

DOUGLAS COUNTY CULTURAL PLAN

Updated January 2008



Douglas County Cultural Council

Mission: To serve a diverse citizenry through access, research and communication thereby facilitating the development of cultural opportunities in the arts, sciences and history.

SETTING THE STANDARD
OF EXCELLENCE IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

INTRODUCTION

Douglas County, located at the center of Colorado, celebrates many of the features for which Colorado is widely recognized: majestic landscapes, western heritage, evidence of an intriguing prehistoric past and attractive recreational opportunities. The County, located between Denver and Colorado Springs, encompasses 844 square miles of diverse topography and natural resources. These attributes have attracted dramatic population growth in the past decade; 191 percent from 1990 to 2000. The current estimate is a population of more than 280,000 residents. Despite this rapid growth, the County continues to value its rural character that provides a sense of identity for newer residents and reinforces a keen sense of pride among contemporary descendants of Douglas County pioneers. Residents appreciate this area's quality of life and access to cultural and recreational activities.

Arts, culture and scientific programming enjoy more recognition in the larger communities in Douglas County. A 2006 voter opinion poll revealed that 58 percent of the respondents felt that more choices of events were needed. There is increasing interest, too, in the history, archeology and paleontology, and natural resources found in Douglas County. This same poll noted that 83 percent of respondents felt that Douglas County has a historical legacy worth preserving and protecting. Arts, culture and especially heritage can be significant unifying elements for the entire County.

The principal jurisdictions in Douglas County are the incorporated communities of Castle Rock, Larkspur, Lone Tree and Parker. Highlands Ranch, which remains unincorporated, is a rapidly growing community as well. These areas provide civic and cultural amenities for their residents and for the County as a whole.

Douglas County Cultural Council

The Douglas County Cultural Council was originally formed to distribute the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD)¹ funding in participating areas of Douglas County. The Council is comprised of nine members appointed by the County Commissioners (each Commissioner appoints three representatives from their District). These volunteer Council members must reside in Douglas County and may serve one or more three-year terms. In 2006, the Cultural Council was able to re-grant \$327,407 from SCFD Tier III funds to arts, cultural and scientific organizations providing a variety of programs and services in Douglas County. However, it is important to note that while Douglas County participates in the seven county SCFD in metropolitan Denver, the communities of Castle Rock and Larkspur are not included in that funding mechanism at their own request.

Background

In September 2001, the Douglas County Cultural Council initiated a comprehensive planning process that resulted in the Cultural Plan for Douglas County that was adopted in September 2002. This Plan, with goals that embraced the areas of heritage and natural resources, facilities, education, support services and collaboration, audience development and cultural tourism, has guided the Cultural Council in its support for arts, culture, heritage and science activities throughout Douglas County. This Cultural Plan also served as a valuable inventory of the breadth of the cultural potential in Douglas County with the expectation that implementation would be a collaborative enterprise. Numerous accomplishments in these areas were achieved by the Cultural Council through collaborations and with grants to organizations provided by financial support from the SCFD.

In reflecting on the development of cultural activities in the County since the inception of the original Cultural Plan, the Douglas County Cultural Council decided in 2006 that it was time for an update in order to design action steps to support the growing demand for cultural facilities and arts, culture, scientific and heritage opportunities for its constituents. This cultural planning would parallel the County's process for updating the Comprehensive Master Plan and facilitate inclusion of the 2007 Cultural Plan in this document. Barbara Neal, an arts management consultant from Denver, was selected as the planning consultant to lead this effort that would involve reviewing existing research, conducting interviews, facilitation and preparation of planning materials with the result an updated Cultural Plan.

In addition, the Douglas County Cultural Council wanted to explore effective ways to increase community awareness about public art and assist public art programs in Castle Rock, Highlands Ranch, Lone Tree and Parker. This initiative would be incorporated as a new component in the updated Cultural Plan.

