

Work plan - 2016/17

Be led by creative forces.

Albuquerque's Downtown is home to a unique array of assets, including artists, designers, filmmakers, galleries, museums, theaters, musicians, music venues, city festivals, restaurants, food trucks / kitchens, breweries, coffee shops, and creative entrepreneurs living and working in both formal and informal spaces.



The Downtown Arts & Cultural District, made up of roughly 30 blocks in and around the Central Avenue corridor, was officially signed into being in 2016 with the support of Councilor Isaac Benton and the city council, Mayor Richard Berry, the City of Albuquerque's Cultural Services and Economic Development teams, the New Mexico Department of Economic Development and NM Mainstreet program, the NM Arts Commission, and the NM Department of Cultural Affairs Arts and Historic Preservation Division.

Those organizations, along with a council of cultural and artistic institutions and businesses already invested in Downtown, helped to develop a cultural plan that outlines some of the district's strongest opportunities, including:

- Supporting and promoting existing creative work
- Growing a strong creative identity, internally and externally
- Unlocking unused or underutilized space
- Increasing access to shared knowledge
- Stimulating a range of funding opportunities
- Increasing visitors to the district

Work Plan Summary. Following the 2016/17 priorities pulled from the approved cultural plan is a priority list of projects.

Organization. *Work with the ACD council members and public and private sector stakeholders to increase awareness of existing assets and growth opportunities.*

1. Establish consistent reporting formats & data collection for city, city council, and state on progress within the district (visitor traffic to creative biz/orgs, sales taxes, loss/gain of creatives and their businesses)

2. Develop a financial plan and secure funding for year 2 of ACD program staffing and expanded programming
3. Map out criteria/selection for future members of the ACD council and working groups that align with the approved cultural plan
4. Develop / support regular programming that benefits all ACD members and nearby creatives (Biweekly Coffee + Creatives, monthly workshops)

Design. *Refocus the physical environment and brand of downtown to encourage a safe, friendly, and creatively vibrant district.*

1. Develop a cohesive design concept and brand identity for the district that supports its image as an arts, culture, dining and entertainment district
2. Develop and support a “temporary exhibit” program that links artists and creative entrepreneurs to public / private spaces that are empty and can host short-term installations that are semi-formal or informal

Promotion. *Develop a strong internal and external perception of downtown’s creative assets as mapped out in the approved cultural plan.*

1. Develop and execute a marketing strategy that maps to the approved cultural plan and the state’s ACD brand
 - i. Update website - including copy, design, assets, categories, and establish process for new businesses / institutions to be easily added. Sync events calendar options with ABQToDo.
 - ii. Establish a blog, social media channels, and newsletter to share written and visual narratives highlighting work from multiple asset areas in the approved cultural plan
- b. Develop a communications strategy that includes local stakeholders / community leaders, as well as develops relationships with local and national media, including arts and creative entrepreneurship focused publications
2. Support a signature event that leverages assets from multiple areas of the approved cultural plan and partner with the City, Convention and Visitors Bureau, and ACD stakeholders
3. Working with the City of Albuquerque and Downtown Mainstreet, start to track and share information specifically related to creative industries economic impact in the district to more deeply reveal the “multitude of riches” within the ACD

Economic Positioning. *Engage and strengthen the district’s economic environment by engaging with creative businesses and sharing funding resources and knowledge.*

1. Conduct visits with business owners to share the vision of an Arts and Cultural District (ACD), learn their needs, and identify ways that they can participate in / benefit from district activities
2. Use the website to communicate findings from the approved cultural plan’s market analyses and highlight arts, cultural, dining and entertainment business development opportunities, including state and local tax and training incentives

3. Develop and support an easy to update overview of funding resources and connect artists, creative entrepreneurs and business owners to local, regional, and national private / public investments and grants opportunities. Provide support / fiscal sponsorship for projects that benefit the district.
4. Present to city council internal operations committee by April of 2017, incl. revenue and expense report, work plan, measureable objectives.

Priority Projects:

1. Develop a cohesive design concept and brand identity for the district that supports its image as an arts, culture, dining and entertainment district
2. Develop and execute a marketing strategy that maps to the approved cultural plan and the state's ACD brand
3. Create a financial plan and secure funding for year 2 of ACD program staffing and expanded programming
4. Develop / support an easy to update overview of funding resources and connect artists, creative entrepreneurs and business owners to local, regional, and national private/public investments and grants opportunities
5. Establish / support a "temporary exhibit" program that links artists and creative entrepreneurs to public / private spaces that are empty and can host short-term installations that are semi-formal or informal
6. Support a signature event that leverages assets from multiple areas of the approved cultural plan and partner with the City, Visit ABQ, and ACD stakeholders