

Special Purpose Guidelines

ARTS AND CULTURE

The need to encourage the growth of the arts in Virginia Beach begins with the following objectives and strategies.

Objective 1: Arts and Cultural Districts

Creating arts and cultural districts in areas where visual or performing arts venues are located will revitalize and activate under-utilized areas and encourage artists to locate their studios in the area. Arts districts also can attract private and public sector development. Mixed-use areas of the city where a high concentration of arts and cultural facilities serves as an anchor of attraction, supplemented by restaurants and retail to add to the vibrancy of the area.



Entertainment at Town Center

Strategies:

1. Encourage the designation of arts and cultural districts.
2. Consider amending the City's Zoning Code to create Arts and Cultural Districts.
3. Consider an arts component in development of Requests for Proposals for City-owned sites.
4. Formalize and designate the following as Arts and Cultural Districts:
Pembroke Strategic Growth Area to include Town Center 17th and 19th Street Corridors
5. Encourage connections between and among cultural venues to locate approximate to one another in identifiable clusters or districts.
6. Consider amending the City's sign ordinance to allow appropriate and adequate temporary and general signage, banners and decoration in the Arts and Cultural Districts.

Objective 2: Arts as a Civic Value

Public art can be used to emphasize important places, transitions and gateways within Virginia Beach by celebrating them with works of art. A city can use art to

add interest to the citizen's or tourist's experience and to accent locations such as future transit stations, sidewalks, paths, streets, parks and building lobbies that are visited by many people. Public art has the power to energize our public spaces, arouse our thinking, and transform the places where we live, work, and play into more welcoming and beautiful environments that invite interaction. Public art can punctuate the community by using pieces to emphasize focal points and mark transitional locations.

There is no established and on-going public funding source for public art in Virginia Beach. Private developers are not required to provide public art. City Council passed an ordinance in 1986 establishing a Percent for the Art Program, administered by the Virginia Beach Arts and Humanities Commission (VBAHC). Funding for the program was removed from the City budget in the early 1990s.



Beachball sculpture

Strategies:

1. Consider incorporating public art into the planning stages of publicly funded projects and projects on City-owned land.
2. Consider installing public art in City parks, trail system, and community facilities.
3. Capitalize on the potential that public projects have for serving as symbols of the city, and for expressing the identity and special character of the area where they are located by encouraging public art that communicate the purpose of the project and the identify, history and uniqueness of different places with the city.
4. Consider supporting the temporary reuse of vacant and/or underutilized building facades for art exhibitions and murals.
5. Empower the Arts Commission to implement a comprehensive art plan and program.
6. Explore innovative public and private funding opportunities for public art.
7. Create incentives for the provision of public art as part of private development projects.
8. Explore funding a "Percent for the Art" program that would mandate a full one percent of new construction or redevelopment costs to acquiring and maintaining public art.

Objective 3: Economic Development and the Arts

A flourishing arts and entertainment industry in Virginia Beach impacts much more than the employment of artists. It increases the city's tax base by generating admission, meal and hotel taxes. It improves the quality of life of its residents by making arts and entertainment available to attract more knowledge workers to Virginia Beach. This, in turn, encourages creative industries to locate in the City, knowing that it can meet its hiring needs because of the availability of a well-qualified, knowledge workforce that prefers to live and work in Virginia Beach.



Festival at Town Center

The Virginia Beach Arts and Humanities Commission have completed the first ever City-wide Arts Economic Impact Study conducted by the Americans for the Arts.

Strategies:

1. Use traditional economic development and tourism marketing tools to promote the arts.
2. Use results from Arts Economic Impact Study to strengthen the importance of the arts and culture to Virginia Beach.
3. Promote and market events that support and encourage cultural tourism.
4. Promote partnerships between arts organizations, educational institutions, and charitable foundations to enhance programming, funding, and facility development.
5. Develop innovative public-private partnerships to support the arts and music in Virginia Beach.
6. Encourage partnerships with the private sector and organizations to encourage monetary and non-monetary support for the arts through programs like Art in Private Development, where large commercial development projects spend a percentage of the construction on public art or pay an in-lieu fee.

Objective 4: Arts and Cultural Venues

To continue to provide the quality of life and entertainment opportunities desired by Virginia Beach residents and tourists, the city invests in cultural venues such as the Contemporary Art Center of Virginia, Sandler Center for the Performing Arts, the Verizon Wireless Virginia Beach Amphitheatre and future development at the Oceanfront on the former Dome Site.

In 2007, the Virginia Beach Arts and Humanities Commission conducted an assessment of the needs of the visual artists in Virginia Beach. From the results of the survey, the most immediate needs of Virginia Beach artists are places to exhibit their work and studio space.

Strategies:

1. Continue to explore opportunities to acquire sites for use by arts groups, artists and organizations.
2. Use public-private partnerships to create additional cultural centers in Virginia Beach and vibrant mixed-use centers.
3. Ensure that all facilities and venues are universally accessible.
4. Include appropriate revenue-producing and fundraising activities in cultural centers to help underwrite the cost of operations.
5. Maintain an inventory of existing cultural venues and identify site for future venues.

Objective 5: Artistic and Cultural Literacy

Virginia Beach can develop audiences through school-based arts appreciation programs, enhanced public access and diversity in cultural programming.

Arts education benefits students in ways that other curricula cannot. It deepens expression and interpretation, and accommodates individuals' strengths and learning styles. It challenges learners to develop skills needed to perceive, inquire, create, reflect and critique. When students are offered quality arts education continuously throughout their school years and are given the opportunity to build upon and refine acquired skills, they will carry those skills from the school, to the workplace, to



Dancers at Sandler Center

society at large.

Strategies:

1. Collaborate with Virginia Beach City Public Schools to continue to make arts and culture part of Virginia Beach's curriculum, including instruction, appreciation and participation.
2. Assist in the development of partnerships that increase exposure of students to arts and cultural activities.
3. Make cultural experiences accessible to the widest possible public by removing economic, physical and other barriers to participation and enjoyment.
4. Continue to encourage the expression of Virginia Beach's ethnic diversity, history and cultural heritage through a full range of cultural and artistic activities.
5. Integrate diverse cultural and artistic perspectives into the City's public decision-making about arts and cultural matters.