

# The CAP Report

30 Ideas for the  
**C**reation,  
**A**ctivation &  
**P**reservation  
of Cultural Space

A PROGRAM FOR SUPPORTING  
CULTURAL SPACE DEVELOPMENT  
May 2017



Seattle

# Acknowledgments

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# Table of Contents

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<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	6
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	12
<b>DEFINING THE PROBLEM AND THE OPPORTUNITY</b>	15
Value of Cultural Space	
How is Cultural Space Defined?	
Creating Cultural Space to Strengthen Neighborhoods	
Cultural Space in Strong Markets	
Barriers to Creating Cultural Space	
Incentives to Creating Cultural Space	
Case Studies and Models	
<b>30 THINGS TO FOSTER CULTURAL SPACE IN SEATTLE</b>	21
The 30 Things: Cultural Space Idea List	
Certify Cultural Space	
Code Changes	
Permitting Process	
Older Buildings	
Technical Assistance	
Financial Tools	
Public Policy	
<b>APPENDIX / RESOURCES</b>	84



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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & INTRODUCTION**

# Executive Summary

## PROBLEM AND OPPORTUNITY

Cultural spaces add value to neighborhoods.

It's a neighborhood's theaters, galleries, music halls, artists' studios, community centers, museums, and cinemas that showcase vitality and reflect character—attracting residents, businesses, and visitors. The value of cultural spaces and activities can also be quantifiable, driving economic growth and urban development. Blocks in Seattle with cultural spaces have:

- Significantly higher Walkscores
- More businesses open at 10 pm on Fridays
- Twice as many outdoor café seating permits
- Three times as many photos uploaded to social media

Despite cultural space's role in strengthening neighborhoods, creating and maintaining these spaces in strong real estate markets can be extremely difficult. The older, smaller, more eccentric spaces that often house cultural uses and small businesses are particularly vulnerable to development-driven displacement.

Throughout Seattle's history, certain populations and neighborhoods prospered at the expense of others. As recent displacement has occurred, some populations and types of organizations have

been pushed harder and further than others. The story of Seattle's growth is the story of the under-investment in, and ultimately the displacement of, the diverse communities that have added cultural richness to the city. Communities of color, LGBTQ communities, people experiencing poverty, immigrant and refugee communities, and the artists and cultural organizations that reflect and represent those communities, have been left unprotected.

However, developers are eager to build in attractive, culturally rich neighborhoods. There is room in these strong markets to find mutual benefits for both developers and the community by creating new space for the cultural uses that bring value to all.

Often, we have found, what stands in the way of creating more cultural space is an exhausting series of relatively low hurdles. Minor changes to code, or the removal of antiquated barriers, or the creation of simple new programs and projects, could have enormous benefit and clear the path to cultural space creation, activation, and preservation.

No single action that the City can take will make cultural space invulnerable in an overheated real estate market. At the heart of this report is a list, a menu of options, an extended potential action plan. Our intent is to encourage exploration of, and action on, the items on this list over time.

# The 30 Ideas

Over the past several years a broad-based team of advisors and consultants has come together to build, critique, support, and shape this list. The project has brought together community members, property owners and developers, City staff, elected officials, artists, architectural designers, real estate brokers, legal professionals, and cultural stakeholders.

## CERTIFY CULTURAL SPACE

- Certify Buildings  
Publicly acknowledge and market projects and developers who create cultural space, or who preserve cultural space.
- Certify People  
Create a training program to introduce real estate professionals (designers, attorneys, brokers, developers, agents, etc) to the needs, opportunities, and functional models of cultural spaces in Seattle.
- Brand Cultural Spaces  
Extend the Cultural Space Branding effort, created as part of the Arts & Cultural Districts program, to include all cultural spaces in Seattle.

## CODE CHANGES

- Create FAR Exemptions / Bonuses for Cultural Space  
Allow cultural spaces to be exempted from Floor-to-Area Ratio calculations, and in certain cases for that space to be allowed as an additional development bonus.

- Create Height Additions for Cultural Space  
Allow additional development potential in some zones for projects that include significant cultural space.
- Allow Rooftop Cultural Spaces  
Take advantage of allowances, typically used for mechanical structures, to create artists' studio spaces on the roofs of some mixed-use projects.
- Enhance Pedestrian Zone Inclusion  
Create an official definition of Cultural Space in the Seattle Building Code, and add Cultural Spaces to the list of permitted uses in Pedestrian Zones. Consider new requirements for mandatory inclusion of cultural space in P-Zones in designated Arts Districts.
- (Re)Create a Temporary Occupancy Permit  
Allow for pop-up arts uses of available real estate by artists and arts and cultural organizations for up to 6 months without requiring permanent code compliance.
- Reclassify Art Galleries as M Occupancies (from A-3)  
Align the Building Code with the operations of art galleries as commercial retail spaces, thereby allowing new galleries to open without necessarily triggering "substantial alterations" reviews.

## PERMITTING PROCESS

- Streamline Permitting for Cultural Space Projects  
Allow projects that include significant cultural space to access the same “procedural streamlining” the City currently allows for Priority Green projects.
- Include ARTS in Pre-App Meetings Where Appropriate  
At SDCI’s discretion, invite a representative from the Office of Arts & Culture to pre-application meetings with projects of a certain scale or in arts-rich neighborhoods.
- Build Online Connections between ARTS and SDCI  
Increase the cross-posting of information between the ARTS and SDCI websites, intended to create connections between developers and cultural space seekers.
- Identify an SDCI Liaison  
Create an administrative pathway in support of nonprofit cultural organizations, identifying compliance options in the permitting process.

## OLDER BUILDINGS

- Incentivize Cultural Uses in Older Buildings  
Create pathways, with both funding and technical assistance, to encourage the adaptive re-use of older structures for cultural purposes.
- Explore Energy and Plumbing Codes  
Create allowances for underperformance of energy and plumbing codes for cultural spaces in older buildings.

- Provide Guidance Regarding Substantial Alteration Triggers  
Allow more significant changes to older buildings without triggering a full “substantial alteration” review for cultural space projects.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Build a Clearinghouse for Capital Funding Information  
Aggregate other capital funding opportunities for cultural projects in an online database. Lead a regional conversation around capital funding for cultural space.
- Organize Hyper-local Cultural Space Panels  
Bring neighborhood stakeholders, cultural players, and developers together to identify needs and opportunities in new projects and advise developers seeking cultural uses.
- Matchmake Developers and Space-Seeking Cultural Users  
Provide information and introductions between properties seeking cultural users and cultural organizations seeking space.
- Gather Models & Case Studies and Share Out  
Create an online database of cultural space development projects and case studies about new models in cultural development, and support a series of conversations with cultural developers.
- Advocate for Changes to Other Building Certifications to Support Cultural Space  
Make developers aware of the benefits of the Living Building Pilot program and ways of meeting requirements by including the arts, and work with leaders in certification systems to include the arts.



## FINANCIAL TOOLS

- Subsidize Permit Fees  
Explore the potential impacts of subsidizing the permitting process for non-profit cultural organizations and individual artists creating cultural spaces.
- Increase City Capital Funding for Cultural Spaces  
Increase the Cultural Facilities Fund total expenditure, and explore opportunities to support organizations currently outside of the program's eligibility guidelines (smaller and less institutional organizations).

## PUBLIC POLICY

- Create a Cultural Space Management PDA  
Create and fund an independent Real Estate Holding Company entity to lease, develop, purchase, and otherwise control and sublease space to cultural organizations and artists.
- Require Cultural Space in Public Buildings of a Certain Size  
When the City develops properties of a certain size (for example, the Denny Substation project), require the presence of cultural space in that development.
- Elevate Culture into Neighborhood Planning  
Include the creation of cultural space in future community conversations about neighborhood planning.

## OTHER IDEAS

- Regulate Live/Work Spaces  
Explore opportunities to capitalize on the thousands of units created through code incentives as "live/work" space that are currently not performing to the mixed-use expectations and requirements.
- Build Tax Tools  
Explore the potential of expanding tax incentives and abatements, analogous to the MFTE program, for the creation of cultural space.
- Allow Cultural Spaces in the Duwamish MIC  
Revise Land Use Code to allow certain types of cultural spaces to be established in Seattle's Industrial Zones, where arts and cultural uses are barred by current code.
- Require Cultural Space in Private Buildings that Displace Cultural Space  
Should a private development directly displace a cultural space, explore the possibility of requiring that the developer replace the displaced use in-kind and onsite.

# A Kit of Parts

Imagine a development project, a standard mixed-use box of apartments over commercial space. Say this project is planned for a culturally rich neighborhood, 12th Ave and South King St in Little Saigon, or Rainier Ave South and 57th Ave South in Rainier Beach. Say this project hopes to attract a fine dining chain and a national retailer for its commercial spaces.

This is the traditional model of “plopped” new development in many of our culturally rich neighborhoods, a model that leads to a community’s resentment of new development, to the fraying of cultural and social fabric, to the loss of character and sense of place.

Now re-imagine the same project with many of these tools already in place. The Arts Office is involved in the pre-application process (Idea #11) and advises the developer about the cultural context of the project’s site and about the many market-driven benefits of cultural space. A hyper-local community advisory panel is convened (Idea #18) to inform about immediate cultural needs. The Cultural Space Liaison connects the developer with a list of potential cultural tenants (Idea #19) and the resulting cultural space is certified (Idea #1), exempted from FAR calculations (Idea #4) and the project is granted an additional story of developable space (Idea #5). The project sails through the permitting process as an expedited application (Idea #10) with its permit fees subsidized by the City (Idea #21).

This project is reflective of its community. Far from displacing culture and the arts, the project strengthens the cultural scene, it is woven into the fabric of the neighborhood.

There are 30 ideas described in this report that have the potential to strengthen and preserve existing cultural spaces, to activate temporary or fallow cultural spaces, and to incentivize new spaces and new opportunities for arts and culture.



Photo Credit : Mackenzie Waller



Photo Credit : Joe Iano

# Introduction

Seattle is growing faster than almost any other large city in the United States.

The rate at which we're adding people, and jobs, and wealth, and new buildings, is outpacing almost every other major city in the Western Hemisphere. More building permits were issued per capita in 2014 in Seattle than in any other city in the United States. At one point last year, there was an open building permit for every 219 people in the region. In 2016 Seattle led the nation in fastest home-price growth. Seattle is spending more per capita on transit than any other city in the country. In 2016 downtown Seattle construction broke all records – for number of building starts, for total square footage, and for total construction budgets.

In recent years, Seattle has led the country on social issues (marriage equality, minimum wage, universal childcare), on environmental issues (America's greenest utilities, America's greenest building), and on wealth generation (our population of millionaires grew by 17% in 2014, and as of 2016 we have the nation's highest density of millionaires under the age of 34).

Over the past decade, Seattle has also been repeatedly recognized for its cultural richness:

- Top US City for Culture (Business Insider)
- America's 12 Top ArtPlaces (ArtPlace America)
- World's 5 Best Cities for Arts & Culture (Condé Nast)
- 5 Best Up-and-Coming Cities for Art & Culture (Yelp)
- America's 5 Coolest Cities (Forbes)
- Greatest City in the US for Starting a Business (Kiplinger)
- Sperling's Arts & Culture rating of 98 out of 100
- Country's Best Theater Scene (Backstage)
- Top Music Cities in the USA (About.com)

These accolades reflect an active ecosystem of cultural life treasured locally and recognized nationwide. This arts ecosystem thrives in a rich network of cultural spaces that flourished during periods of greater affordability in Seattle. Without the spaces to support this cultural life, without the presence of arts and cultural organizations in our neighborhoods, the ecosystem can't be sustained.

At this writing, there are 62 construction cranes working within the city limits. Rents are rising faster than anywhere in the country. Vulnerable communities, the “canaries in the coalmines” of displacement, are disappearing from the cultural landscape. Some of the first to disappear are communities of color and the arts and cultural organizations that reflect them, whose presence helped create the very land value on which those cranes are now building.

Many property owners, and property developers, are aware of these dynamics, and want to see a vibrant and diverse cultural sector remain in the city. Many of them are represented here as the project’s “working group.” Even as advocates for cultural space, they find structural obstacles to preserving and creating space for arts and culture, and have helped create the list you’re about to read.

