



Arts  
Master  
Plan

May 16

2012

Prepared by  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of the Arts Master Plan is to develop a five-year strategic plan that defines the role of the City of San Marcos in supporting the arts, and the role of the arts community in accomplishing the City's broader goals of quality of life and economic development.

## **APPROACH**

The planning process engaged the participation of key stakeholders, artists, and community members in the Arts Master Plan, establishing goals and objectives to provide the framework for orderly and consistent planning and development of arts and culture in San Marcos. In addition, the Arts Master Plan includes an asset inventory of San Marcos, identifying cultural assets in a Schematic Layout Map.

Arts planner Grady Hillman has utilized a synergistic approach in developing the San Marcos Arts Master Plan, building upon existent culturally relevant plans and processes. The initial phase of the planning process involved identifying community-engaged cultural planning documents, which focused wholly or in part on the role of the arts. These existent arts-related needs assessments and recommendations have been organized in historical summaries with recommendations culled from the available documentation.

Having completed the research, Hillman conducted interviews with key stakeholders identified by the San Marcos Arts Commission to develop an informed set of recommendations which was organized for community input. In addition, Hillman and his staff produced an inventory of San Marcos arts assets based on input from the Arts Commission, the Parks and Recreation department, stakeholder interviews and independent research.

The next phase of the planning process involved public presentations of the preliminary plan and arts inventory to survey community support for the recommendations presented and elicit new recommendations and community arts assets to be included in the arts inventory.

The final component of the Arts Master Plan contains the combined recommendations from both sources of community input, which are intended for use in prioritizing the needs of future cultural development.

## SAN MARCOS ARTS PLANNING HISTORY

### Summary of Community Planning and Recommendations

This section outlines existing plans the City of San Marcos has adopted and recommendations from community meetings/planning sessions in which arts and culture are included. The purpose of this review is to establish a historical perspective of community planning in San Marcos that has included the arts and to establish a base for the stakeholder interviews and the community input survey.

Included are the most relevant excerpts from the plans as they relate to the arts.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY—SERVING UP THE ARTS

Arts Planning Forum, November 4, 1996

Public meeting hosted by the San Marcos Performing Arts Association and the Heart of Texas Arts Alliance attended by 70 San Marcos area residents.

Top Five Suggestions as ranked by attendees:

- *Build support for existing programs with emphasis on multiculturalism and multicultural events.* This would be accomplished through more cooperation, a cohesive agenda/calendar, and combined events to create bigger and more diverse audiences.
- *Art along the river and on the Square.* This encompasses both live and visual arts presentations.
- *Develop a San Marcos historical docudrama to be performed on a regular basis in an outdoor theater.*
- *Have a well-supported K-12 art program in public schools.*
- *Develop a map showing artist studio locations and contact information.* This would develop into an “Artist’s Studio Tour.”



Suggestions for facility use or new facilities:

- Creation of a river amphitheater
- Refurbishment of Lamar Auditorium for community theater
- Greater utilization of the Glade Theater
- Greater use of Aquarena Springs as a performance venue
- Creation of a San Marcos Arts Center

FINAL REPORT: Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on Tourism Development  
March 1997

This report generated a number of strategies and concepts for increasing tourism to San Marcos including heritage tourism and eco-tourism. Those recommendations with an arts-related component are the following:

- Texas State should develop a presence in the Central Business District accessible to visitors that displays some pieces from the Southwest Writers Collection and artwork from Texas State. A university employee would be able to direct visitors on how to access the collections, artwork and arts venues on campus.
- Develop a plaza and park in commemoration of St. Mark. Park development will be enhanced by a statue and park design competition open only to Texas artists.
- Hollywood, Texas. Signage should be developed which identifies the many movie set sites in San Marcos for self-guided and assisted tours.
- The Old Baptist Church should be restored and utilized as a community venue. The Calaboose should be developed into a museum. The Jail at 170 Fredericksburg St. could be restored.

SAN MARCOS HORIZONS

Adopted February 1996

This is the Master Plan of the City of San Marcos. Elements of it, particularly in relation to facility use, were integrated into the City of San Marcos--Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, Adopted 06/14/02. However, it is important to note policies and recommendations adopted into the San Marcos Master Plan.

All items below are taken from the Horizons' Executive Summary:

Economic Development:

- Goal 4 - Community Gateways
  - Create attractive "gateways" into San Marcos which provide aesthetically pleasing and informative entrances into the community.

Town Center:

- Goal 4 - Aesthetics/Visual Appearance
  - Improve the aesthetics/visual appearance of the downtown area.
- Goal 6 - Downtown Activities
  - Promote a variety of cultural activities and attractions in the downtown area.

Downtown Plan Contents:

- An outdoor amphitheater and arts complex are proposed to be located along the banks of the San Marcos River, north of Children's Park and east of C.M. Allen Parkway.

CITY OF SAN MARCOS PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN  
Adopted June 14, 2002

## Introduction

This Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan is [. . .] designed to be a comprehensive, long-range plan for the development, expansion and acquisition of parks, open space, and greenspace and recreational areas within the incorporated limits of the City of San Marcos. This Plan is the result of a community effort with work having been done on the part of many. This included the gathering of information from citizen comments through the public process, city and school district personnel, and from various community organizations. Before final adoption, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the City Council of the City of San Marcos held public hearings on this plan. This Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan is intended to guide and satisfy all of the related needs of the City of San Marcos over the next decade.

