

Mayor's Art Commission: Proposal Draft

Summary:

This proposal is for the creation of a Mayor sponsored "Kenosha Arts Commission" whose purpose will be: Leveraging the Arts and Culture, Businesses and Institutions, and Creative Communities for a stronger Kenosha. The creation of this committee is necessary so that arts opportunities can be discussed, collaborated on, and mutually supported in order to provide Kenosha with a strong, unified arts scene.

Statement of need:

Currently there are several arts organizations in town and each institution has its own arts program. However, there is no unifying force to bring these people together and allow for discourse, collaboration, and support of all Kenosha programs in order to grow the strongest art community possible. Research shows that having the support of a city commission behind an arts organization such as this one not only provides credibility, but unifies the city representatives. The commission is needed to build collaboration between businesses, institutions, and artists in order to utilize the arts in improving Kenosha's economy. In a recent study done by Creativity Works in Milwaukee it was discovered that in the seven-county Milwaukee region (Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington, Waukesha) there are a total of 49,146 jobs associated with creative enterprises and self-employment. There are an additional 17,561 jobs that involve creative occupations in other industries.

Project description:

The commission will be carried out through monthly meetings with the key representatives (attached) and quarterly meetings with the sub-committee members (attached). The committee will study artistic and cultural activities and proposals to see what is needed in order to make downtown Kenosha a strong Entertainment District. (Downtown is defined by all areas from Union Park to Anderson Arts Center.) The work done for this district can then be applied and spread to areas such as UpTown and beyond.

The meetings will be held in the Mayor's Office and used for discussion, support, collaboration, and shared resources.

The anticipated outcome is a strong, city-backed, creative arts committee that meets the goals and needs of both the city and individual artists. (Goals are outlined on attached pages.)

Budget: There are currently no financial needs; all committee members will be volunteers. However, the committee will seek out future grants that can be distributed to fund events, projects, artists, and to hire a part-time administrator. Since an administrator is imperative to the success of the commission, the mayor has offered to designate some hours to an already employed city worker for this commission.

Expenses: We will seek sources of funding as projects develop.

Organization Information: This committee will be a city-backed organization focusing on collaboration and communication between key parties as well as focusing on bringing high level arts programs and events to the Kenosha residents. The committee will receive proposals from businesses and arts, advocate for arts and artists, analyze gaps and opportunities in programming,

support, funding and promoting the arts, and focus on stimulating the community and economic development of Kenosha.

Conclusion: Creative and talented people from all backgrounds – science, art, technology, business – want to live and work in an area where they can benefit culturally. Businesses want to build in an area where they can offer a culturally rich life for employees. This committee seeks to provide the support to form that necessary Arts and Entertainment District.

Goals		
Recommendations	Delivery Procedure	Expected Results
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Key member meetings held monthly in order to better understand the arts community. ➤ Bi-monthly sub-committee meetings held to get the direct input from representatives of the arts. ➤ Establish the framework needed to support current ongoing projects; and create and sponsor new collaborative initiatives between businesses, institutions and artists with the purpose to enhance the competitiveness and economic outlook of downtown Kenosha. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Better communication between businesses, institutions and artists. ➤ Foster and positive outlook on the City of Kenosha and residents' experiences here.
Financial Support for the Arts (one year goal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Collaboration in finding, writing and securing grants that can be dispersed to artists and cultural activities. ➤ Investments from businesses in Kenosha to further the arts. ➤ Provide assistance to nonprofit and for profit organizations and individual artists/entrepreneurs by identifying sources of funding, including, but not limited to grants. (I think we should mention the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Grants for resident artists. ➤ Better relationships between the artists of Kenosha and City Council

	<p>“Wisconsin Main Street” program.</p>	
<p>Artists working together with local businesses, public institutions, and nonprofit organizations to create a Downtown Arts/ Entertainment District (immediate goal that should be reached by summer 2011)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Artist representatives from each genre come in for a bi-monthly meeting to discuss their concerns and needs. ➤ Encouraging all genres of art from all groups and institutions to focus on the greater good of Kenosha and its future. ➤ Strengthen the image of Downtown Kenosha by embracing the marketing boundaries established by the downtown BID marketing initiative (For marketing purposes the downtown area will be expanded to include the following districts: Downtown and Harborside, Library Park, Harbor Park and the Civil War and Kenosha Public Museums, Andersons Arts Center and the Third Ward, Union Park, Station-side and Civic Park. Utilizing these boundaries for the creation of the Arts/Entertainment district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Giving artists of Kenosha the support to succeed in future endeavors. ➤ Enhance sense of pride for all citizens and businesses and their city.
<p>Infrastructure Changes through the City (immediate goal that should be explored and begun within 6 months – opening up new possibilities by summer 2011)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In order to create a welcoming Entertainment District, the goal of this committee will be to look at city ordinances / zoning that stand in the way of current opportunities toward success. ➤ The committee will explore financial incentives to encourage the growth of arts in the downtown area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ With many non-present building owners, the commission may be able to present them with rental income while providing subsidized space for artists to rent and / or use for artistic endeavors. ➤ Ordinances that currently exist, such as the need for a sign permit to place a sculpture outside one’s building, will be re-examined as to their necessity and their blockage of building an arts community. ➤ Zoning that now exists, such as being able to produce limited

		quantities of artisan soap in one's shop, will be re-examined in order to best serve the artistic community and its growth.
<p>Second Saturdays (immediate goal that should be reached within 6-9 months)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ With Second Saturdays we have an opportunity to build a culturally rich evening that connects all art forms in Kenosha. ➤ Tie together transportation to make access to Carthage, Union Park, and Anderson Arts Center more accessible for the walking patron. ➤ The more that is available, the more patrons will come; the more patrons that come, the more that will become available. ➤ A venue for local artists, musicians, etc. to share their work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Incentives for businesses to become involved. ➤ City support backing this crucial event so that businesses and arts are both encouraged and allowed (see infrastructure changes) to participate. ➤ Transportation needs / availability to help patrons navigate the broader scope of what is available in this downtown arts district that includes everything from Library Square / Anderson Arts to Union Park and could include Carthage College as well with their galleries and performances on the same evening.