venue.</p>
<p><b>WORKING TOGETHER</b></p> <p>Build and support public and private capacity and collaboration to grow the creative sector.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build a strong network of arts and culture organizations; shift the thinking across the business, nonprofit, educational and arts/culture sectors toward working together to create a stronger future for the city.</li> <li>2. Encourage start-up businesses through inviting the business community and developers along with the creative sector to work together collaboratively and cultivate, support and expand the city's entrepreneurial economy.</li> <li>3. Collaborate to implement "groundswell" ideas, such as 56560, that are fun and energizing ways to visualize the city in a new, positive light and instill pride of place.</li> <li>4. Develop an intentional approach to building cultural inclusion, responding to the needs of and celebrating diverse cultures.</li> <li>5. Support the business, economic, and professional development of artists and cultural creatives.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Cross Sector Partnership:</b> There is evidence of strengthened connection and alignment across organizations and sectors in support of the creative sector.</p> <p><b>Cultural Creatives:</b> There is an increase in the number of cultural creatives that live, work, and have businesses in Moorhead.</p> <p><b>Entrepreneurship:</b> There is documented growth of the creative sector and evidence of increased value of the arts and culture sector to business development.</p> <p><b>Cultural Inclusion:</b> There is documented growth in the involvement of new immigrant communities and people of color in the creative sector.</p> <p><b>Arts and Culture Organizations:</b> There is a measurable increase in sustainability of arts and culture organizations.</p>
<p><b>STORY AND IDENTITY</b></p> <p>Brand and market Moorhead's unique artistic, cultural and creative attributes.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Position the city – through both a specific identity campaign as well as ongoing efforts – as an Upper Midwest center for cultural creatives, a home to creativity, including positioning around a positive, progressive and youthful culture.</li> <li>2. Develop a robust marketing and communications plan, including financial, human and technological resources for implementation that will enable ongoing promotion of the city's arts and culture resources and invite constituencies to use social media to help messages "go viral."</li> <li>3. Work to develop strong regional partnerships to work cooperatively in positioning and marketing Moorhead's creativity.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Brand:</b> Moorhead will have in place an identity and reputation throughout the Upper Midwest as a progressive, vibrant, and youthful place; a home to creativity.</p> <p><b>Marketing:</b> Moorhead will be connected on a regular basis by a formal communications structure for keeping arts and culture events, resources, ideas and projects before citizens, tourists and city leadership.</p> <p><b>Partnerships:</b> Key partners within the arts and culture sector and media will be working closely with the Moorhead Art and Culture Commission in the execution of this identity and communications campaign.</p>
<p><b>IMPLEMENTATION</b></p> <p>Coordinate and champion people, processes, and practices to propel this framework forward</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lead efforts to engage and secure commitments from individuals, arts and culture organizations, businesses, foundations, and the public sector to accelerate the development of Moorhead's creative sector.</li> <li>2. Encourage collaboration within government planning bodies or elsewhere in the community, ensuring that arts and culture add value and are an integral part of the planning process.</li> <li>3. Review and consider policies, procedures and practices that support and accelerate the development of the arts and culture sector.</li> <li>4. Work together across government, business and foundations to develop strategies to invest financially in Moorhead's creative economy.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Champions:</b> There will be a documented growth in individuals, organizations, and businesses committed to growing the creative sector.</p> <p><b>Planning:</b> Public and private planning bodies will have embraced arts and culture as integral elements of a sustainable future, used as a resource in all aspects of master plan design and development.</p> <p><b>Policies and Procedures:</b> Policies, permitting, and practices will be in place that facilitate the vetting, financing and execution of projects and businesses that support the creative sector.</p> <p><b>Investment:</b> Various private, philanthropic and public investment tools will be available to accelerate Moorhead's creative economy.</p>



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Moorhead Art and Culture Commission wishes to acknowledge and publicly thank the many voices that are reflected in this document. This framework grew out of a review of existing plans in the city, as well as informed by a significant public input process.

Through the leadership of Arts Midwest, national and regional perspectives were infused into this framework, strengthening the recommendations. Finally, the economic impact and importance of arts and culture to our community was quantified and documented by the CreativeMN research process of Minnesota Citizens for the Arts.

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i [knightfoundation.org/sotc/](http://knightfoundation.org/sotc/)

ii <https://www.businessinfocusmagazine.com/2017/03/the-best-small-city-in-america/>

iii [Livability.com/mn/Moorhead](http://Livability.com/mn/Moorhead)

iv <https://www.millennialpersonalfinance.com/best-cities-outdoor-lovers/>

v [knightfoundation.org/sotc/](http://knightfoundation.org/sotc/)

## MOORHEAD ART AND CULTURE COMMISSION

Carrie Wintersteen, *Chair*

Hon. Mayor Del Rae Williams

Tim Beaton

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