This report represents two years of incredible work by our partners at Framework Cultural Placemaking. Lesley Bain and her team have spent years with City staff and stakeholder groups exploring changes the City could make to support the creation, activation, and preservation of cultural space.

This report also represents the beginning of a dialogue about what we, as a city, wish to become. It is a dialogue about how we grow and how we change. It is a conversation about what we wish to preserve and what progress and change we wish to embrace.

We look forward to the conversation that the report will start, and to the action that will result. Please join us and be a part of it.



Matthew Richter  
Cultural Space Liaison  
Seattle Office of Arts & Culture  
May, 2017

# Ethnic Heritage Art





Photo Credit : Robert Zverina



# DEFINING THE PROBLEM & THE OPPORTUNITY

While the value of cultural space is generally recognized, a deeper understanding of those values—subjective and measurable—gives credence to the formulation of tools to support creation of art and cultural space in Seattle.

# Value of Cultural Space

While the value of cultural space is generally recognized, a deeper understanding of those values—subjective and measurable—gives credence to the formulation of tools to support creation of art and cultural space in Seattle.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD DESIRABILITY:**

Arts and cultural organizations are small, local businesses. They bring character and uniqueness to neighborhoods, and draw both residents and visitors to a creative environment.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD VIBRANCY:**

Arts and cultural uses offer evening activities, creating “18-hour” neighborhoods. Lively public spaces benefit businesses and residents.

## **ECONOMIC VALUE:**

Many cities have successfully turned to arts and culture for economic revitalization. The arts attract participants and audiences, with spill-over effects for restaurants and other businesses. Researchers have demonstrated that as an economic sector, arts and culture generate nearly 450 million dollars annually in Seattle (Americans for the Arts, Arts & Economic Prosperity IV) and some \$700 billion nationwide (National Endowment for the Arts/ U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2012).

Seattle was one of three cities recently studied by the Preservation Green Lab’s Older, Smaller, Better report. Using innovative methodologies, the report finds that older, smaller buildings contribute to local economies and distinctive, livable neighborhoods. The connection between older building stock and cultural use is strong, since many arts and cultural uses are housed in older buildings. When the research done for Older, Smaller, Better was combined with information collected by the City of Seattle’s Cultural Space Inventory, it was found that the presence of a cultural space correlates with sharp increases in the performance of these areas. For example:

- Blocks with cultural spaces have higher Walkscores (89 to 81).
- Blocks with cultural spaces have more businesses open at 10pm on Fridays.
- Three times as many Flickr photos are uploaded from blocks with cultural spaces.
- Blocks with cultural spaces are twice as likely to have outdoor cafe seating permitted.
- Rents are higher in blocks with cultural uses: The average median residential rent in commercial or mixed-use grid squares with cultural spaces is about \$1,200, compared to citywide average of \$1,000.

In many cases, presence of cultural space is associated with steep increases in property value.

Seattle was also one of three case study cities in the Natural Cultural Districts study done as part of the Social Impact of the Arts Project (SIAP) from 2010 to 2012. One interesting finding showed that Seattle's richest neighborhoods did not have the highest cultural asset scores. This indicated to the researchers that development of cultural clusters does not necessarily lead to gentrification.

These naturally occurring cultural districts appeared to encourage:

- Increased social diversity
- Improved public health outcomes
- Declines in ethnic and racial harassment.

It is no coincidence that developers are also attracted to culturally vibrant neighborhoods. The presence of older low rise buildings, however, can make these neighborhoods vulnerable to larger scale development that takes advantage of higher density zoning. Unfortunately, the presence of the new, large buildings, and the removal of cultural uses, takes away what was most attractive about the neighborhood. The proposals outlined in this report have three goals that align with this information regarding cultural value:

*Create* : encourage the creation of new cultural spaces when new development occurs,

*Activate* : make it easier to adapt existing buildings for new and existing cultural uses, and

*Preserve* : support and preserve existing cultural spaces in dynamic, growing neighborhoods.

**“Twenty-five years ago we recognized the need to assess the environmental impacts of all decisions. Today the same is true of culture.”**

—Creative City Toronto

# How is Cultural Space defined?

Cultural Space includes all spaces whose primary purpose is to present or support artists and their art:

- All **arts presentation** spaces. These include but are not limited to museums and galleries, live theaters and cinemas, bookstores and record stores, live music venues, and multidisciplinary arts spaces. These spaces are typically open to the public.
- All spaces dedicated to **artists' creative process** and the **creation of artistic product**. These include but are not limited to artists' studios, music and theater rehearsal rooms, film and video studios, music recording facilities, writers' centers, and industrial spaces dedicated to the creation of artistic product. These spaces may be shared between artists or individually dedicated.
- All publicly accessible spaces that **supply the means of creative production**. These include but are not limited to art supply stores, musical instrument stores, and film and video equipment supply stores.
- All **arts training** and **arts education** spaces. These include but are not limited to art schools, theater training facilities, literary arts centers, arts departments at large educational institutions, and any other classroom or other space dedicated to teaching the arts.

- **Artists' live/ work space**—spaces that serve a dual function to both house the artist and their family, and to provide creative space in which to conduct their artistic practice. These include but are not limited to residential units with dedicated contiguous work space, and commercial or industrial work spaces with dedicated contiguous residential space.
- Work space for **arts support organizations**. These include but are not limited to spaces occupied primarily by arts funding organizations, arts sector support organizations, and arts advocacy organizations.
- Space primarily occupied or utilized by **cultural heritage organizations**. These include but are not limited to ethnic community meeting spaces, gathering spaces for immigrant communities, traditionally monocultural spaces dedicated to celebrating a unique heritage, and other spaces, either shared or dedicated, that support diverse communities.

Cultural Space is, to borrow terms from the United States Supreme Court, something that “is difficult to describe, but you know it when you see it.” There will always be an element of subjectivity in the defining of cultural space, and the decision over whether a certain space qualifies or not. We embrace this subjectivity and the need for ongoing evaluation of definitions.

In short, Cultural Space is simply the space that surrounds art. How do you create cultural space? Create art, support art, show art. The space above, below, in front of and behind that art becomes cultural space.

—CITY OF SEATTLE,  
OFFICE OF ARTS & CULTURE

# Creating Cultural Space to Strengthen Neighborhoods

Not all neighborhoods in Seattle are experiencing strong development pressures. Neighborhoods with lower rents or vacant properties can be opportunities to incorporate cultural uses. Some of these neighborhoods—Chinatown/International District, Georgetown, South Park, parts of the Rainier Valley—are our most culturally diverse neighborhoods. The recommendations in this report can help increase cultural opportunities and assist arts organizations to find more affordable spaces. The Office of Arts & Culture can play a useful proactive role in neighborhoods with lower development pressure.

**“Rapid increases of market-rate housing tends to extinguish cultural uses, reducing the cultural legacy and the very distinctive nature of the neighborhood that made it attractive.”**

—Creating a Cultural Destination, 125th Street Business Improvement District, The Earth Lab at Columbia University

# Cultural Space in Strong Markets

Cities often turn to the arts to revitalize areas that are struggling economically. Seattle has a different situation, with an existing strong market that is displacing cultural uses at a rapid rate. The difficulty with a strong market is the vulnerability of the older, smaller, eccentric spaces that often house cultural uses and small businesses.

The advantage in strong markets is that developers are eager to build in attractive neighborhoods with high demand and higher rents. Because strong markets show positive cash flow from rents, there can be room to work with owners and developers to create public benefits and still have the projects “pencil out.”

Seattle’s cultural community needs to delve deep into potential methods of increasing resources, and focus on the development of a social infrastructure of art space advocates, including developers, lenders, government agencies, foundations, and political and civic leaders. This social infrastructure can provide leadership, technical expertise and political will for the protection and nurturing of cultural uses and spaces.

# Barriers to Creating Cultural Space

Even as Seattle experiences rapid growth in mixed-use development, it is rare to find for-profit development that includes space for arts and culture. Neither can the City rely solely on non-profit development to create the amount of cultural space needed to foster and maintain creative neighborhoods. Creating new pathways for the development of such spaces begins with a better understanding of the barriers that currently discourage such development from taking place.

## **NOT BUSINESS AS USUAL**

For-profit development does not normally focus on the space needs of arts organizations. Many developers are not familiar with the kinds of organizations that would be looking for such space. Cultural space is not part of typical development pro-formas, nor something that lenders would even think of including. Arts organizations may even be considered as less desirable tenants when they are considered at all.

The idea of creating space for the arts needs to come from outside the current set of actors and forces shaping standard development. This is the first barrier to overcome—having project proponents even consider the idea of incorporating art space into a mixed use development. Many developers look to brand their developments with a signature restaurant, or retail space. Far fewer have considered the cachet that can come from a project that embraces arts and culture.

## **LACK OF RECOGNITION OF BENEFIT**

As outlined in the Value of Cultural Space discussion above, there is a substantial body of evidence that cultural spaces bring economic value. A first step would be to highlight those benefits to property owners and project proponents. The 12th Avenue Arts project on Capitol Hill is an excellent example of a project that has been well-publicized and lauded for its benefit to the community. Visibility and positive community response can help projects stand out, and may improve the rate at which units rent up.

And as retail for street-level use becomes harder to find, cultural uses are excellent candidates for signature buildings and ground level activity.

## **NEED FOR RESOURCES AND INCENTIVES**

A next step would be offering assistance to developers interested in incorporating cultural space. With the City's creation of the position of Cultural Space Liaison, connections between developers and organizations looking for space are already happening; we can expand this network.

There are other possible resources, such as technical assistance for design issues, and help identifying financing options. Some cities offer economic incentives, process streamlining, and development bonuses for including cultural uses, most often in special districts targeted for reinvestment. All of these are considered here as part of a menu of possible resources and incentives.

## FINANCING

Obtaining financing for a project plays a major role in shaping developments. Not only must a developer want to include space for arts and culture, the project lender must be supportive of the proposed uses and rental rates for space within the building. In order for more cultural space to be built with new development, the full range of decision makers, including banks, financiers, and non-profit lenders, need to have models for success and as many incentives as possible.

# Incentives for Creating Cultural Space

Incentives can help overcome the barriers to creating cultural space. Tax relief approaches have been major incentives for historic preservation for many years, and would be very helpful for cultural space preservation and creation.

Incentives can target the barriers discussed in the previous section—financing, recognition, resources and getting cultural space on developers’ “radar screen.”

The City of Seattle currently has zoning incentives in certain zones for developments that provide designated public benefits. Providing benefits is necessary in order for the project to meet the full allowable development potential.

**“Organizations need examples of successful artist-space projects that they can present to banks and other funding agencies to demonstrate the potential markets for their product”**

—Leveraging Investments in Creativity (LINC), Developing Affordable Space for Artists



Photo Credit : Joe Iano



# 30 IDEAS TO FOSTER CULTURAL SPACE IN SEATTLE

These 30 items will make visible the City's commitment to supporting arts and culture and to enact changes that result in plentiful cultural space for a vibrant creative city.

This section spells out a series of actions that will work together to encourage inclusion of cultural space in new development and in repurposed spaces, supporting neighborhoods throughout the city.