Elements of this plan directly relevant to arts planning in San Marcos include the following:

### Master Plan:

Policy CF-1.13: (and CF-6.3) The City shall encourage, promote, and facilitate art and related types of festivals throughout the park system.

Policy CF-6.6: The City shall establish an education program for cultural resources at all levels.

### Objectives:

Other high priority requests made at the various public hearings for incorporation into this Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan include a BMX track, skateboard and roller blade parks, regional and neighborhood pools, *neighborhood recreation centers with neighborhood recreation programs, and a regional arts / cultural center.* (Italics added for emphasis.)

### Prioritization of Needs:

This Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan recommends a 10-year action plan with ordered priorities, time line for accomplishment and funding sources as follows:

*Ranked as 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> respectively out of 8 are two arts related priorities:*

- Cultural Arts Center-- Ongoing from year one to year 10—Grants, Donations, Bonds, In-kind Services
- Neighborhood Recreation Centers--Ongoing from year one to year 10—Grants, Bonds, In-kind Services

ART IN PUBLIC PLACES Policy and Procedural Guidelines  
City of San Marcos Arts Commission; Adopted April 5, 2005

This document provides a process for the placement of permanent and temporary artwork, monuments, and structures on city property. It does not apply to privately owned properties. It is relevant to some of the citizen recommendations that appear later, such as creating temporary sculpture exhibits on waterway trails or youth-interactive art in public parks. It will be included as an Appendix to the final San Marcos Arts Master Plan.



DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN  
City of San Marcos; Adopted October 2008

The following excerpts are taken from the Downtown Master Plan, which was adopted by the City of San Marcos in 2009. It envisions a San Marcos that appeals to a “creative class” drawn by the articulation of historic and cultural assets. **Bold areas** represent arts related mentions highlighted for emphasis or commentary by this consultant.

The City of San Marcos Downtown Master Plan is a part of a decade-long process that began with San Marcos’ Horizons efforts in 1996, and stems from even earlier city master planning efforts. In light of extraordinary growth along the Interstate-Highway 35 corridor, the City’s Horizons planning document has directed development for positive community growth. The original Horizons document has been expanded into several sector plans and other special area plans for City projects.

The Downtown Master Planning process engaged a diverse group of residents, business owners, and citizen interest groups. Community forums and open-houses, walking tours, meetings with key city staff and stakeholders, and surveys were conducted over the course of a year in order to form a representative foundation upon which to build the Downtown Vision. Over 1600 respondents

completed the Downtown Master Plan Survey, and more than 400 community members participated and collaborated in person with city staff and consultants.

### **Vision Plan**

- **Benchmarking & Planning Principles:**  
The economic model utilized for the Downtown Master Plan focuses on the factors that play important roles in stimulating economic vitality in a community. In contrast to traditional economic development models that employ mostly industrial recruitment strategies, this model acknowledges that employers are increasingly locating where talented employees are, and this “creative class” is moving to places where they want to live.

In other words, today’s talented employees decide where they want to live first and then find work in those places, rather than the other way around. For this reason, employers are locating in communities that have the quality of place that will attract or have already attracted the talent that they need. As a result, quality of place and “sense of place” issues are central to a community’s success in economic development.

- **Encourage Third Places:**  
San Marcos should encourage the establishment of “third places” distinct from home and work, such as coffee shops, internet cafes, alfresco dining areas, pubs, bookstores, and the like, that foster a culture of informal gathering, socializing, conversing and exchanging ideas. The best third places are adjacent to sidewalks and public spaces; each benefits greatly through association with the other.
- **Mind the Details:**  
Great downtown environments engage both the sense and intellect with diverse and detailed architectural facades, preservation of key views, engaging signage, attractive furnishings, colorful planting, sidewalk commerce, **public art**, and many other points of detail. The city’s regulatory framework should be flexible enough to allow the unfolding of a diverse and stimulus-rich environment over time.

### **Vision Plan--The Big Ideas**

*This “visioning” element of the Downtown Master Plan presents a multiple “village” articulation of San Marcos generally running from the southern boundary of Texas State adjacent to Downtown through Downtown on a corridor to I-35. A critical design element that contributes to this model is the development of a commuter rail between San Antonio and Austin with a Transportation Hub constructed in downtown San Marcos. The Transportation Hub is projected to be located at the end of Edward Gary Street. (Hillman)*

Finally, the Big Ideas plan attempts to promote and preserve the cultural and historical heritage of San Marcos. Each neighborhood is envisioned in the Downtown Master Plan as being distinct in terms of identity, yet as also working in concert to form a rich character that is uniquely San Marcos. The Big Ideas diagram identifies these neighborhoods as a series of “villages” that compose the Downtown.