¹ The Scientific and Cultural Facilities District was authorized by the Colorado General Assembly and approved by the voters in 1988. It collects a one tenth of one percent sales tax in the participating areas of the seven metropolitan Denver counties (Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson) and distributes these funds to cultural facilities and organizations through a three-tiered system based on budget size and other criteria.

Process

The Douglas County Cultural Council identified a 25-member Steering Committee representing all geographic areas of the County to guide the planning review and development. Eight members who served on the Steering Committee for the original plan were included in order to provide valuable continuity. Initially convened in March, the Steering Committee formed goal task forces to analyze progress on achieving the original goals. The task forces' reports emphasized the need for coordination and staffing strategies to pursue the goals of the original Cultural Plan and future direction.

The Steering Committee then met five additional times to review these reports and refine the components of the new plan. Strong support for an action-oriented plan emerged from this planning dialogue. The Plan clearly articulated the leadership role of the Douglas County Cultural Council and how it could advance arts, culture, science and heritage activities in communities throughout Douglas County. This action agenda features three goal areas: (1) broad, enhanced support for local programs and services; (2) strategic leadership initiatives for public art, facilities planning, cultural tourism and advocacy for arts education and lifelong learning; and (3) collaborative implementation.

At various stages in its development, the plan concepts were presented to the County Commissioners, the Douglas County Cultural Council and several interest groups for review and comment. The updated plan draft was accepted by the Douglas County Cultural Council in September 2007.

During this same period, a Public Art Administrators Group that included representatives from Castle Rock, Highlands Ranch, Lone Tree and Parker met to develop a collaborative project designed to build awareness and support for public art in these communities and throughout Douglas County. This project, temporary exhibitions of artwork on loan from artists, has a working title of Art Encounters.

Implementation

The Douglas County Cultural Council functions primarily in a leadership capacity, serving as a catalyst and seeking partners and opportunities for collaboration to achieve the goals of the Cultural Plan. An example is distribution of the Tier III funding to organizations for programs and services in the arts, culture, science and heritage in the various communities. To address the challenge of implementation of this ambitious countywide action plan, the Cultural Council has designed a collaborative strategy that re-establishes the arts and culture working group within the Partnership of Douglas County Governments. This working group of representatives from each of the jurisdictions will plan and work collaboratively to realize and evaluate the Cultural Plan initiatives. This strategy will raise awareness of the potential, as well as the needs, of cultural enterprises at the local level and encourage the jurisdictions to identify and marshal the resources to take advantage of this potential. Stronger coordination, collaboration and communication will encourage better use of existing resources, develop broader access and participation and foster sustainability in the cultural life of Douglas County communities.

DOUGLAS COUNTY CULTURAL PLAN UPDATE

The sections in red are cross references to the Douglas County Comprehensive Master Plan 2030.

Mission

To serve a diverse citizenry through access, research, communication and collaboration thereby facilitating the development of cultural opportunities in the arts, sciences and history.

Guiding Principles

- ★ Arts, culture and heritage are a priority for the Douglas County Commissioners and for the jurisdictional leadership.
- ★ Where appropriate, the Douglas County Cultural Council will be a catalyst and make recommendations regarding cultural policies, funding, education, facilities, cultural tourism and stimulate collaboration among the jurisdictions.
- ★ The Council will continue to be an advocate for local initiatives in support of this Cultural Plan.
- ★ The Council will seek partners and other collaborators in achieving the goals of this Cultural Plan.
- ★ The Douglas County Cultural Council will continue to encourage development of arts, cultural, heritage and scientific programming and services to communities throughout Douglas County.

Goal Statements

GOAL #1

The Douglas County Cultural Council, in collaboration with the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District and other partners, will create and promote an aggressive calendar of robust public arts exhibits and performances for the entertainment and education of communities throughout Douglas County.