# Cultural Space Agency Idea List

## **CULTURAL SPACE CERTIFICATION**

- 1 Certify Buildings
- 2 Certify People
- 3 Brand Cultural Space

## **CODE CHANGES**

- 4 Create FAR Exemptions /Bonuses for Cultural Space
- 5 Create Height Additions for Cultural Space Projects
- 6 Allow Rooftop Cultural Spaces
- 7 Strengthen Support for Cultural Space in Pedestrian Zones
- 8 (Re)Create a Temporary Occupancy Permit
- 9 Reclassify Art Galleries as M Occupancies (from A-3)

## **PERMITTING PROCESS**

- 10 Streamline Permitting for Cultural Space Projects
- 11 Include ARTS in Pre-App Meetings
- 12 Create Online Connections Between City Departments
- 13 Identify an SDCI Liaison to Assist Developers Interested in Creating Cultural Space

## **OLDER BUILDINGS**

- 14 Incentivize Cultural Uses in Older Buildings
- 15 Explore Energy and Plumbing Codes
- 16 Provide Guidance Regarding Substantial Alteration Triggers

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

- 17 Build a Clearinghouse for Capital Funding Connections
- 18 Convene Hyper-local Cultural Space Panels to Advise Projects
- 19 Matchmake Developers and Space-seeking Cultural Users
- 20 Gather Models & Case Studies and Share Out
- 21 Advocate for Changes to Other Building Designations to Support Cultural Space

## **FINANCIAL TOOLS**

- 22 Subsidize Permit Fees
- 23 Increase City Capital Funding for Cultural Spaces

## **PUBLIC POLICY**

- 24 Create a Cultural Space Management PDA
- 25 Require Cultural Space in Public Buildings of a Certain Size
- 26 Elevate Arts & Culture Through Neighborhood-based Planning

## **OTHER IDEAS**

- 27 Regulate Live/Work Spaces
- 28 Build Tax Tools
- 29 Allow Cultural Space in the Duwamish Manufacturing Industrial Center
- 30 Require Cultural Space in Private Buildings that Displace Cultural Space

# Cultural Space Certification

Certification systems have been instrumental in elevating sustainable development. LEED—Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design—has raised awareness of sustainability in building design through a certification process, and the cultural certification recommended here is drawn loosely on that model.

Certification will strengthen the supply of cultural space by:

- Raising awareness of the value of cultural space to the community
- Indicating the level of City support for creation and retention of cultural space
- Increasing visibility for projects that incorporate cultural space, to the benefit of developers and cultural organizations, and
- Increasing knowledge of cultural space development and connections among the real estate community, designers, funders and regulators

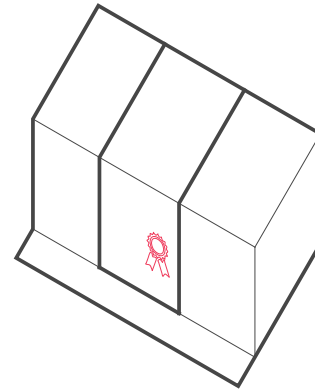
# 1 Certify Buildings

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- Craft a certification program for new and existing buildings that house space for arts and culture.

A specified percentage of the project's space, or a certain number of square feet dedicated to arts and culture, will qualify a building for certification. There will be multiple levels of certification available for new buildings or changes to existing buildings, depending on the amount of space created or preserved.

The LEED model includes accumulating "points" in a way that is appropriate to specific projects, and it offers visible recognition in terms of a physical plaque and the ability to market the project as "sustainable". The Cultural Space Certification model similarly encourages developers to meet cultural criteria, and creates visible recognition for developers in the form of a Cultural Space brand that could be enormously helpful in marketing to urban end-users.



**“Twenty-five years ago we recognized the need to assess the environmental impacts of all decisions. Today the same is true of culture.”**

—Creative City Toronto

## WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA FOR CERTIFICATION?

Certification will include several levels of recognition, based on the amount of cultural space provided by a project.

### ENTRY LEVEL CERTIFICATION

- 250 sf or 1% of total building sf
- 5 year committment

An entry level of involvement would allow modest amounts of space to be recognized. The advantage of an easy-to-meet entry level is to encourage small projects a route to certification, and to encourage a wide spectrum of projects.

If done right, small cultural spaces can have significant impacts. The suggested entry level would be at least 250 square feet, or 1% of the building's gross square footage, whichever is larger, dedicated to arts and cultural use. Smaller spaces could include storefronts, "vitrines" used for rotating art displays, practice rooms, or offices devoted to cultural organizations. Spaces should be as visible to the public as possible. Uses may be covenanted for a 5-year period.

### MID LEVEL CERTIFICATION

- 2500 sf or 5% of total building sf
- 12 year committment

For projects that include moderate-sized spaces, incentives and recognition can increase. Mid-level certification would have a minimum level of 2500 square feet, or 5% of a building's square footage, whichever is larger. This category of space is large enough to include a small gallery space. Street level visibility would be required, and uses could be covenanted for up to 12 years. For interior uses, the use would need to be well marked at street level.

### MAJOR SPACE CERTIFICATION

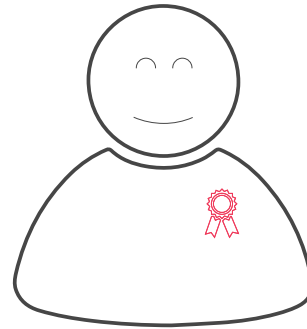
- 5000 sf or more
- 20 year committment

Special attention would be given to dedicated, significant spaces such as performance halls or theaters. Incentives and City support would be maximized.

## 2 Certify People

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- Craft a certification program for cultural stakeholders.
- Form a social and resource network for creating cultural space.
- Create neighborhood-based cultural panels that can coordinate with developers and arts organizations to support active uses.



### WHY CERTIFY PEOPLE?

The creation of cultural space depends on a broad group of people—developers, leaders of arts organizations, artists, designers, real estate financiers, neighborhood leaders, and regulators. This social infrastructure is a critical component of success, and often has gaps. Identifying, recognizing, and convening a group of people focused on the creation of cultural space is foundational to a successful program.

LEED was very intentional in developing leadership and public awareness about sustainability. Not only does LEED certify buildings—people are certified. For design professionals and people as well in the building industry, LEED certification became a valued, almost necessary, part of professional credibility. The best clients were aware that there was important cachet for designated buildings; even developers with little interest in sustainability knew that it was a perceived public

value. The generation of professionals who have become LEED certified is both a knowledge base and an advocacy group for sustainable design.

Because many publicly funded buildings were required to meet LEED standards, many design professionals became LEED certified in order to compete in the marketplace that required certification. The certification of people expanded professional knowledge of sustainable design, and made the value of environmental design visible to the broader public.

Certifying people will encourage relationships and leadership for building art space. The certification process could begin with an invited set of leaders, and broaden over time. People with certification will form a powerful resource for problem-solving and for creating new opportunities as well as supporting implementation of other recommendations included in this document

**WHO WOULD BE CERTIFIED?**

There are many candidates for certification involved in real estate, community development, cultural organizations and neighborhood leadership. The intent of the certification for individuals is to develop advocates for a vibrant arts communities in Seattle’s neighborhoods. The breadth of people involved is an advantage, and would aim to create a network of leaders that could help support and strengthen infrastructure for arts and culture, with people including:

- Developers
- Arts organizations’ staff and board members
- Community or neighborhood development groups
- Designers
- Real estate attorneys
- Building industry professionals
- Bankers; others involved in financing development
- Design Review Board members

- Capital campaign consultants
- Cultural philanthropists
- Urban activists
- Artists and cultural workers
- Realtors and Brokers

**WHAT WOULD BE REQUIRED?**

The Cultural Space Agency certification process would not be exam-based, but would focus on building a network of people that share distinct knowledge about supporting cultural uses in our community.

The Office of Arts & Culture would host sessions with updates on land use issues, tours of various arts spaces, and presentations by experts on topics related to the creation and support of space for arts and culture. To be certified, people would need to have a related field of expertise or be an active member of the community, and attend a minimum number of certification sessions. This process would serve to create a network of people and shared knowledge across areas of expertise.

**“Supporters of artist space development would do well to recognize, and appeal to, the arts-related motivations of many nonprofit and for-profit developers and lenders, many of whom seem to recognize the value of artists as project residents and community activists.”**

—Artist Space Development: Financing, LINC

### WHAT WOULD BE THE VALUE OF INDIVIDUAL CERTIFICATION?

People with certification would be part of a set of recognized leaders in a network of professionals who are knowledgeable about, and interested in, the creation of space for arts and culture. The list would be published on the Office of Arts & Culture website, and would be part of the brokerage connecting arts organizations and space providers. Events would provide networking opportunities and useful information. Smaller working groups could be formed on an *ad hoc* basis to work on specific topics or geographic areas. Other recognition could be available and publicized for particular contributions or successes in creating space for arts and culture.

#### MODEL: PROJECT FOR PUBLIC SPACES PLACEMAKING LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Project for Public Spaces (PPS) founded the Placemaking Leadership Council in 2013 to create a cross-disciplinary network of people working on “placemaking” efforts. PPS is managing the group, which has grown to more than 1300 people from over 75 countries. Annual meetings have taken place with support from the Kreske Foundation, and Resource Teams are being mobilized for topic-related networks and local action. Members apply via a web-based form, answering questions on background and ways that they could contribute to placemaking efforts. Several meetings are held through the year in different locations and on different topics. More information at [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org)

32

The certification program should offer information for the development community and arts advocates to help make the case for space creation, and tools for making it happen. Resources would expand over time, and the “brain trust” of certified people would help direct and develop those resources.

### DEMONSTRATING THE NEED

If project proponents are considering including cultural space, they need to understand the market demand for such space. This certification process could help with understanding cultural space as a viable market sector. Surveys are one tool available to establish demand, indicating to developers the kind of space needed, and the willingness and ability for artists and organizations to rent or own space.

**“Develop partnerships with organizations, foundations, government agencies, institutions, and individuals. Identify and pursue those potential partnerships with aligned goals, mutual support, and advocacy to achieve success.”**

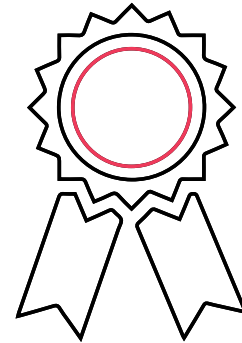
—CODAC  
(Cultural Overlay District Advisory Council)  
Goal #6



## 3 Brand Cultural Space

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- Develop a program to bring positive attention to certified projects.
- Create an attractive and distinctive marker to draw attention to certified projects—a “barber pole” for cultural space.



It's the branding, the celebrating, of cultural space that makes the certification, the designation, the official recognition of cultural space, worthwhile.

The city should invest in a brand for cultural spaces that raises the visibility of those spaces and celebrates their creation and preservation. This brand could be seen as a physical object onsite, it could be mapped online, and it could be used by owners and developers to demonstrate their pride in the cultural space they create and host.

This branding could take several forms beneficial to both the cultural projects and the building owners:

- A physical and highly visible plaque making the spaces, and their buildings, easy to spot
- Recognition, through the plaques, of the scale of the cultural space, analogous to LEED's Silver, Gold, and Platinum rankings (Perhaps a window vinyl acknowledging the most basic spaces, a cast plaque for larger spaces, and a neon version for the most significant projects.)
- Inclusion on a map, both printed and online, of all branded cultural space projects in Seattle
- Other ways for the City to celebrate certified cultural space, including on social media, visibility on the Seattle Channel, and any other appropriate recognition



Photo Credit : Joe Iano

# Code Changes

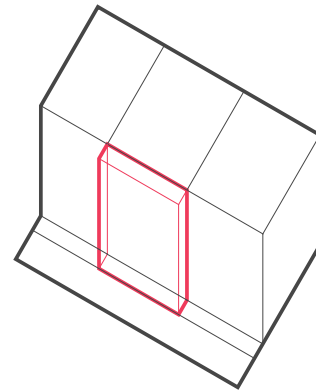
One of the ways to encourage the creation of cultural space in new buildings is to make the entitlement process easier for cultural space projects.

Community members have advocated for changes to City code that would remove perceived roadblocks to the creation of cultural space. Each proposed change in this section is a direct response to actual issues that have frustrated multiple cultural space projects in Seattle.

# 4 Create FAR Exemptions / Bonuses for Cultural Space

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- Develop code language that allows additional developable square footage for certified Cultural Space projects.



Allowable square footage for a project is calculated through Floor Area Ratio (FAR), and represents a multiplier of allowable development based on the area of the site. Denser zones allow more FAR. The considerations in increasing FAR for Cultural Space Projects include the amount of additional FAR for the amount of cultural space created, and the zones and perhaps neighborhoods where the increase would be allowed. Some neighborhoods are more accepting of additional density than others. It may be more acceptable to increase FAR for cultural space in designated Arts Districts, or in designated urban villages.

Two possible modifications would create an incentive for new cultural space. First would be offering FAR increases for including cultural space. That would mean additional overall developable space for a project that included cultural space.

The second approach would be to exempt art and cultural space from counting in FAR calculations under Section 23.47A.013.D. In that case, the additional FAR available to the development would be the equivalent of the amount of the cultural space.