- **The Downtown Village:**  
This village coincides with the existing Downtown neighborhood that is identified in the Observations and Analysis chapter. This neighborhood is essentially comprised of the Courthouse Square and the blocks that immediately surround it. The Downtown Village should seek to preserve its historic character while encouraging appropriate infill development in underdeveloped properties. The Downtown Village should be a mix of housing, employment, **entertainment**, and retail usages that support the unique flavor of San Marcos. It should be the heart of the entire community, and it should hold together all of the other Downtown neighborhoods.
- **The University Village:**  
Following along with ideas that were articulated in the City’s 2007 campus Edge Strategic Plan, the University Village is identified as the area between the central Courthouse Square and Texas State University. The neighborhood should be comprised of a mix of housing and **entertainment** options that successfully engages the student population to the north. This village will help to maximize Downtown’s connections to the University and will serve as a transition zone for town-gown relations. It should be a place for interaction between students, nonstudents, and out-of-towners.
- **Entertainment Village & Transportation Hub:**  
The southern half of the Downtown neighborhood currently consists of loft-style residential units, a number of warehouses, some of which are historical, and a mixed assortment of businesses. The Downtown Master Plan envisages this area as the location for a future transportation hub for the proposed commuter rail stop; this district could offer a combination of uses ranging from housing to retail to **entertainment and arts**.
- **Arts Village:**  
**Adjacent to the transportation hub lies a second warehouse zone. This neighborhood, identified as the arts village in the Big Ideas diagram, offers a transitional space with structures large enough to serve as artist’s studios, music centers or other cultural development venues.**
- **East Guadalupe & Victory Gardens:**  
The East Guadalupe and Victory Gardens neighborhoods comprise another of the Downtown Master Plans’ villages. These residential communities, with their unique heritage, are envisioned as having a neighborhood market and community gathering spaces just east of Guadalupe Street.

- **Cultural & Historic Village:**  
This village, located to the southwest of the Courthouse Square, is viewed as an extension of the cultural amenities located Downtown. The Calaboose African American History museum is located within the Dunbar neighborhood. Also proposed are the Eddie Durham Jazz Park and the Cephus House.
- **Civic Neighborhood:**  
East of the Downtown, between the San Marcos River and the interstate, there exists a neighborhood of Civic and Community Services. These community services are located adjacent to the community park, and create a hub of city government and amenities, including city hall, the activity center, and the library. The City of San Marcos should seek to actively direct positive growth Downtown in a manner consistent with the Planning Principles and Vision Plan. By building upon the already-established framework resident to Downtown San Marcos, and by realigning economic development principles to value quality of place, San Marcos will be well poised to realize the vision for an active, vibrant, and revitalized Downtown.

### **San Marcos' Identity & Placemaking**

- **Marketing for Success - making the Downtown a unique destination:**  
Vehicular signage on IH-35 that directs people to the Downtown should be coupled with entry gateway markers at five key locations, which correspond with the main access corridors of Aquarena Springs, Hopkins Street/County Road 12, CM Allen Boulevard, Guadalupe Street, and Wonder World Drive. The City will need to work with the Texas Department of Transportation to establish better signage for Downtown exits along IH-35. The Texas Department of Transportation will also need to be consulted as landscaping and median plans are developed for areas surrounding interstate entry and off-ramps. **The gateway markers at these locations should be representative of Downtown or San Marcos and standardized or themed motifs could register on street signs and directional signage throughout the city. Several motif ideas were offered during conversations with residents of San Marcos, including Texas stars, San Marcos salamanders, and Aquarena Springs mermaid icons. As a way to garner community support, San Marcos could conduct a public campaign to generate a new city icon.**
- **Promotion of Cultural Events:**  
The City of San Marcos could also enhance its identity by promoting cultural events in the Downtown area. These events, when properly marketed, draw visitors and community members to the City and into the Downtown. As an example, San Marcos could reinstate its chili festival, sponsor performances in conjunction with Texas State University, or promote farmers or artists markets Downtown. Events such as these could also take place at key nodes of activity

in the residential neighborhood Downtown or could be located along the banks of the beautiful San Marcos River.

- Edward Gary Street at the PROPOSED Commuter Rail Stop: Here, the idea of a market plaza is incorporated into the rail station development, which could be a unique element that is utilized for farmer or artist's markets, gathering spaces for performances or any variety of events.

#### Recommendations:

##### Enhance Downtown's Unique Characteristics

- Continue to increase the promotion of cultural events that draw people Downtown.
- Establish and enhance centers of activity within each neighborhood.

#### SAN MARCOS CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU STAKEHOLDER FORUMS

(Notes compiled by the SMCVB): *Cultural Tourism and Heritage Tourism*, June 9, 2009

The San Marcos Convention and Visitors Bureau convened two key stakeholder forums to discuss Cultural Tourism and Heritage Tourism assets, opportunities and obstacles. The notes from both meetings were provided to this consultant, and the Cultural Tourism group definitely provides several recommendations that have been integrated into the Community Recommendations that follow. The Heritage Tourism group identified many cultural assets that have been integrated into the Arts Asset Inventory. Given that, these discussions were informational for the CVB and did not take place in public meetings or hearings, their recommendations represent the ideas of the individuals who proffered them and were shared with the community in the Arts Master Plan process.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE I-35 REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

June 29, 2010

##### Overview

The I-35 Redevelopment Committee was convened by Mayor Narvaiz to explore both short term and long term aesthetic improvements to the I-35 corridor and recommend actions through which the City of San Marcos can visually improve the gateway into our community.

##### General Recommendations

- Establish a small grant program for façade improvements to buildings along the interstate.
- Establish a Gateway Overlay district to address signage, landscaping, and façade materials.
- Improve the appearance of the overpasses through a partnership with Texas State University (i.e. collaborate with Texas State art/design students for mural

ideas and the City will incur the expense of materials or include the City branding logo along highway overpasses)

### Specific Recommendations

The I-35 redevelopment committee selected the following six underutilized/ empty buildings that could benefit from public/private revitalization efforts:

- The former Taste of China (904 Bugg Lane)
- Stokes Construction Building (1920 S. IH-35)
- Electrosorce Building (2809 S. IH-35)
- The former McCoy's Headquarters (1200 N. IH-35)
- Widelite (126 Texas Avenue)
- Springtown Mall (The area bounded by I-35, Springtown Way, Thorpe Lane and the Railroad tracks)