- A. Support the **performance of art** that includes concerts in a variety of music and dance forms, theatre and other performances as well as films, literature and displays of visual arts and crafts.
- B. Encourage the **practice of art (visual, performing, literary, media, etc.)** that stimulates the work of artists in our communities.
 1. Provide professional development opportunities for artists and arts organizations to improve their practices and strengthen and sustain their programs and services.
 2. Identify and provide similar professional development opportunities for cultural, scientific and heritage organizations.
- C. Advocate **participation in the arts** through workshops, classes and other activities that enable people of all ages to explore their creativity.
 1. Focus additional attention on a variety of programming to engage teens and young adults.
 2. Identify barriers to active participation in the arts such as transportation and expense and seek partners to help break down these barriers.
 3. Research demographics to help direct programming emphases.
- D. Support strategic **promotion of the arts** to build awareness, audiences and expectations for cultural activities sponsored by the Douglas County Cultural Council (and SCFD, if appropriate).
 1. Explore sponsoring an annual cultural forum or congress to bring all cultural organizations in Douglas County together for networking and promotion and professional development in these areas.
 2. Identify opportunities for cross promotion in order to reach and attract broader audiences.
 3. Develop branding strategies to market cultural events: Examples include: Douglas County (DOUGCO) presents: (a) Events at the Tree; (b) Events at the Rock; (c) Events at the Ranch; (d) Events at the Park.

*Comprehensive Master Plan 2030: Section 5 Community Resources
Goal 5-7 Provide opportunities for cultural experiences.*

GOAL #2

The Douglas County Cultural Council will identify opportunities to strengthen the cultural vitality of Douglas County by initiating, coordinating and advocating for projects that accomplish that purpose.

- A. The Douglas County Cultural Council will strengthen public art programs in Douglas County by building awareness and support for public art with support from the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District and local partnerships.
 1. Identify and recruit a coordinator for public art processes and projects and marketing and promotional strategies for countywide public art projects.
 2. Launch a countywide public art project for exhibition of artwork on loan initially in the four jurisdictions: Castle Rock, Highlands Ranch, Lone Tree and Parker.
 3. Partner with the Douglas County Libraries Foundation in soliciting and selecting public art to be installed at the libraries.
- B. The Douglas County Cultural Council will coordinate research, planning and advocacy for new cultural facilities in Douglas County.
 1. Work with the Douglas County Commissioners, the Douglas County Historic Preservation Board, Douglas County School District, Denver University, the University of Colorado, Douglas County Libraries and other potential partners interested in cultural facilities initiatives. Incorporate planning for a summer home for the Colorado Symphony.
 2. In pursuit of our heritage goals, support the efforts of the Douglas County Commissioners, the Douglas County Historic Preservation Board and the Colorado Historical Society in researching development of a countywide Historic Preservation Master Plan to assess the range of historic materials and resources in Douglas County and plan for comprehensive preservation, display and appropriate utilization of these assets.
 - a. Help develop marketing strategies that highlight these resources and focus on Douglas County as a destination for this experience.
 - b. Participate in developing strategies for funding of these initiatives.

Comprehensive Master Plan 2030: Section 6 Community Services

Goal 6-3: Preserve Douglas County's cultural resources for future generations.

Objective 6-3A Create a preservation program that includes methods and policies for the protection of cultural resources.

Policies: 6-3A. 1through 6-3A.4

3. Participate in the County's facilities planning efforts on behalf of arts, cultural, heritage and scientific interests in Douglas County communities and unincorporated areas.
 - a. Advocate for inclusion of appropriate facilities in the plan and monitor implementation.
 - b. Advocate for cultural facilities initiatives currently being planned in the jurisdictions such as performing arts facilities for Lone Tree and Parker.

Comprehensive Master Plan 2030: Section 5 Community Resources

Goal 5-7 Provide opportunities for cultural experiences.

Objective 5-7A Establish cultural facility locations in new and existing communities.

Policies 5-7A.1 and 5-7A.2

4. Research and maintain an inventory of currently available venues for arts, cultural, heritage, historical and scientific programming.
 - a. Promote availability of this information to interested groups and individuals who could use these venues to deliver their programs and services to Douglas County communities.
 - b. Encourage collaborative planning and utilization of facilities that meet the needs for scientific, cultural, arts and historical activities.