**“If this program existed I’d be first in line to take advantage of it.”**

—Maria Barrientos, Barrientos + Ryan

### **CASE STUDY: 125TH STREET DISTRICT**

The City of New York created this district to protect the famed relationship of the Harlem neighborhood to its historic culture.

Height and density bonuses for including cultural space played a key role in the development tools for 125th Street. The City created a Bonused Space Local Arts Advisory Council to review and make recommendations regarding proposed visual or performing arts spaces, and their eligibility for the arts bonus provisions. Proposed operators of cultural venues are to have a lease no less than 15 years long, with two five-year renewals.

Within the core sub-district, new developments and significant building enlargements with frontage on 125th Street, must have at least 5% of the development devoted to arts or entertainment uses. Certain uses, such as banks, are not allowed at street level. Floor area ratio (FAR) increases of 1.4 to 2.0 are offered for uses that include a cultural use (A 2.0 FAR increase would mean for a 10,000 sf lot, an additional 20,000 sf of developable area would be allowed.) The Chair of the City Planning Commission must attest that the City's conditions have been met. These zoning changes are estimated to allow approximately 1.8 million additional square feet of office, hotel and retail space, along with some 2,600 new housing units, according to New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC).

### **CASE STUDY: SOMERVILLE MA**

The City of Somerville created a zoning overlay district to implement their vision of a rich, arts related district. The district was created to provide incentives for new arts-related uses of all kinds. The intended uses would be permanent, affordable, and contribute to the experience of the public realm in Union Square.

Density bonuses between 25% and 50% are offered for deed-restricted "arts related uses". Parking relief may be granted for continued or new reuse of existing buildings in the zone. For projects that are entirely art uses, a density bonus of 100% is possible. More modest density bonuses are available for artist live/work space. A set of design guidelines sets dimensional requirements for usable art space, and is applied to all but minor projects.

According to Ward 3 Alderman Bobby McWatters, "We've already seen clear evidence that an emphasis on the arts has benefitted the greater Union Square area."

# 5 Create Height Additions for Cultural Space Projects

- Revise code language to allow height incentives for certified Cultural Space projects.

Several sections of the code could be adapted to create height bonuses for cultural space.

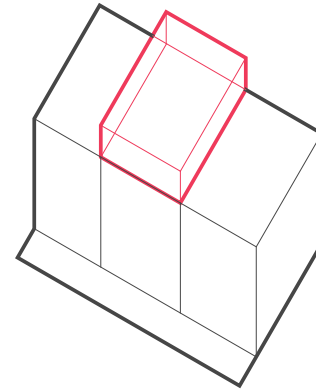
### Section 23.47A.012.A.1b

In Neighborhood Commercial (NC) and Commercial (C) zones with 30 or 40 foot height limits, several provisions allow a modest increase in height. Projects permitted as certified Cultural Space projects could be included, qualifying for a four-foot or seven-foot height bonus. While this would not permit an additional story, the extra height would benefit larger cultural venues that need high ceilings.

### Section 23.73.014.B

In the Pike/Pine Conservation Overlay District, a height exception exists for lots that include character structures so long as the street-facing facades of the character structure are retained, and the new structure is set back 15 feet from street property lines that abut the character structure. Inclusion of a significant amount of cultural space could be an additional trigger for height bonus in this district.

Other areas of the city could include a height bonus for cultural space. The considerations in increasing height for certified Cultural Space projects include the amount of additional height for the amount of cultural space created, and the zones and perhaps neighborhoods where the increase would be welcomed.



Similar to the considerations of density bonuses, some neighborhoods are more accepting of additional height than others. It may be more acceptable to increase height for cultural space in designated Arts Districts or urban villages.

These height incentives dovetail well with the City's Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA). Cultural uses are a key component of a livable city.

## CASE STUDY: PIKE/PINE OVERLAY

The Pike/Pine Overlay is pertinent to the Cultural Space Agency as an Overlay District within the Capitol Hill Arts District. Under the provisions of the Pike/Pine Overlay, projects can qualify for a 10-foot height bonus by preserving the façade of an existing "character building". This incentive has proved attractive to developers, and has been used by many projects. The Pike/Pine Overlay offers an opportunity as an already-defined zoning district where existing incentives may be expanded by including creation of space for art or culture as a way to qualify for additional height.



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EST. 2015  
CHOP SHOP  
NEIGHBORHOOD CAFE & BAR

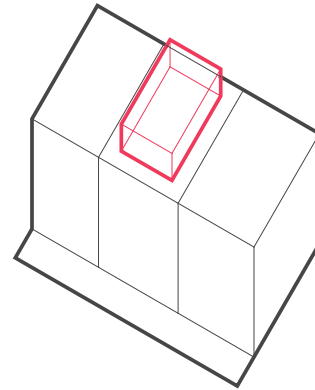
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Photo Credit : Lara Swimmer

# 6 Allow Rooftop Cultural Spaces

- Modify code language to allow certain specified arts and cultural uses on rooftops
- Uses could include artist studio or gallery space, rehearsal or performance space.



The land use code (Section 23.47A.012.C) allows a limited set of uses to be placed on rooftops. Features such as mechanical equipment, play equipment, and communication devices may extend up to 15 feet above the height limit. Energy efficient elevators may exceed the height limit by up to 25 feet.

Roof space, with setbacks from the perimeter, could become art space without visual impacts or additional shading at street level. Provisions exist in other sections that could be used to ensure neighborhood protection—maximum coverage provisions for rooftop features, setbacks from the property line, and requirements for shadow diagrams.

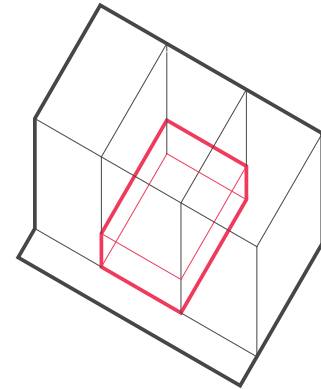
Exiting and accessibility will be primary considerations for the design of rooftop artist space, and the cost required to create the space.

One challenge will be to ensure that the intended use continues. This challenge has been overcome for other incentivized uses, such as child care centers and affordable housing. Twenty years would be a significant period to agree to use the additional rooftop space for a designated cultural use.



# 7 Strengthen Support for Cultural Space in Pedestrian Zones

- Include a definition of Cultural Spaces in the code to ensure that all arts and cultural uses are recognized in the land use code.
- Include Cultural Uses as one of the allowable uses in all pedestrian-designated zones.
- Explore P-zone rules in Arts Districts that incentivize cultural space.



Section 23.47A.005.D.1 requires that certain uses must make up at least 80 percent of the street facade along pedestrian-oriented streets. The list includes retail, restaurant and other uses. Art Facilities were recently added to this list. Arts facilities are defined in Section 23.84A.002 - "A" as follows: "Arts facility" means space occupied by one or more not-for-profit organizations dedicated to the creation, display, performance or screening of art by or for members of the general public.

Adding a definition that broadens the set of uses to include culture as well as arts, and may include for-profit organizations would meet the goals of supporting cultural space. This definition can be added to the list of allowed street level uses in pedestrian zones, and may prove useful for other code language where cultural uses are encouraged.

Another idea to explore is mandatory inclusion of certain zones, perhaps in Arts Districts, or designated areas where cultural uses are a priority—a Pedestrian Cultural zoning.

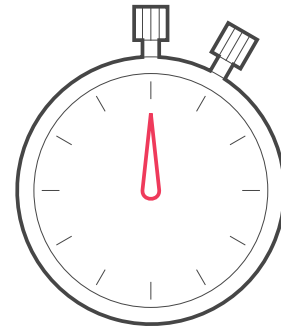
## CASE STUDY: FEAST ARTS CENTER, TACOMA

Feast Arts Center, in Tacoma's Hillside neighborhood, is an example of a highly desirable cultural use that falls outside of the code definition of an Arts facility. Feast offers youth and adult art classes, gallery space, community events and lectures. The owners have chosen to not organize as a non-profit, preferring a simpler management option. As such, they fall outside the code definition.

# 8 (Re)Create a Temporary Occupancy Permit

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- Coordinate with arts and culture community to determine barriers to permitting for temporary cultural events.
- Create a Cultural Event permit that makes it easier to host pop-up arts events, performances, indoor festivals and other desirable cultural uses on a temporary basis.



Pop-up and other temporary events bring cultural events to a wide variety of spaces. Permitting these events in existing indoor spaces can be confusing, time-consuming and expensive. Various departments are interested in life safety, noise and nuisance, traffic and parking, and food and liquor requirements.

Supporting these temporary cultural events in a variety of vacant, industrial, or other types of space not typically used for assembly purposes would be beneficial to cultural organizations and communities. Some cities have developed mechanisms for short term cultural uses that streamline permit requirements, while still ensuring public safety.

Seattle has a Special Events Office with information on permitting for large scale events and celebrations. A special event permit is needed for events on private property that expect more than 500 people, that may have a substantial impact on neighbors, or require substantial public services.

A temporary occupancy permit would:

- Need to be developed with both the Fire Marshal's Office and the Department of Construction and Inspections
- Be valid for up to six months
- Not require permanent change of use
- Need to include mechanisms that would prevent dangerous conditions for large-scale assembly uses
- Need research into the history of the temporary occupancy permit that previously existed in Seattle

Other jurisdictions wrestle with similar issues and have created temporary use permits, including:

- Austin, Texas allows 90-day activations through two 45-day temporary permits back-to-back without requiring a Change of Use or full code compliance
- Denver, Colorado, allows 180-day temporary activations through a Special Event Permit, with approval from the Fire Department, a letter of request for waivers from a Building Official, and verification that building floor systems meet minimum live load requirements.
- San Jose, California, permits 4-week temporary occupancies, as allowed by language in their planning and zoning ordinance.
- Detroit, Michigan, offers a Temporary Use Permit through a simple one-page application, avoiding the need for a Change of Use, which can permit temporary pop-up cultural uses for up to six months.

### **CASE STUDY: VANCOUVER BC ARTS EVENT LICENSE**

The City of Vancouver BC recognized the need to simplify regulations for temporary performances. In consultation with members of their arts and culture community and the public, The City of Vancouver brought together various departments (Cultural Services, Licenses and Inspections, Planning and Development, Fire and Rescue, and Police) to create a pilot program that would make it easier to host pop-up performances in unconventional spaces including studios, warehouses, factories, offices, shops and wholesale spaces.

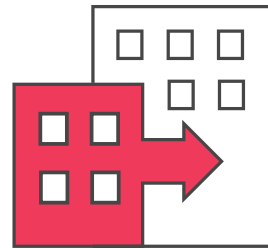
The City set up a pilot program to address the barriers identified by the arts and culture community, including restrictive requirements, complex processes through multiple departments and lengthy staff response time and limited knowledge on the part of the arts community. During the two-year pilot program, 110 events were licensed, and feedback was positive. At the end of the pilot in fall of 2015, valuable feedback informed recommendations for implementation of the permanent program.

An Arts Event License is applicable for events up to three days per month for up to 250 people. Instead of needing to work with multiple agencies, the license requires one application through a point person at the City, with a reduced fee.

The City website helps potential applicants understand safety and exiting requirements, liquor license requirements, minimizing impact on neighbors, green considerations and insurance considerations.