### *Springtown Mall:*

The committee identified the entire site as needing redevelopment; this would include the area bounded by Thorpe Lane, Springtown Way, I-35, and the railroad tracks. The most appropriate use of the property was identified as being mixed use. **It was important to the committee that the use of this property accommodates for the needs of the surrounding residential areas and provides some neighborhood services. Other possible uses include an entertainment venue with a residential component and urban setting that supports a shop, work, and live lifestyle. (Emphasis added by Consultant.)** Additionally, this site may be good place for a business incubator program. Site Development Requirements include providing screening of parking through the use of liner buildings along Springtown Way and I-35. For this site to receive assistance from the City, the committee identified the following conditions that must be present:

- LEED Certification (silver)
- The City must set required performance measures for the developer
- Office space should be incorporated with an incentive to keep existing business through the help of possible temporary relocation and the choice of office space in the redevelopment.
- Access issues on Thorpe Lane need to be addressed

Potential Incentives the City may consider for assisting the development of this property include the following:

- The City could help by paying for the demolition of the buildings
- Tax abatement for reconstruction of buildings

CITY OF SAN MARCOS PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN  
Adopted December 7, 2010

This Plan updates the 2002 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan and is much more comprehensive and informative in nature. Upon completion, the San Marcos Arts Master Plan will be integrated as an Appendix into Open Space Master Plan.

The following are excerpts from the new Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan relevant to the arts and cultural programming. Where arts related information policy or information is imbedded in other information it has been highlighted for emphasis:

Within the limits of this plan, we address park land, park facilities, programming, parkland dedication, maintenance, and funding. Each of these individual items and ideas make up the whole of the city-wide plan. Care was taken over the course of several months to understand the needs and desires of the policy makers and residents alike. While this document provides the necessary technical data and standards for development, it is heavily weighted in the public process that results in meeting the local needs of the citizens.

Local park experts and City staff were also asked to identify priorities for the parks system. The highest priorities listed were to:

- Expand the existing park system through the acquisition of additional park land and natural areas.
- Revise/update the current Parkland Dedication ordinance to reflect changing trends in San Marcos development/expansion.
- Develop the newly acquired city park facilities.
- Provide more efficient maintenance and security in existing park facilities.
- **Develop comprehensive recreational and cultural arts activity programming.**



**Vision:**

Create a unified parks and recreation system that serves the entire San Marcos community, supports tourism efforts and remains a good steward to the River and surrounding environment.

**Goals:**

- **Funding:** allocate adequate funding for the long-term benefit of the park system.
- **Maintenance:** establish a set of department standards by which maintenance practices adhere to.
- **Safety:** maintain parks for the health, safety, and welfare of the public.
- **Programming:** offer a variety of recreational and cultural City programs for public use.
- **Sustainability:** plan for the long-term health of the park and recreation system.
- **Environmental:** sensitivity to natural areas, waterways, habitat and the aquifer recharge zone.
- **Tourism:** promote recreational and cultural tourism through the development of regional facilities.
- **Connectivity:** interconnected system of parks, trails and greenbelts throughout the San Marcos ETJ.
- **Parkland Dedication:** revise/update the current Parkland Dedication ordinance to reflect changing trends in San Marcos development/expansion.
- **University:** create a plan that can be implemented over time with the coordination/cooperation of Texas State University.

**Stakeholder Interviews:**

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with City of San Marcos officials, University officials and associated agency directors and staff to gauge the current state of the San Marcos Parks, as well as understand their goals for the future. Responses within each of the following five categories are listed in priority order.

From a cultural programming (art, music, theater, etc.) standpoint, the most common needs are:

- Citizen Involvement and Promotion of the Arts
- Facilities
- Funding
- Staffing

**Action Plan:**

One activity center is currently operated by the city at the level of 1 per 50,000 people. The national guideline suggests 1 per 25,000 people. Based on community feedback, and to meet the needs of the expanding population, this plan recommends that all future activity centers be smaller in scale and located throughout the City. Similar to neighborhood parks, these facilities would serve more localized populations (rather than city-wide), and could be tailored to the needs of the area it served (i.e. seniors, youth, etc.) Although this arrangement may spread the department resources, it will better serve the population by providing accessible recreation/programs.

**Related to recreational activity centers, the City is also in need of a facility for cultural programming, including the arts. This center could serve the dual role of servicing a specific locale within San Marcos, but also act as an anchor for cultural programming throughout the City.**

2010 Prioritization of Needs:

- Trails (connections to existing trails and rivers/creeks)
- Acquisition of Parkland and development of facilities in the southwest quadrant of the ETJ
- Acquisition of Parkland and development of facilities East of I-35
- Athletic Fields west of I-35
- Community Park development west of I-35 and near downtown
- Passive Park development along San Marcos River and Blanco River
- Increased Staffing and budget for increased facilities
- **Development of recreational/activity centers (small) and cultural arts center**

Activities and Programming:

City-sponsored programs and activities are being utilized to a degree, but there appears to be strong support to increase the frequency and availability of those programs; especially for cultural programming, outdoor recreation and activity center.