Comprehensive Master Plan 2030: Section 5 Community Resources

Goal 5-1 Ensure the provision of adequate community resources in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Objective 5-1B Maintain a development pattern of contiguous and logical extensions of community resources and infrastructure.

Policy: 5-1B.2 Encourage multi-purpose use of public lands, facilities, or services to reduce duplication.

Objective 5-1C Ensure new development pays its fair share.

Policy: 5-1C.3 Ensure new development is and able to fulfill commitments to provide, or contribute toward needed community resources and infrastructure.

Goal 5-2 Provide educational facilities that serve the County's population.

Objective 5-2A Maintain a cooperative approach to planning for educational facilities.

Policy 5-2A.3 Support tax incentives or other benefits to create partnerships between businesses and educational institutions.

Objective 5-2B Schools should be safe, accessible and prominent in the community.

Policies 5-2B.1 through 5-2B.3

5. Encourage communities to develop collaborative activities with the cultural events they are planning such as, block-booking, cross promotion, marketing and ticketing.
- C. The Douglas County Cultural Council will help promote cultural tourism in Douglas County and create broader awareness of the cultural, artistic and scientific resources in our communities that contribute to the economic development of our jurisdictions.
 1. Seek partners to facilitate development of a Cultural Tourism Plan for Douglas County.
 - a. Explore the potential benefits of establishing a Cultural Tourism Commission for Douglas County.
 - b. Seek a variety of potential partners such as the Douglas County Business Alliance and others engaged in economic development initiatives.
 - c. Enlist arts, culture, heritage and scientific organizations in implementing successful cultural tourism promotion.
 - d. Research strategies for funding such a promotional effort such as passing a lodging tax for marketing and promoting arts, cultural and heritage activities in Douglas County.
 2. Continue to utilize communications strategies for print and electronic media to promote and market Douglas County resources.
 - a. Inventory resources to promote, develop a calendar, and keep it current and engaging. Categories might include: facilities, heritage, events, arts and culture, recreation.
 - b. Encourage cultural organizations to submit their schedules and calendars of events and activities, and keep them current for marketing and promotion of these activities.
 - c. Develop links to related sites.
 3. Promote collaboration among the jurisdictions and communities to design strategies for economic development through cultural activities.
 - a. Connect with Tier I and Tier II organizations and the Colorado Historical Society to encourage their visitors to visit Douglas County.
 - b. Connect with Welcome Centers, the Colorado Tourism Organization and chambers of commerce to promote Douglas County destinations.
 4. Promote the heritage, scientific and natural resources of Douglas County through these networks by featuring attractions such as state parks, Pike National Forest and various public access open spaces.

Comprehensive Master Plan 2030: Section 6 Community Services

Goal 6-4 Create a robust and sustainable economy.

Objective 6-4A Establish economic development programs that support businesses of all sizes.

Policy 6-4A.4 (With application to cultural tourism)

- D. The Douglas County Cultural Council will promote arts, cultural and heritage education in our P-20 schools, recreation centers and other alternative venues for lifelong learning.
 1. Increase opportunities for SCFD Tiers I, II and III to provide programs in Douglas County schools, libraries and other educational venues.
 - a. Assist cultural, scientific and heritage organizations in preparing programs that relate to Douglas County School District curriculum standards.
 - b. Raise awareness in schools about taking advantage of presentations by cultural organizations and artists in residence programs as well as field trips.