# 9 Reclassify Art Galleries as M Occupancies

- In the Seattle Amendments to the International Building Code, allow commercial art galleries to be classified as Mercantile (M) occupancies, with a posted maximum allowable number of people

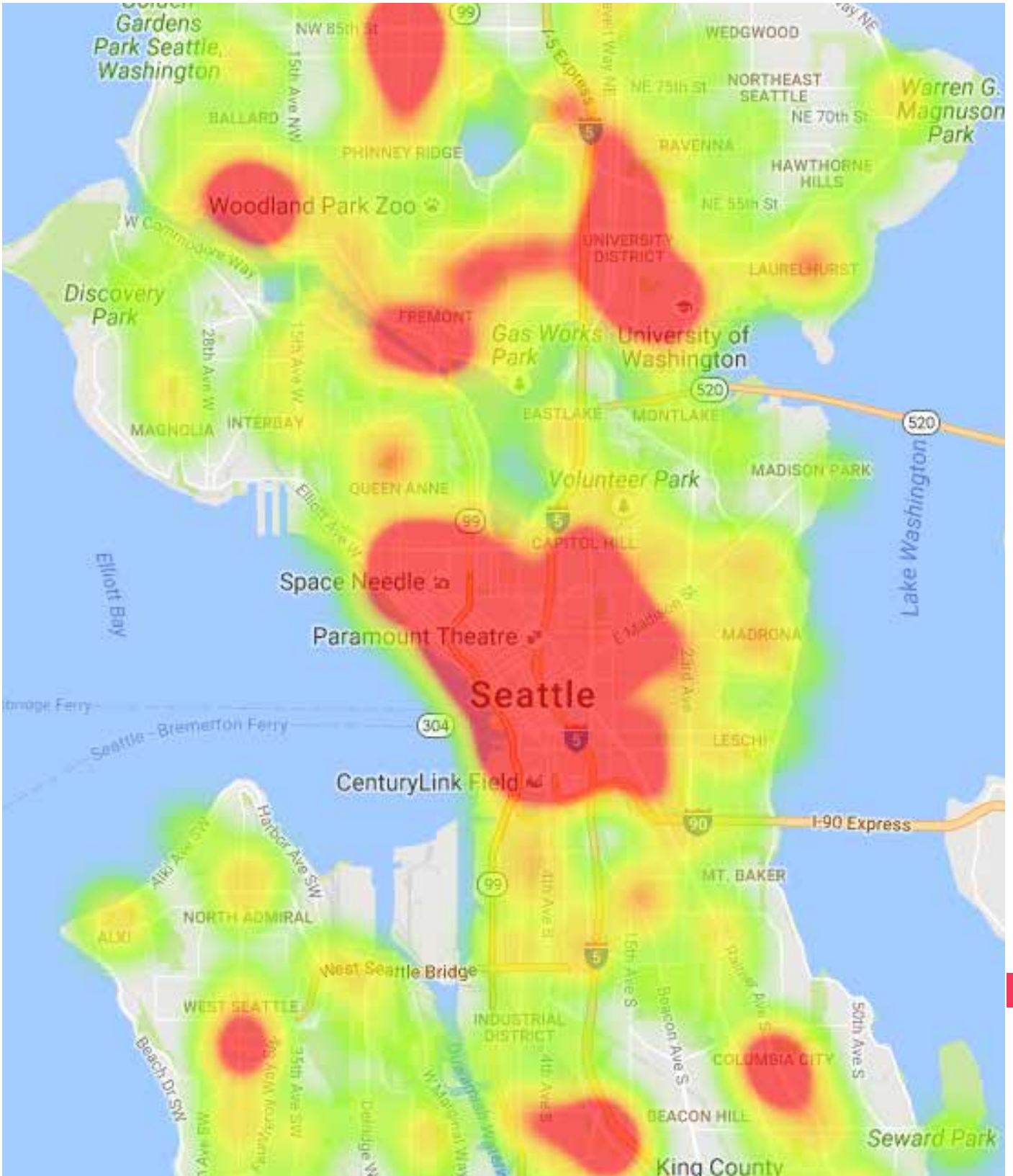


One disincentive to creating gallery space is that the building code classifies galleries as Assembly (A3) uses. The Assembly classification expects that the number of people to be in a given number of square feet to be quite high, which can trigger expensive building modifications. An A3 use (Table 1004.1.2) assigns 1 person per 30 net square feet of area when designing the fire safety and egress systems. A Mercantile (M) occupancy applies to retail and sales display; an M use assigns 1 person per 100 square feet in an unsprinklered building, or 130 square feet in a sprinklered building.

Life safety is essential in cultural space. The intent of this provision is to more accurately depict the level of usage in commercial art galleries, which may have many fewer people than the code calculation.

Many gallery spaces do have events, where the number of attendees can be much higher than in the course of a typical operation (as any event in a non-assembly space would). In order to provide a safe space for events, a maximum occupancy sign would be posted, and adhered to by event organizers. For unusual events, special measures can be taken by working with the Fire Marshal's Office to ensure safety.

# HEAT MAP OF CULTURAL SPACE IN THE SEATTLE REGION



The Seattle Office of Arts and Culture has recently started to map cultural spaces in Seattle, giving an overlay of where geographically cultural hot spots and desserts are located

**CREATE, ACTIVATE, AND PRESERVE CULTURAL SPACE**



Photo Credit: Jack Straw and ORA Architects

# Permitting Process

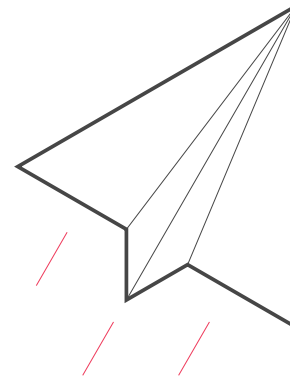
The City has policy language about the value of arts and culture, but stronger links between the Office of Planning & Community Development, the Department of Construction and Inspections, and the Office of Arts & Culture would be a step towards making that commitment visible and useful to cultural space creation.

Large development projects, with access to vast professional resources in the design and legal fields, move through the permitting process more deftly than small independent cultural projects, for whom the permitting process is likely to be a once-in-an-organizational-lifetime event.

The following set of tools will reduce confusion around cultural space permitting issues and bring predictability, add equity, and ultimately increase affordability by reducing cost.

# 10 Streamline Permitting for Cultural Space Projects

- Create a mechanism for faster building permit review for certified Cultural Space projects
- Consider additional incentives similar to the Green Building Permit incentives.



Seattle’s Department of Construction & Inspections has streamlined permitting program, Priority Green, for new construction projects that meet green building standards. An analogous program would be an incentive for incorporating cultural uses into new construction.

An easy first step would be to add “preservation or creation of cultural space” as a 1 to 2 point item on the Green Building Matrix. This could be done immediately by including cultural space creation or preservation as an allowable strategy under item “HP-0 Other Innovative Healthy People & Communities Elements”. Future revisions of the Matrix could add this outright as Item HP-7 Preservation or Creation of Cultural Space.

Green Building Permit incentives from the City also include Priority Green Facilitated, which applies to master use permits (MUPs), and an Innovation Advisory Committee, which offers assistance from a group experts in the review of energy-efficient proposals that fall outside the codes.

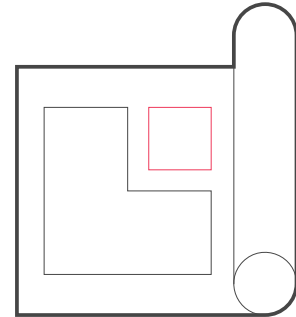
The Living Building Pilot allows developers attempting to meet the Living Building Challenge standards to request departures from the Land Use Code through the Design Review Process. Departures may be necessary for projects to meet the high standards of the Living Building Challenge, such as having enough space for solar collectors. Height and floor area incentives may also be offered. Another incentive for green buildings is the ability to begin deconstruction of an existing building before the building permit for the new building is issued. This provision may save a developer valuable time on a project.

These incentives for green buildings are the result of discussions between the City and green building proponents. They are relevant to cultural space creation in terms of both the incentives themselves, and the support of a dialogue between developers and the City regarding the kind of spaces that are desirable to communities.



# 11 Include ARTS in Pre-App Meetings

- Integrate the Office of Arts & Culture’s Cultural Space Liaison into the Office of Construction and Inspections pre-application process for mixed-use projects in urban villages.



Proponents for larger projects are required to attend a pre-application meeting with multiple City departments. Staff representation from the Arts Office at selected pre-application meetings for relevant projects would bring cultural issues to the table as a factor in the development process.

At that time, developers would be made aware of the cultural landscape of the vicinity and the resources available for the creation of cultural space.

Where developers are interested in creating space for arts and culture, Office of Arts & Culture staff could help advocate for the project during the entitlement process. The two departments can work together over time to identify regulatory changes that could help preserve and create cultural space.

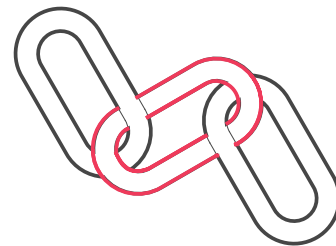
**“Uses that occupy the storefronts of new development are among the most critical elements of a pedestrian-oriented business district.”**

—Director’s Report and Recommendations for Pedestrian Zones

# 12 Create Online Connections Between City Departments

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- Provide interdepartmental connections online between the Office of Arts & Culture, Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections, and Office of Planning and Community Development.
- Revise the Department of Construction & Inspections website to link to the Office of Arts & Culture website's Cultural Space information.

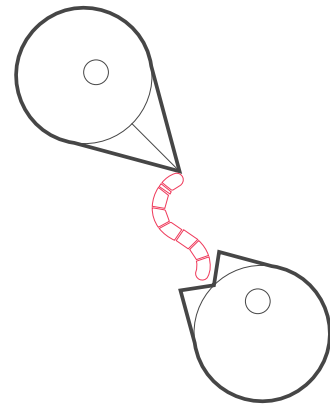


The relatively simple action of linking City websites will support interdepartmental interaction and a visible connection to resources on cultural development for people using City websites. The website connections will need to be maintained and updated over time. It will be an opportunity to have people find out about cultural space development resources and to celebrate successes.

# 13 Identify an SDCI Liaison to Assist Developers Interested in Creating Cultural Space

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- Provide technical assistance for potential projects that create new cultural space.
- Provide assistance, through the Liaison, with compliance options for building reuse
- Offer potential Cultural Space projects a City-funded pre-submittal conference with the Liaison



For some property owners, especially those who are not professional property developers, a Liaison with the Department of Construction and Inspections would be very helpful. Similarly, many cultural organizations are not knowledgeable about processes and requirements for developing or adapting structures for cultural use.

A dedicated Liaison would be useful for all involved in decision-making and the entitlement process for cultural space. The Liaison would be familiar with options

for designing and permitting potential cultural projects, which would allow potential developers to make good decisions early in the process.

Project proponents typically meet with City staff prior to submitting their permit documents. For Cultural Space projects, the pre-submittal conference could occur in the earliest stages of consideration, and be free of charge to encourage proponents to work with the City and know the full range of issues and benefits.

ROJECTS



Photo Credit : Joe Iano

# Older Buildings

Three-quarters of all cultural spaces in Seattle are in buildings that are over 50 years old. Half of all cultural spaces in Seattle are in buildings that are over 75 years old. A dangerously large percentage of cultural spaces in Seattle are located in buildings technically reaching the end of their useful lifetimes.

Because so many arts and cultural uses are in older buildings, protecting older buildings and reducing barriers for their use is key to having sufficient space for cultural uses.

## OLDER BUILDINGS

### PROTECTING OLDER BUILDINGS

Seattle has a long track record of successfully protecting historic buildings. For structures with particular historic significance, there are Federal, State and local designations, protections and funding sources. Historic designation is complicated, because along with protections come complex permitting requirements for any renovation, or even signage.

Historic preservation serves as a model for cultural preservation. It is also significant to cultural space because so many arts uses are housed in older buildings. Not coincidentally, several of Seattle's neighborhoods with a vibrant arts culture are in or near historic districts—Pioneer Square; the Chinatown International District; Columbia City; and Ballard.

Most older buildings are not historically designated. They are often smaller than the square footage allowed under current zoning, and attractive targets for redevelopment. The Pike Pine Overlay took innovative steps to retain the character of the neighborhood through saving the facades of older buildings, but it is hard to preserve through regulation the kinds of unique stores and cultural uses that were behind the now-preserved facades.

Protecting older buildings has been extensively discussed in Seattle, particularly regarding TDP/TDR (transfer of development potential or development rights) and in the provisions of the Pike Pine Overlay. The details of those discussions are outside the scope of this report. However, an important part of the City's cultural space work is to advocate for making older buildings usable, affordable and safe for artists and cultural organizations.

54

### THE COSTS OF REUSING OLDER BUILDINGS

Most of Seattle's cultural spaces are in existing, older buildings, and the number of Seattle's cultural organizations that rent space far outnumber those that own their space. As a consequence, the ability to cost-effectively occupy existing buildings is important to the amount of space usable for arts and culture.