**The City is in need of a cultural activities coordinator who can begin to develop the strategy and model needed to implement a successful program.** Availability of space seems to be a barrier to keeping people involved. It was suggested that several, smaller centers be developed (similar to recreation) so that individuals of any age have easy access within their neighborhood and not across town. **Certain activities such as music and theater would benefit from their own, larger facility, so a long-range goal is to identify where and how that happens.**

Park Development

*0-5 years Need Cost (in 2009 \$\$)*

**Cultural Center** Arts, music \$500,000 (location TBD)

*5-10 years*

**Activity Center** TBD \$450,000  
(East)

**Activity Center** TBD \$450,000  
(North)

**Activity Center** TBD \$450,000  
(West)

**Activity Center** TBD \$450,000  
(South)

**TOTAL \$2,300,000**

## DREAM SAN MARCOS INITIATIVE

Launched August 16, 2011

San Marcos unveiled the Dream San Marcos Initiative on August 16, 2011. The Initiative asked residents to contribute ideas regarding the city's development as part of a process to update the city's 1996 comprehensive plan. The city collected ideas from residents using IdeaScale online software, email, comment cards, activities and public events.

The following are the most popular ideas listed on the IdeaScale website that relate to community arts. The numbers represent an average of people who supported the idea through online votes.

- Centralized Event Listing (81)
- Create a Central Arts District (70)
- More public music events (45)
- Museums and an Arboretum (32)
- Organize a designated legal art wall (28)
- Creative Community; improve culture, education and entertainment and provide a community that encourages creativity and innovation (26)
- Gateways; make all gateways nice to let people know that they are welcome to our town (22)
- Make San Marcos a Public Art Destination (21)
- San Marcos Public Radio Station (15)
- Farmer's Market; expand its schedule and improve upon it to make the market more attractive to young people (8)
- Drive-in Movie theater (7)
- San Marcos Public Access video channel (6)



## ARTS MASTER PLAN - COMMUNITY INPUT PROCESS

### Stakeholder Interviews

As stated above, part of the process of generating recommendations from the community included interviewing community stakeholders as identified by the San Marcos Arts Commission. These interviews took place between January 2011 and May 2011. The recommendations which these community members provided were then compiled by Hillman into a comprehensive survey.

### *List of Community Stakeholders*

- Lisa Morris, Recreation Manager, City of San Marcos Community Services-Parks and Recreation
- Rick Bowen, President, San Marcos Performing Arts Association
- Kelly Franks, Program Director, Main Street Program
- Scott Gregson, Texas Music Theater
- Beverley Mangham, Owner and Instructor, Eye of the Dog Art Center
- Lisa Jasek, President, San Marcos Art League and 12 League Members
- Linda Kelsey-Jones, San Marcos Area Arts Council
- Ofelia Vasquez-Philo, President, Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos
- Chris Cooper, teacher
- Diann McCabe, San Marcos Arts Commission
- Sofia Nelson, Senior Planner, City of San Marcos
- Arlis Hiebert, San Marcos Arts Commission
- Joan Nagel, teacher
- Kevin Huffaker, San Marcos Arts Commission
- Michael Niblett, Director, Art and Design, Texas State University

### Public Involvement Process

The Stakeholder Recommendations Survey (Appendix A) generated from the Stakeholder interviews was presented at a town meeting in June 2011, with 50 San Marcos citizens in attendance. Community members were asked to rate each recommendation on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “highly disapprove” and 5 being “highly approve.” The scores were then calculated to determine the average ranking for each item. All recommendations with a score of 3.9 or above (indicating that on average, the recommendation was met with approval) were then compiled to provide a list of action items for the Arts Master Plan. Twenty-three surveys were completed.

Lisa Morris, Diann McCabe, and Clay DeStefano conducted a second town meeting in July 2011, with 25 people in attendance. Community members were asked to brainstorm a set of their own recommendations and ideas. The full set of recommendations generated is included in table F-1.

Table F-1

Arts Town Meeting Planning: July 9, 2011				
<p>Participants were asked the following question: When you think of the next 3-5 years, from your perspective and experiences, what is a strategy or action that the City of San Marcos could put into place to support and facilitate a diverse representation of art and culture in San Marcos?</p> <p>From the responses, the ideas were sorted into five main areas of need with specific objectives identified below.</p>				
Consolidate efforts to create a central arts district	City arts commitment and collaboration	Develop infrastructure to support the arts	Develop arts publicity/marketing/communication initiative	Hold community-wide arts festivals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a central cultural center</li> <li>• Make downtown an art and musical destination!</li> <li>• Support artists' basic needs living in a community</li> <li>• Foster multicultural collaboration</li> <li>• Develop a sculpture trail along the river</li> <li>• Provide studio/art space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central application PDF file for artists/vendors for festival on City website</li> <li>• Support existing arts programs</li> <li>• Initiate a city-wide arts coalition</li> <li>• Support youth art programs</li> <li>• Make the arts a part of development policies</li> <li>• Enhance city council leadership to create an awareness of the role the arts play in San Marcos</li> <li>• Recruit competent arts leaders and administrators</li> <li>• Ensure that key art staff are in place at the City level</li> <li>• Have a "chamber of arts and culture"</li> <li>• Involve businesses</li> <li>• Seek new and sustainable funding sources</li> <li>• Initiate major fund rotation</li> <li>• Intergenerational arts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a plan to restore empty building(s)</li> <li>• Look at existing surveys of available vacant buildings</li> <li>• Plan for a parking garage downtown</li> <li>• Research and develop facilities and space for artists</li> <li>• Increase available facilities for arts events and limit costs charged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop signage for San Marcos arts</li> <li>• Develop and arts webpage for SM</li> <li>• Develop a Facebook site for the arts (done!)</li> <li>• Involve local businesses</li> <li>• Sub-branding positioning San Marcos as an Art Town</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold a fine arts festival involving everyone</li> <li>• Have arts festivals for artists for networking</li> <li>• Have arts festivals/fairs for galleries</li> <li>• Insure intergenerational participation in the arts</li> </ul>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Overview

As the two town meetings produced different sets of recommendations, we have made an effort to combine both sets of results in order to present a cohesive picture of the community's desires, with the end result being a list of actionable items.