- c. Promote these opportunities with and through the District Study Teams in Art, Music and Theatre.
- 2. Support creation of a regional magnet school for the arts.
- 3. Develop and implement a comprehensive advocacy plan for arts education P-20.
 - a. Determine the current arts education environment: What's in place for delivering the arts education curriculum now? What needs to be put in place? Who needs to be involved to make it happen? What research is needed to support this advocacy effort? Identify potential partners in this effort such as the Colorado Council on the Arts and THINK360: Arts Complete Education and others.
 - b. Include audience development strategies.
 - c. Convene forums or communication events to promote arts education and lifelong learning in the arts. Enlist adult learners in this campaign.
 - d. Bring educators together and promote the benefits of arts education and the communities' interest in arts education for their children.
 - e. Have a presence at education or arts related events to advocate for arts education.
 - f. Connect with civic, business and youth leadership and request arts, culture and heritage advocacy in leadership training and awareness.
 - g. Support activities and events that build literacy and awareness of appropriate audience behavior. Use these events as opportunities for advocacy for these and similar programs.

Comprehensive Master Plan 2030: Section 5 Community Resources

Goal 5-7 Provide opportunities for cultural experiences.

Comprehensive Master Plan 2030: Section 6 Community Services

Goal 6-3: Preserve Douglas County's cultural resources for future generations.

GOAL #3

The Douglas County Cultural Council will identify and cultivate the resources needed to implement this Cultural Plan.

- A. Research options and potential resources and secure stable and ongoing funding from a variety of sources to support implementation of the Cultural Plan.
- B. Creatively explore options of shared staff, contractual resources and volunteer opportunities to assist in accomplishing the tasks outlined in the Cultural Plan.
- C. Reactivate the Arts and Culture Subcommittee of the Partnership of Douglas County Governments to assist with networking functions, conduct research and serve as a communications link with the jurisdictions.
 - 1. Schedule quarterly joint meetings for this subcommittee, the Douglas County Cultural Council and interested members of the Steering Committee for the 2007 Plan to establish priorities and benchmarks for implementation of the 2007 Cultural Plan.
 - 2. Evaluate progress and explore funding strategies for expanded implementation for the 2007 Cultural Plan.
- D. Include questions on arts, culture and heritage topics in the citizen survey scheduled in April 2008 to establish a longitudinal analysis for the growth of public response to arts, culture and heritage programs and services in Douglas County.
 - 1. Analyze and use results for planning programs and services for Douglas County citizens.
 - 2. Repeat surveys on a regular schedule to track growth of the arts, culture and heritage organizations and audiences.
 - 3. Continue to use results and analyses for evaluation and planning.

Glossary

- ★ **Arts** are broadly defined to include music, theatre or dance performances, concerts, exhibitions of visual art, new media, lectures, literary readings, screenings, classes and other displays for audiences in the communities of Douglas County.
- ★ **Education** includes curricular and extracurricular work P-20 (pre-kindergarten through college) as well as opportunities for Douglas County citizens to engage in lifelong learning.
- ★ **Public art** is artwork acquired with public funds, on public display and maintained by the municipality or jurisdiction. This artwork may be commissioned, purchased or otherwise acquired by a municipality or jurisdiction if they so choose.
- ★ **Art in Public Places** can be privately commissioned works of art, purchased, or selected and continue to be owned privately. There is no requirement that the community is involved in the selection process. The works of art may be displayed in a public location. The artwork is maintained by the owner.
- ★ **Heritage or cultural heritage** refers to the growing and evolving traditions, the historical materials, sites and structures as well as the natural resources we have inherited from our predecessors. It can also include genealogy and cultural practices.
- ★ **Culture** can be defined as the broad range of activities in Douglas County communities that include arts, heritage, science and technology and the frameworks that support those activities and give them meaning.
- ★ **Cultural Tourism** attracts visitors to an area based on sites and activities that reflect the traditions or celebrations, art forms, heritage or natural resources found in that community and among its people.
- ★ **Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD)** collects a 1/10 of 1 percent sales and use tax in the seven county metropolitan Denver area (with the exception of the Town of Castle Rock and Larkspur in Douglas County). These funds are distributed to cultural organizations and facilities whose primary purpose is to enlighten and entertain the public through the production, presentation, exhibition, advancement and preservation of art, music, theatre, dance, zoology, botany, natural history and cultural history.