Reuse and renovation of existing buildings is often complicated. In Seattle, existing buildings are regulated by the International Existing Building Code, with modifications made by the City. Changing the use of the building can trigger "substantial alteration", which can be very costly. Substantial alteration requirements come into play with major remodeling of a building, a change to a more intense use, reoccupying a building that has been vacant for 2 or more years, or a significant increase in occupant load in an unreinforced masonry building.

Because cultural uses often include gathering—either for patrons in a gallery or audiences in performing arts—they often trigger substantial alteration requirements because the intensity of the use increases. These gathering spaces, categorized as "Assembly" uses in the Code,

**Three quarters of cultural spaces are in buildings 50 years or older. Half are in buildings over 75 years old.**

—City of Seattle Cultural Database

must meet life safety requirements including fire prevention, exiting, and seismic stability. Life safety requirements may be achieved by various methods, but must be met. Accessibility provisions—covered not only by City and State regulations, but also Federal Department of Justice requirements—also have little flexibility.

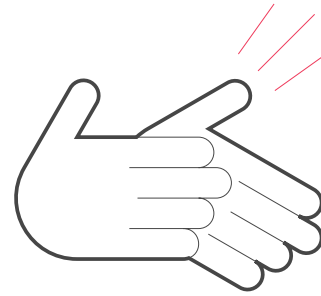
Seismic upgrades for existing buildings is an interesting topic in terms of trade-offs between economics and level of safety. This has been playing out in a long-standing debate regarding unreinforced masonry structures (URMs). The City would like to require seismic upgrades to older buildings—often historic brick buildings that are particularly vulnerable in earthquakes. Because the cost of these upgrades is out of reach for many property owners, options have been considered that improve seismic safety, but do not reach full code compliance. A solution called “Bolts Plus” has been adopted in California, which requires structural improvements that affect life safety, but does not mandate upgrades that primarily reduce property damage. Partial code compliance options could be considered for cultural uses looking to move into existing buildings in need of seismic upgrades.

**Code requirements that fall outside of life safety and accessibility could have more flexibility for cultural space. Energy codes could be waived or implemented over time. Plumbing codes could be reduced, potentially saving expensive bathroom installations.**

# 14 Incentivize Cultural Uses in Older Buildings

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- Coordinate the work of the Office of Arts & Culture with the Department of Neighborhoods' historic preservation program.
- Offer technical assistance to property owners interested in using existing buildings for cultural space. This may include design professionals and staff working across departments and agencies.
- Assist property owners in finding potential funding sources for upgrading existing buildings.
- Advocate for additional City funding for use of existing buildings for cultural space, especially for improvements to existing buildings that support multiple goals of historic preservation and support for the arts.
- Favor buildings that have desired uses (including arts & culture) in allocation of funds to remediate buildings with unreinforced masonry.



City policies value both cultural uses and preservation of older buildings. If the City is able to identify funding sources for seismic upgrades for URMs, the City could prioritize buildings that contained cultural space in order to meet multiple goals.

In the URM discussions, a City-appointed Technical Advisory Committee created a list of potential tools and incentives for building owners. These may be applicable to the adaptation of existing buildings for cultural uses:

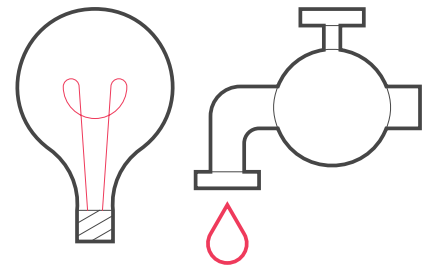
- A liaison with the Department of Construction and Inspections that can assist with compliance options
- City-funded pre-submittal coaching
- Subsidized permit fees
- An interdepartmental/ interagency permit facilitator
- Assistance in identifying potential funding sources



# 15 Explore Energy and Plumbing Codes

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- Consider waivers or other mechanisms to make reuse of existing buildings more affordable in regard to non-life-safety aspects of the building code.

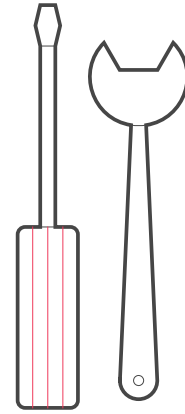


For certified Cultural Space projects that are required to be improved to meet current codes, the City could, on a case by case basis, relax provisions of the energy and plumbing codes. This relaxation would be specific to the building conditions and the particular needs of the usage, and result in an affordable but effective set of building improvements.

Relaxing plumbing standards may increase the wait for restrooms, but that trade off may be acceptable to cash-strapped cultural uses. Insulation may be reduced, and temperatures slightly lower than 72 degrees, but that inconvenience may be acceptable to patrons and allow organizations to more economically adapt older buildings for cultural uses.

# 16 Provide Guidance Regarding Substantial Alteration Triggers

- Consider leniency for non-life-safety substantial alteration requirements for Cultural Space projects.
- Offer Cultural Space projects technical assistance to help them navigate existing flexibility in substantial alteration code provisions.



Reuse of existing buildings is desirable for many reasons, and many cultural uses are housed in older buildings. Substantial alteration is defined in Seattle’s modifications to the International Building Code (Section 305.1.1) by any one of the triggers shown in sidebar.

Cultural Space Projects could be looked at on a case-by-case basis to ensure life safety but with consideration of affordability. It is sometimes the case that because the costs of reuse are high, buildings lie fallow, or are used without permits.

Modifications that would make reuse more affordable could include less than full compliance with the plumbing code, energy code and other non-life-safety requirements. Fire requirements, exiting requirements, and other life-safety codes would still need to be met.

## SUBSTANTIAL ALTERATION TRIGGERS

1. Repair of a building that has been damaged by 60% or more.
2. Remodels or additions which substantially extend the useful life of a building, other than typical tenant remodeling.
3. A change of use to a more hazardous occupancy
4. Reoccupying a building after more than two years of vacancy
5. A significant increase in occupant load of an unreinforced masonry building.

For cultural uses only, a building that had been heavily damaged could be rebuilt without full code compliance on a case-by-case basis. “Extending the life of the building” is a common trigger. For cultural uses, after discussions with the City, some level of code relief may be appropriate. Reoccupying a vacant building could be a similar negotiation for cultural use.

The triggers that relate to safety—more hazardous uses and significant increases in occupancies—would need to be improved in terms of life safety, but still may be subject to negotiated improvements for non-life-safety issues.

An example of modified compliance is the Bolts Plus solution for seismic improvement. Unreinforced masonry buildings are particularly vulnerable in earthquakes, and full seismic retrofit can be very expensive. The City wants older masonry buildings to be

brought to modern seismic standards, but many building owners are unable to afford full compliance. The Bolts Plus compromise position, developed in California, allows a simpler retrofit that solves the most critical deficiencies of a particular building.

Accessibility compliance can also mean significant expenditures for building reuse, but is enforced through local code and Federal requirements. For this reason, ADA compliance cannot be modified by the local jurisdiction.



# Technical Assistance

The Office of Arts & Culture is assembling a set of tools for developers interested in creating space for arts and culture. The Cultural Space Inventory, for example, helps property owners understand the relationship of their property to cultural “clusters” or “deserts”. There are links to relevant topics on other department websites.

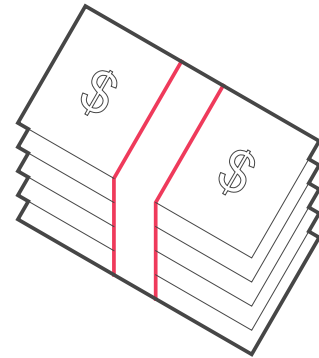
Information regarding organizations that need space is very valuable for developers interested in creating cultural space. Numerous models for this type of resource exist, including the Spacefinder Seattle website, created by the Office of Arts & Culture.

More resources can be gathered over time, specifically case studies of cultural development that has been an economic success. People certified in the proposed Cultural Space Agency program would be valuable contributors of materials and resources to promote space-making, and problem solve obstacles to creating and managing successful cultural spaces.

# 17 Build a Clearinghouse for Capital Funding Connections

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- Create a centralized living document compiling funding, grants and incentives available for Cultural Space projects.



The City’s Cultural Space staff should be well versed in the range of financial incentives available for encouraging preservation and creation of space for art and culture, including funding from City levies, reinvestment of City B&O taxes, and/or grants. This information should be put into a format that is easy to understand and to use.

The City may wish to explore ways of making the funding process more efficient or effective, possibly by convening funders and looking for ways to work together and to make sure that underrepresented artists have access to funding information and the application process. The Common Grant Application process used by Philanthropy Northwest may be an applicable model.

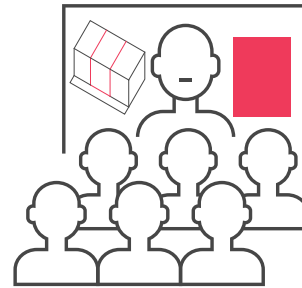
This report also advocates expanding the city Cultural Facilities Grant program or creating other significant sources to fund cultural space.

**“Because the principal problem is cost, the principal solution is more money”**

—Artist Space Development: Financing, regarding artist space development in strong markets

# 18 Convene Hyper-local Cultural Space Panels to Advise Projects

- Set up cultural advisory panels that understand the cultural needs of their neighborhood to advise design review, developers and agencies on hyper-local cultural needs.



Local leaders know what their neighborhoods need. Neighborhood-based cultural advisory panels would be a resource for the range of actors and decision-makers in the development process. They could advise design review boards in guiding development to best contribute to their surroundings when weighing design departures; they could help developers with decisions regarding viable uses. They could even become advocates for neighborhood cultural planning, both in designated Art Districts and neighborhoods without designation.

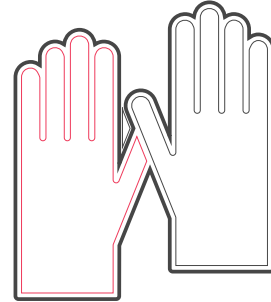
Neighborhood panels would be comprised of people that are certified through the Cultural Space program, with a range of backgrounds—valued advisors with up-to-date knowledge of the neighborhood.

**A cultural use that fits perfectly on one block may be completely inappropriate on another block.**

# 19 Matchmake Developers and Space-seeking Cultural Users

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- Continue the work being done by the Office of Arts & Culture's Cultural Space Liaison to connect developers and cultural users.



The City of Seattle's Office of Arts & Culture has a Cultural Space Liaison who is an important link between the arts community and people who may wish to develop space for cultural uses. This position, created in 2013, has been instrumental in connecting various actors in the development of space for arts and culture.

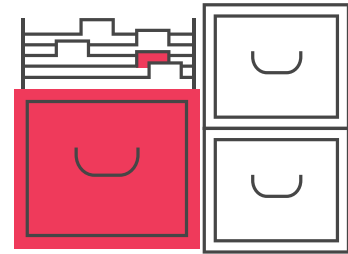
Support of this role will continue to increase awareness of the needs for cultural space, its value and viability, and strengthen the web of relationships that foster cultural space.

Adding capacity to this role at the Office of Arts & Culture will bring more resources to bear increasing cultural space in the neighborhoods.



# 20 Gather Models & Case Studies and Share Out

- Use the resources of the City of Seattle to find and share the best models around the country and worldwide to inform projects and policies in Seattle.



There is much to learn from others that are creating cultural spaces. These models may include creative incentives, financing or ownership mechanisms, or new approaches to partnerships. We can also learn from indirect models, such as those discussed earlier in this report, drawing on successes in historic preservation, sustainability, and other desired outcomes for development. These models can spark ideas for Seattle's arts community, development community and policy makers.

Case studies are also helpful in understanding how cultural uses can be economically successful, add to the value of real estate developments, and bring viability to surrounding businesses. Cities that have been dealing with similar issues of growth and displacement, such as San Francisco and Brooklyn, would be useful to study.

## CASE STUDY: IDEA SPACE

IDEA Space was created as a resource center for residents, business owners, and stakeholders of the Seattle Chinatown International District to work on community development projects.

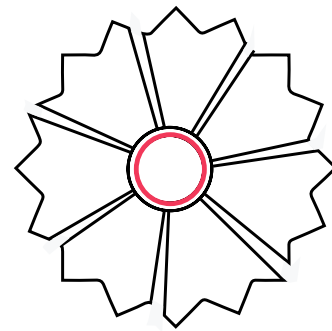
A part of the Seattle Chinatown International District Public Development Authority, IDEA Space offers research, technical assistance, access to resources, and manpower for projects that benefit the community. IDEA Space is particularly helpful in this multilingual district, assisting the community in having their voice heard in near-term projects and long term visions for their neighborhood.