After reviewing both sets of data, we have generated the following list of **seven focus areas**, which include all of the primary areas of concern and/or action. These seven focus areas cover all recommendations of both sources in a comprehensive manner.

### Focus Areas

#### Focus 1: Spaces

The creation, development, and maintenance of new and existing spaces for arts and cultural programming. This includes five subcategories:

- Collaborative Arts and Cultural Centers
- Performing Arts Spaces
- Public Arts Spaces
- Gallery Spaces and Museums
- Available Spaces

#### Focus 2: Accessibility

The improvement of the accessibility of arts and cultural programming for all community members.

#### Focus 3: Arts Education

Providing and maintaining opportunities and programming.

#### Focus 4: Funding

Providing and generating funding for the development and continuation of arts and cultural programming.

#### Focus 5: City Involvement

Establishing the role of the city in two areas:

- Development, Facilitation, and Promotion of the Arts
- Staffing

#### Focus 6: Promotion and Advocacy

Promoting and advocating of and for arts and cultural programming, to include:

- Promote community awareness of programming
- Promote community support of the arts
- Distinguish San Marcos as an arts and culture destination

#### Focus 7: Events

The development and continuation of new and current events.

## List of Recommendations

### SPACES:

#### Collaborative Arts and Cultural Centers

##### Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- Build a San Marcos Arts Center dedicated to cultural programming. This center could serve the dual role of servicing a specific locale within San Marcos, but also act as an anchor for cultural programming throughout the City. (4.5)
- Create an art center that provides after-school programs, houses a museum, gallery/performance space, and hosts art classes (similar to the Carver in Austin). (4.4)
- The Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos provides youth arts and music classes, cultural events, and programs to the Georgia Street Senior Center and should become a community arts center. (4.2)
- The Dunbar Recreational Center should expand its arts services and become a community arts center. (4)

##### Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Develop a central cultural center.

#### Performing Arts Spaces

##### Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- The performing arts such as music and theater shall have a dedicated performing arts facility. (4.5)
- Create a 100-person minimum community performing arts theater that can serve as a home to the community theater, the community chorus, the community orchestra, and multi-cultural performing arts. (4.1)
- The San Marcos High School auditorium is a quality performance space that should be utilized for major performing arts events. (4)

#### Public Arts Spaces

##### Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- The pedestrian trails along the rivers and waterways along with the re-development of Aquarena Springs should become an eco-tourism zone with opportunities to become a center for eco-art. (4.7)
- Create inspirational walking paths which incorporate community art-making such as murals and mosaics generating more public art. (4.4)
- Provide live and visual art offerings along the river and on the Square. (4.3)
- The Sculpture Garden at the Activity Center/ Library should become a stepping off point for a pedestrian art trail with the shows at the Walker Gallery as an anchor. (3.9)
- The Rio Vista area should have functional art park benches and semi-permanent or permanent art that kids can interact with and climb on. (3.9)

Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Develop a sculpture trail along the river.

Gallery Spaces and Museums

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- Create a Downtown gallery/museum venue for rotating art exhibits from Texas State– (Wittliff Collection, Mitte, etc.) – that would be a Downtown attraction and promote the arts resources of Texas State. (4.3)
- Create a dedicated gallery space Downtown for San Marcos youth work. (3.9)

Available Spaces

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- Develop a downtown art center in a vacant (or vacating) building such as the Justice Center transforming it into artist studios and gallery space, creating a downtown arts incubator. (4.2)
- Springtown Mall should have/become a major entertainment/performance venue. (4)

Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Survey available vacant buildings; build plan to restore empty buildings in order to provide studio/art space for artists.
- Increase available facilities for arts events and limit costs charged.



ACCESSIBILITY:

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- To facilitate parking and enhance safety near the Square, alleyways should become cultural passageways with public art, murals, and illumination at night. (4.2)
- Expand CARTS services to provide transportation from senior centers to cultural events and centers. (4)

- Texas State should create a way-finding system in town for its arts venues and assets and should be more accessible to the City. (3.9)

Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Plan for the construction of a parking garage downtown.

ARTS EDUCATION:

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- Have a well-supported K-12 arts program in schools. (4.7)
- Every elementary and middle school should have a dedicated art teacher. (4.7)
- Create greater arts programming for family and children, especially after school programs, which are free and not tuition-based. (4.5)
- Establish an education program for cultural resources at all levels (4.3)
- Create a clearinghouse for community opportunities in the arts so that students can engage in service learning opportunities and internships, which are vital for the forthcoming Fine Arts and Communications Academy. (4.3)
- The schools should loan or rent space for after-school and summer arts programs, both youth and adult. (4.3)
- San Marcos needs a youth arts incubator program that works intensively with artists in residence programming, providing opportunities for youth to exhibit and sell their work. (3.9)



Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Support existing arts programs.
- Support youth art programs
- Recruit competent arts leaders and administrators.

FUNDING:

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- The City should have a “Penny for the Arts” public art program where 1% of every dollar spent on public construction goes to the commission of a public art installation. (4.4)

- Increase the appropriation from the Hotel Occupancy Tax for the San Marcos Arts Commission. (4.3)
- Fund after-school arts programs that run until 6pm at every campus utilizing Title 1 funds, which can be allocated to support arts programming. (4.1)

Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Seek new and sustainable funding sources.
- Initiate major fund rotation.