The City could also assist neighborhoods and artists in similar way, including technical assistance for people interested in creating cultural space regarding design, permitting, neighborhood needs, and potential funding.

# 21 Advocate for Changes to Other Building Certifications to Support Cultural Space

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- Encourage awareness of how cultural space advantages projects aiming for other certification, such as the City's Living Building Pilot Program.
- Work with other certification organizations to find ways to include cultural space preservation and creation in their criteria.



The breadth of sustainability has become increasingly understood to include healthy culture as well as a healthy environment. Cultural Space projects may well be poised to, or required to, meet other certification.

For example, in order to receive funding from the State of Washington's Building for the Arts fund, a project must be LEED Silver certified. The CAP Report recommends that the City advocate for LEED to recognize the benefits of creating, activating, and preserving cultural space.

LEED for Neighborhood Development, for instance, could more clearly encourage cultural uses in neighborhoods. Incorporation of cultural uses could be encouraged in LEED for New Construction and Major Renovation. This would be consistent with their goals of enhancing

human well-being, social equity, community health and quality of life.

The Living Building Challenge does broaden their criteria to include Health and Happiness, Equity, and Beauty. Imperative 19 calls for integrating public art, but could go further in terms of supporting places that uplift the human spirit, and foster creativity and beauty.

The Living Building Challenge is particularly important to tying cultural space with certification. The City of Seattle has created a Living Building Pilot program (SMC 23.40.060) that offers significant benefits for developers that achieve all or specified aspects of the Living Building Challenge. Projects that meet the criteria can receive both height and FAR bonuses.



**"The project must meaningfully integrate public art and contain design features intended solely for human delight and the celebration of culture, spirit, and place appropriate to the project's function."**

—Imperative 19, Living Building Challenge 3.1

(C) Nic Lehoux for the Bullitt Center



Photo Credit: Joe Iano

# Financial Tools

So much of creating cultural space is finding the financial tools to design, renovate or build new space. The City can assist cultural space development as an advocate for funding and incentives, and for creating new sources of revenue for cultural space development.

## 22 Subsidize Permit Fees

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- Reduce or waive permit fees for certified Cultural Space projects.



Reducing permit fees would especially help arts organizations with limited funds. The fee reductions could be targeted for most effect and to minimize impact on City revenues. In crafting legislation regarding fees for cultural uses, the City could choose to include a cap on annual total reductions either as a percentage of permit fees or as a dollar amount.

**“The single most pressing development issue cited by cultural groups and artists themselves is space. Simply put, artists cannot work without affordable studios, residential spaces and offices. There is no issue more central to their ongoing growth and vitality.”**

—Creating a Cultural Destination, Columbia University Urban Design Lab and the 125th Street Business Improvement District

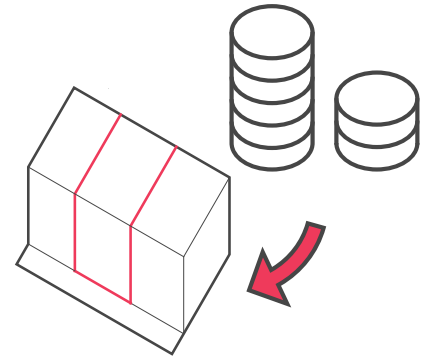
# 23 Increase City Capital Funding for Cultural Spaces

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- Advocate for increased financial support for development of space for art and culture.

Funding cultural space is direct and effective. The City of Seattle should be a strong advocate for the value that the arts bring to communities, and help make a powerful case for funding. The City would also be well positioned to help develop criteria for distributing funds, with ties to neighborhoods throughout the City and an understanding of the space needs citywide.

This report recommends strengthening the understanding of the economic benefits of arts and culture through metrics specific to Seattle, and making the case for the arts as an investment in the City's goal of livability. Mechanisms for greater equity are encouraged, which may reward riskier adventures and emerging artists. The Race and Social Justice Initiative's Racial Equity Toolkit must be applied to funding for arts and culture.







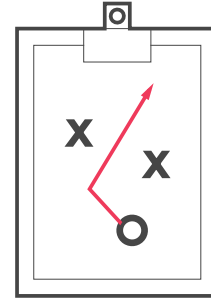
# Public Policy

Art and culture need to be nurtured by thoughtful public policy. Through planning processes and policy mechanisms, the City can be a champion for the cultural uses that bring life and meaning to our community.

# 24 Create a Cultural Space Management PDA

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- Establish a Public Development Authority to preserve, activate, and create cultural space in Seattle
- Explore working with existing PDAs on accomplishing cultural space goals in the near term.
- Explore partnerships, funding sources and a financial plan for a new PDA to carry out the City's cultural space mission



Develop a new organization with the means and authority to manage large amounts of space for cultural uses. This new semi-independent organization can lease, develop, or purchase real estate for the purpose of subleasing to cultural users at subsidized rates.

## WHAT IS A PDA?

Under Washington State law, public corporations as quasi-municipal corporations for public purposes may be established by cities, towns and counties. PDAs are created to provide public services in more flexible ways than the public sector can provide, to administer federal and state funds, and to provide services that government agencies cannot provide. As a steward of government, PDAs are accountable to the public for accomplishing public purposes in a high quality and responsive manner, but outside of the regular functions of City government. PDAs in Seattle are governed by volunteer councils that oversee staffing and activities.

- Created under Washington State law RCW 35.21.730
- Can receive public funds
- Can receive tax deductible donations (However, as the PDA is a Washington-specific structure, its charitable status is not widely understood by many national funders.)
- Is subject to open meeting requirements.
- Can involve private sector participants in meaningful project decision making.
- Can borrow funds or issue tax-exempt bonds.
- In Seattle, the Mayor appoints a certain percentage of board positions

Public development authorities in Washington State have a variety of missions, and often oversee physical property of importance to the local and broader community. (Fort Warden, Hurricane Ridge, Pike Place Market).

The PDA mechanism is used for supporting historic preservation (Historic Seattle Preservation and Development Authority), economic development and downtown revitalization. They are used to operate properties of cultural significance; the Museum Development Authority of Seattle was chartered in 1985 to construct, manage and operate the Seattle Art Museum. Several PDAs in Seattle focus on neighborhoods, The Seattle Chinatown International District PDA, with a mission of preserving cultural and ethnic characteristics, provides and manages affordable housing, and is active in community engagement and economic development.

## HOW CAN A PDA HELP SUPPORT CULTURAL SPACE?

- Developers can point to secured long-term revenue from cultural tenants, which is attractive to financiers
- Developers do not need to seek out cultural tenants and replace them, if necessary, over time
- Artists and cultural organizations can depend on consistent rental rates
- A PDA can serve as a source of information for those seeking cultural space
- PDA's may be able to offer additional sources of revenue for cultural projects
- Grants and fundraising efforts can subsidize cultural organizations' lease rates.

### **OPTIONS FOR SPACE OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The Cultural Space PDA can make arts uses more attractive for private developers by finding or creating an entity to Master Lease and provide the management function for cultural uses. Having a quasi-public entity in charge of managing cultural space can benefit artists and cultural organizations, by making them less vulnerable to rent increases and eviction. From the City's standpoint, a quasi-public management scenario gives them assurance that incentivized uses remain in place over time. A management entity would be able to set criteria for affordability of spaces and be stewards of the definition of eligible cultural uses.

A management entity could not only foster the creation of new space, it could also support use on a temporary basis of existing vacant space. The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, profiled below, successfully uses owned spaces and temporarily donated spaces for artist studios and rehearsal space.

### **FUNDING A MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION**

A management entity would need ongoing funds for its work in property management and other related activities. Funding would come in part by rental income from the managed cultural spaces. For a PDA, public funding might come from City levies, reinvestment of City B&O taxes, and/or grants. Again, there are a number of models locally and nationally that have successfully found ongoing sources of revenue to supplement income from rents.

### **NON-PROFIT CASE STUDY: LOWER MANHATTAN CULTURAL COUNCIL**

LMCC was founded in 1973, with support from the New York State Council on the Arts and a variety of business and civic leaders, in the belief that artists are vital to the life of New York City. LMCC has a variety of resources for artists, including grants and professional skills development. Of interest here is their artists' residency programs.

LMCC offers residencies for artists working in all disciplines to promote creation, development and presentation of innovative new work. The studio spaces are in temporarily donated spaces donated by property owners and leaseholders. Artists can apply or be nominated to this competitive program. The programs are free to the participating artists.

In addition to studio space, artists are supported with weekly salon discussions, visits from critics and curators, and use of Open Studios to showcase their work. Workspace serves 25 to 30 artists or collaborative groups per year. The studio space is private or semi-private, with 24/7 access. Studios range from 150 sf to 300 sf. program does not provide living space.

### **NON-PROFIT CASE STUDY: ARTSPACE**

Artspace's mission is to create, foster, and preserve affordable space for artists and arts organizations

Artspace is a highly successful model of a non-profit organization with a mission to create, own and operate affordable space for artists and creative organizations. They own and operate 35 projects across the country, including Tashiro Kaplan Artist Lofts/Tashiro Arts Building, Artspace Hiawatha Lofts, and Mt. Baker Artspace in Seattle.

Artspace has developed expertise in accessing public and private funding sources. They tap public sources such as housing, economic development, historic preservation and cultural facility development. Private sources include conventional bank financing, individual and community philanthropic support.

The relevance to the Cultural Space Agency is Artspace's ability to manage cultural space created under the program. Artspace has experience with the tricky issues of defining who qualifies as an artist under their programs.

#### **CASE STUDY: PIKE PLACE MARKET PDA**

The Pike Place Market Preservation & Development Authority (PDA) was chartered in 1973 to manage the properties in the nine-acre Market Historic District. The PDA is charged with protecting the Market's buildings; increasing opportunities for farm and food retailing in the Market; incubating and supporting small and marginal businesses; and providing services for low-income people.

PDA activities are governed by an all-volunteer, 12-member PDA Council. Four of the Council members are appointed by the Mayor, four are elected by the Constituency, and four are appointed by the PDA Council. All Council members must be confirmed by the Seattle City Council and typically serve a four year term.

#### **CASE STUDY: CAPITOL HILL HOUSING**

Capitol Hill Housing (CHH), founded in 1976, is a PDA created by the City of Seattle. Its purpose is to assist the Capitol Hill community in preserving and improving the quality of neighborhood, and to provide housing, cultural, social and economic opportunities and facilities. It may also operate outside the boundaries of Capitol Hill.

CHH has taken on the creation of art space with the 12th Avenue Arts project, which opened in November, 2014. They have recently established a real estate operation to manage properties for other affordable housing groups, and played a key role with the City in establishing Capitol Hill as an Arts District.

CHH formed the Capitol Hill Housing Foundation in 2010 as a 501(c)3 organization that raises funds to support the work of the PDA. The Foundation has its own Board of Directors.

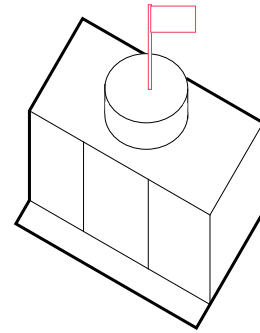
**“Evidence suggests that funders are interested in funding capitalization projects that ensure grantees are able to remain stable in place.”**

—Cultural Space Seattle: Findings and Recommended Next Steps

# 25 Require Cultural Space in Public Buildings of a Certain Size

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- Develop a program, “Culture Factor”, modeled on based on Green Factor, to require a specified amount of space for arts and culture in major public sector projects.
- Incorporate Culture Factor review into the Design Commission review.



New or renovated public buildings over a specified number of square feet should provide an amount of cultural space proportional to the building’s size. The trigger for providing cultural space is recommended to be 5,000, which is the same trigger that requires public projects to achieve or exceed LEED Gold certification.

There would be flexibility in the type and location of uses, and review by the Design Commission would determine the appropriateness of the response to Culture Factor requirements to local conditions, needs and opportunities.