## CITY INVOLVEMENT:

### Development, Facilitation, and Promotion of the Arts

#### Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- The City shall promote a variety of cultural activities and attractions in the downtown area. (4.3)
- The City shall commission or develop more public art. (4.2)
- There should be an Art in Public Places policy included in the City-wide comprehensive master plan when it comes up for revision in 18 months as part of public development. (4.2)
- The City shall encourage, promote, and facilitate art and related types of festivals throughout the park system. (4.1)
- Arts events and exhibits should be attached to regular city events attended by the public including City Council meetings, Chamber of Commerce meetings, etc. to create a greater awareness of San Marcos arts. (4)
- The Arts Commission should become more proactive in developing arts organizations like River City Ballet to create a cadre of independent, quality arts organizations in the community. (3.9)

Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Make the Arts a part of development policies.
- Enhance city council leadership to create an awareness of the role the arts play in San Marcos.
- Have a “Chamber of Arts and Culture.”

### Staffing

#### Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- The City shall have a cultural activities coordinator who can develop the strategy and model needed to implement a successful civic cultural program. (4.3)
- San Marcos should have staff dedicated to arts programming and not continue to rely on volunteerism. (4.2)

Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Ensure that key art staff members are in place at the City level.

## PROMOTION AND ADVOCACY:

### Increase Community Awareness of Programming

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- Develop a cohesive cultural agenda and arts calendar. (4.8)
- San Marcos needs an interactive, communicative arts website that allows for easy linkages. (4.7) (Done: Facebook page)
- San Marcos currently has no centralized hub of arts info, and the website for arts needs to be redeveloped and updates with arts email-blasts going out to interested community member announcing events. (4.7)
- Create a mechanism for getting the word out about arts events other than a website such as a monthly calendar posted at the coffee shops. (4.5)

Second Town Meeting  
Recommendations:

- Create a central application (PDF) for artists/vendors for festivals, available on city website.

### Increase Community Support of the Arts

Stakeholder Survey  
Recommendations (with  
average score):

- Create an affiliate multi-disciplinary arts organization in San Marcos that serves as an advocacy organization for the arts. (4.2)



Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Initiate a city-wide arts coalition.
- Support artists' basic needs living in a community.
- Involve local businesses.

### Efforts to Distinguish San Marcos as an Arts and Culture Destination

Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- The San Marcos music scene should be promoted as a Texas Music hub given the popularity of Cheatham Street Warehouse and the new Texas Music Theater. (4)

- San Marcos could pursue Cultural District designation from the Texas Commission on the Arts and encourage greater density of the arts Downtown. (3.9)

#### Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Develop signage for San Marcos arts.
- Develop sub-branding positioning San Marcos as an “art town.”
- Make downtown an arts and musical destination.

#### EVENTS:

##### Stakeholder Survey Recommendations (with average score):

- Incorporate the arts into Famer’s Market with music and crafts. (4.4)
- The Eddie Durham Jazz Festival should be revived, tied into the Texas State Jazz Festival, and take place in his community as well as on campus. (4.2)
- Summer in the Park should become a mainstay annual event marked as a significant San Marcos attraction. (4.2)
- Create an Art and Eco Event that showcases both San Marcos’ art and its identity as a steward of natural resources. (4.1)
- Create a monthly Noche de Cultura (Cultural Night) at the Centro Cultural Hispano in addition to cultural celebrations on Cinco de Mayo, 16 de Septiembre, and Dia de Los Muertos. (4.1)

##### Second Town Meeting Recommendations:

- Hold a fine arts festival involving everyone in the arts community.
- Have an artist festival for networking purposes. (Done: Art 2 Art Network)
- Have arts festivals/fairs for galleries.

#### Additional Comments

The following comments, grouped according to focus area, are additional input gathered from the June 2011 town meeting attendees who completed the Stakeholder Surveys. They are included here as a reference point and/or idea generating tool for further development of arts and cultural programming in San Marcos.

#### SPACES

- *AIPP – Art in Public Places (as seen in Austin: <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/aipp/>) – for San Marcos.*
- *Community Art Center – classes for all ages; we need a visual arts facility/museum (where classes can be taught); art center for gatherings, lessons, and art shows using TSU artists and local artists.*
- *We need a performing arts facility with production/recording abilities. Does not need to be new – can renovate an existing building.*
- *Utilize local real estate to establish a community performing arts center that is easily accessible financially and geographically.*

- *Venues for theater/music/performance – 300-500 seats, 100-seat black box.*
- *Civic center with 800-1000 seat multipurpose hall (as Dallas Theater Center) for music, theater, dance, etc.*
- *Public theater – a community theater could have so many opportunities for public/community involvement – set design, etc.*
- *City should negotiate with high school to open up the HS auditorium for public art events beyond the HS own efforts.*
- *Art/Sculptural garden or Art museum with a locals gallery.*
- *I would like to see a specific area of town dedicated to the arts – like San Antonio Street (the old Century Tel. Bldg. etc.) to dovetail with restaurants downtown.*
- *Support public art throughout the city: a sculpture walk that incorporates the river and other natural areas, also along downtown alleys and sidewalks; rotating sculpture display in a prominent area in town (Activity Center?); public sculpture depicting the natural resources of Hays County. Focus on permanent art in a way that promotes local artistic development, enhances the reputation of the city, and promotes tourism; provide walking tours; support public sculptures and develop a sculpture walk/river walk with historical markers.*
- *Sidewalks! Create community walkability around San Marcos for things like art walks and festivals.*
- *Art in public places – like San Antonio Riverwalk extension – Include art in sidewalks, bridges, fire hydrants, sign posts, any structure the public sees.*
- *Have public art in city buildings.*
- *Clean up the city! Trash along roadsides everywhere distracts from our beautiful city.*
- *Develop a Mercado with Latino community.*
- *Possible restoration of old advertising on buildings.*

#### ACCESSIBILITY

- *We need to increase transportation options to and from community arts activities.*

#### ARTS EDUCATION

- *Provide crafts lessons for children and adults.*
- *Support for SMART Orchestra (San Marcos Artists' Retention and Training Orchestra) and other initiatives for community based and supported arts.*
- *Have programs for the arts that dovetail with public school programs (including dealing with transportation issues).*
- *Art Center and Education program for summer, spring, and winter break.*

#### FUNDING

- *Provide funding for arts through a building/construction percentage fee.*
- *Set aside a percentage of funding for cultural arts; set aside a percentage of funding for kid's arts.*
- *Provide separate funding for arts programs for the local schools and communities, not tied to tax funding.*
- *Develop a successful bond funding for a Hispanic cultural center, using the help of the community gathered around the Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos.*

#### CITY INVOLVEMENT

- *Facilitate town relationships in terms of Texas State resources and events; find ways to connect with the University.*
- *Support the formation of grant writing groups.*
- *Provide summer art lessons, led by Texas State education major interns, for local children and adults.*
- *We need an arts coordinator for the city; possibly connected with Parks and Recreation.*

#### PROMOTION AND ADVOCACY

- *40% or so of the population in this community is Hispanic. San Marcos needs a plan that engages that community; promotes cultural diversity appreciation.*
- *Preserve and protect existing artwork on display in San Marcos; make an assessment of existing works, obviously “public art,” but perhaps more – such that San Marcos can plan to maintain these works for the future through protection, preservation, even interpretation (i.e.: Parks/tours of San Marcos).*
- *Devise economic impact statement to support arts development.*
- *Establish a social network to support local arts events. It should be FREE and preferably interactive to allow a wide variety of artists/musicians and performers the opportunity to advertise and promote their work and events.*
- *Coordinate publicity for various artistic events in town through a centrally located calendar. Host a city operated website with a calendar of events and links to all arts organizations in San Marcos.*
- *Provide an online calendar submission form on website for people to upload info of their own event.*
- *Community list of events in town – available also off line for folks who don’t use computers.*
- *Encourage interaction among arts groups.*
- *Improve connection of the city to the arts through Texas State.*
- *Generate a comprehensive list of resources, venues, funding, advertising, etc. for local artists and arts organizations.*
- *Have an intentional promotional campaign.*

#### EVENTS

- *Focus on the river as unique setting/backdrop for arts events.*
- *Annual Arts Festival of quality that is unique to San Marcos and draws tourism.*
- *Host a major art show that draws major artists from around the country to sell and also enter to win monetary gift – “Lagoona Gloria,” Ann Arbor Arts Festival, etc.; a juried art show.*
- *Encourage live public music events. Street musicians and music in the parks and on the square should be encouraged and organized on a weekly basis.*
- *Hold art competitions with cool prizes for children’s art developed from age 2 and above.*
- *Support development of a Native American festival/event along the San Marcos springs.*
- *Too many festivals (especially of low quality “kitschy art” art/events) wear the community out and they become uninterested.*

- *San Marcos Music and Art Fest – Annual show, two days of music and local artists! Ex: Gruene Day Festival!*
- *Hold an art festival downtown.*
- *Host 3rd Fridays; downtown businesses give wall space to art hangings; have different bands on four corners of square; downtown dinner theater performers.*
- *Support public performance of classical or folk music; attract opera companies to San Marcos to perform once a quarter at Texas Music Theatre.*
- *Partnership between city and cultural arts groups focused on projects and events.*

#### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

- *The bulk of this survey is not applicable – city should not fund many of these things or determine activities in schools, churches, or university.*
- *Way too much information on this survey; I understand these are items that have been previously discussed, but many items are far too detailed and many are duplicative. Must be edited/shortened/focused.*
- *Very much like the notion of involving businesses and helping them understand the value of arts in the community; conversely, also appreciated the ‘let’s do it!’ attitude of many participants. There is room for both of these types of people.*
- *Involve businesses in these programs – they are half of the equation.*

#### **ASSET INVENTORY AND SCHEMATIC**

The *Cultural Map of San Marcos* was created to highlight points of interest in the San Marcos Arts and Culture community. In order to develop an all-inclusive map, we surveyed the existing establishments in San Marcos, compiled them into an Asset Inventory, and grouped them according to type. The groups include Museums, Galleries, Historic Venues, Organizations, Music Venues, Event Venues, and Hike and Bike Trails. An additional group for Public Art may be added in the future. Some establishments are listed twice; The Coffee Pot, for example, offers both live music and gallery shows.

Michelle Hays, a faculty member at Texas State University’s School of Art and Design, designed and created the *Cultural Map* as seen below. The map will serve as a valuable tool for arts and culture tourism, and can be made available on the internet in various forms. It will be accompanied by a list of arts and culture organizations in San Marcos with additional contact information. The schematic is included as Appendix B.

Appendix A

San Marcos Arts Master Plan Survey Tool

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Appendix B

Asset Inventory Schematic

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