**DEVELOPER REQUIREMENTS**

Voluntary measures are most common for attracting spaces for arts and culture. For other public benefits, such as sustainability or affordable housing, mandatory regulations may also be in place, and are worth consideration for cultural space.

**GREEN FACTOR**

An interesting example of a mandatory, but flexible regulation, is Seattle's Green Factor. The Green Factor is based on tools begun in Berlin and Malmo, Sweden.

Developments are required to include landscape and open space in their project according to a flexible calculation system. Green Factor can be achieved by green roofs, green walls, landscaped areas, trees and permeable paving.

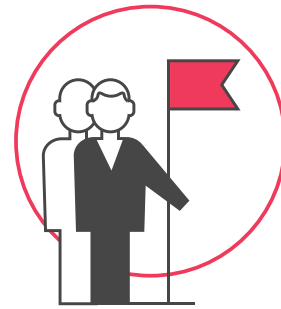
In Seattle, project proponents need to justify their approach to achieving the Green Factor requirement at their Design Review meetings. The Design Review Board can weigh in on the most appropriate way for the Green Factor requirement to serve the neighborhood. For instance, in a neighborhood with narrow sidewalks, the project may be encouraged to add permeable paved area along the street front, rather than meet Green Factor with a green roof.

The corollary for cultural development would be a requirement for a certain amount of space, tailored to site-specific needs. A "Culture Factor" could have an easily achievable baseline requirement; it could be triggered if a development were displacing an existing cultural use.

# 26 Elevate Arts & Culture Through Neighborhood-based Planning

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- Use neighborhood-based cultural panels to promote arts and culture in neighborhood planning.
- Advocate for cultural planning to be incorporated into existing neighborhood planning tools, including neighborhood design guidelines, neighborhood matching grants, and neighborhood-based historic review processes.
- Encourage art districts to be “early adopters” of cultural space creation tools and cultural plan development.
- If neighborhood plans are reconsidered or rewritten in the future, ensure that art and culture play a significant role in the vision for the future health of communities.
- Use neighborhood-based cultural planning to strengthen ties and information flow between the City and neighborhoods.





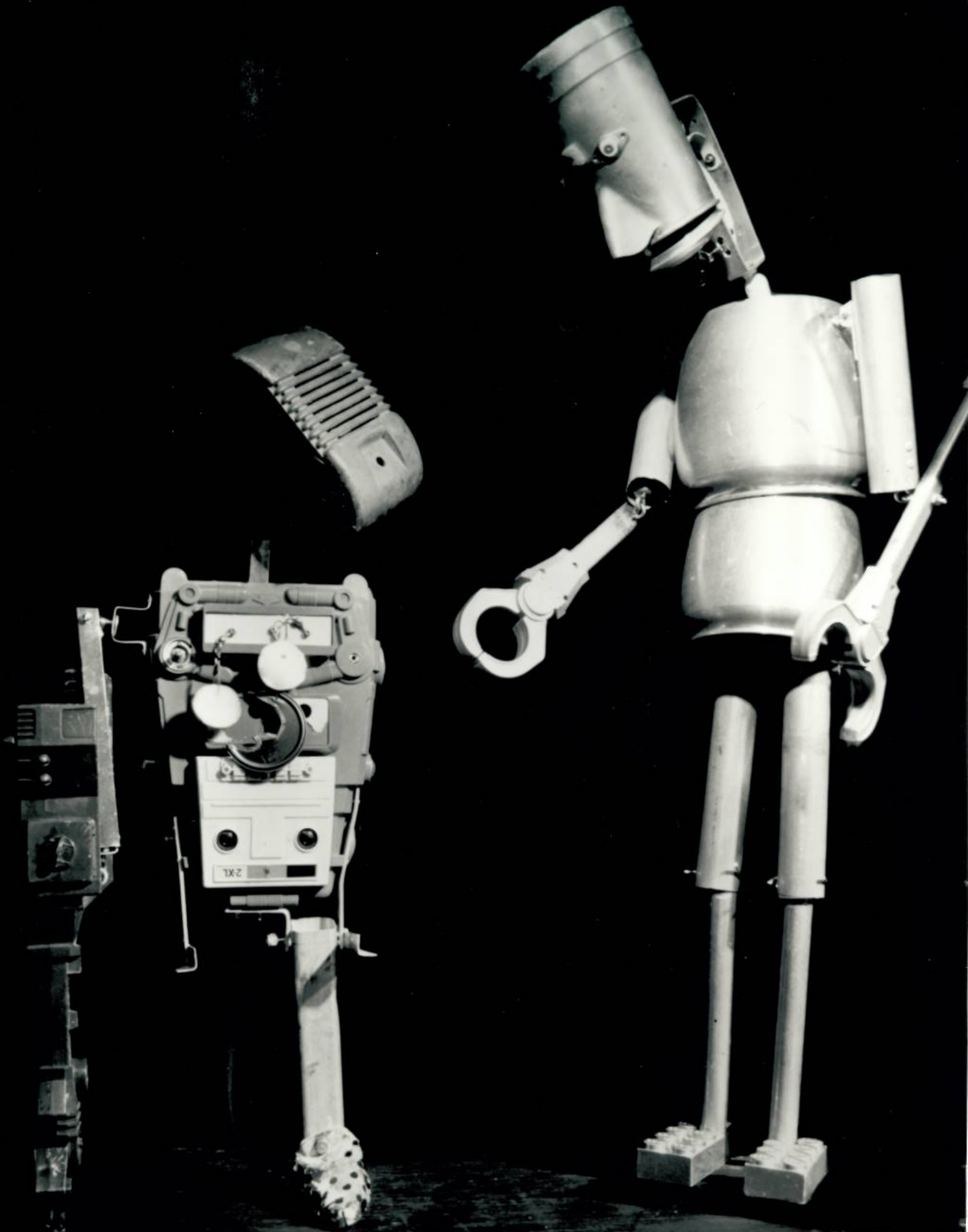
Planning at the local level is critical for a city that values its neighborhoods. The aspiration of Cultural Space Agency is to simultaneously empower neighborhoods and target cultural uses to specific needs and opportunities.

Neighborhood planning is an excellent tool to harness the power of the “hyper-local” cultural space panels described in action #18 to coordinate with physical planning efforts and to advocate for cultural planning efforts in their neighborhoods.

### **OTHER MECHANISMS FOR SUPPORT: CREATING CULTURAL PLANS**

One tool for overall coordination and support is the creation of a cultural plan. Toronto’s Creative City efforts are a good example of using a cultural plan to elevate the status of culture as a public good, and to create a guide for coordinating and allocating resources. Cultural plans require a substantial effort to create, and to implement on an ongoing basis.

Another effective approach to planning is to increase the role of culture in development or neighborhood plans. Most of Seattle’s neighborhood plans were written a number of years ago. If neighborhood plans are reconsidered in the future, culture should play a significant role in the vision for the future health of communities. Other planning tools, such as neighborhood design guidelines, offer opportunities to raise the profile of cultural space issues. In the evolution of all the City’s tools, stronger policies and regulations for cultural space will require advocacy from within the City and from active citizens and organizations.



# Other Ideas

Several of the ideas that were generated through this report's outreach process are not feasible to pursue at present. One idea finds itself in conflict with the State of Washington's constitution. One of them puts cultural space advocacy in direct conflict with advocacy around other civic priorities.

These ideas have value, but for a variety of reasons cannot be explored at this time. We publish them here to honor the input we've received from culturally committed members of the community, and to reflect the entirety of the process that lead to this report.

## 27 Regulate Live/Work Spaces

- Enforce development agreements that included live-work units to increase allowable square footage (FAR) of new buildings, by making sure that spaces designated for live-work are actually used for live-work.
- Revise the Live-work definition to specifically include art uses, and strengthen the Live-work language in Pedestrian Zones.



Many projects have been designated as mixed-use developments by including one or more live-work units in a project. The resulting mixed use designation significantly increases developable area over a residential-only development. .

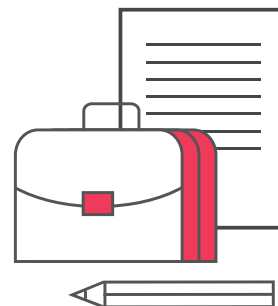
Often, the live-work units are not being used as defined. These spaces are ideal for artist live-work housing, and could be listed in a City database as part of the art and cultural space brokerage, or managed by a non-profit or PDA that would ensure that the space is used as intended.

Live-work units are defined as a nonresidential use per Section 23.47A.004.G "Live-work unit" means a structure or portion of a structure: (1) that combines a commercial or manufacturing activity that is allowed in the zone with a residential living space for the owner of the commercial or manufacturing business, or the owner's employee, and that person's household; (2) where the resident owner or employee of the business is responsible for the commercial or manufacturing activity performed; and (3) where the commercial or manufacturing activity conducted takes place subject to a valid business license associated with the premises.

# 28 Build Tax Tools

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- Explore possibilities for tax relief for art and cultural uses and advocate at all levels of government.



Tax incentives have played a significant role in the success of historic preservation efforts, with incentives on Federal, State and local levels in some areas.

The State of Washington has Special Tax Valuation for Historic Properties; property owners who renovate historic buildings offers relief by revising the assessed value of a renovated historic property by subtracting rehabilitation costs approved by the local review board for up to 10 years. There may be a possible analogy for creation of cultural space in existing buildings.

King County has some property tax incentives, such as the Public Benefits Rating System, which encourages property owners to voluntarily conserve land resources. Protected land is assessed at a value consistent with “current use” rather than “highest and best” use. This tool is being used to expand the County’s trail system, and could be adapted for a cultural space application.

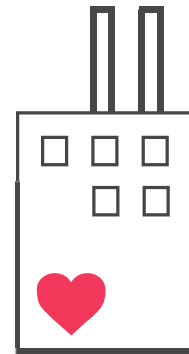
The City of Seattle has some tax exemptions, notably the Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE) that targets new multifamily buildings in certain Seattle neighborhoods. Projects that set aside 20-25% of the units for affordable housing can qualify to the tax exemption. One could imagine an analogous cultural space application.

Advocates for cultural space can look to these models and to examples nationwide to increase tax tools for preservation and creation of space for arts and culture.

# 29 Allow Cultural Spaces in the Duwamish MIC

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- Modify the code to allow cultural spaces in the Duwamish Manufacturing Industrial Center.

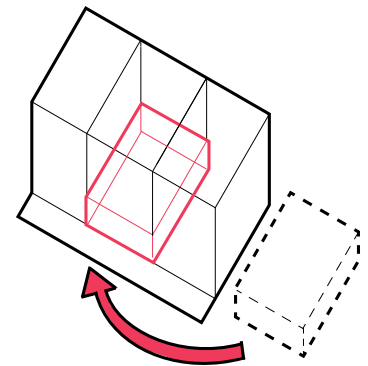


Current Land Use Code (23.50.012) prohibits the establishment of theaters, libraries, cinemas, museums, and other cultural spaces on any property located within the Duwamish Manufacturing and Industrial Center, an overlay of more than 5,000 acres of urban land, including the SoDo, Georgetown, South Park, and Delridge neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are typically post-industrial areas full of the types of buildings that artists and cultural organizations find attractive. The potential to create affordable, central cultural space in surplus property in the neighborhood is enormous.

If this idea were pursued, significant work would need to be done with stakeholders in the neighborhood to ensure that traditional industrial operations and freight and shipping concerns are not interrupted. Appropriate types of cultural space, located appropriately, would need to be negotiated.

# 30 Require Cultural Space in Private Buildings that Displace Cultural Space

- When developments displace existing cultural uses, require new cultural space in the new development.
- Incorporate Culture Factor review into the Design Review process.



As part of the “Culture Factor” program, require a specified amount of space for arts and culture in major private sector projects.

The requirements would be triggered by the displacement of existing cultural uses. It may also be triggered by size and/or location of the project. For example, projects in a designated Art District would be required to contribute to cultural space. The City’s residential displacement policies and regulations can serve as models.

Like Green Factor, there would be flexibility in the type and location of uses, and review by the Design Review Boards would help determine the appropriateness of the response to Culture Factor requirements to local conditions, needs and opportunities.



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# **APPENDIX / RESOURCES**



Photo Credit : Joe Iano

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