

AGENDA
GIG HARBOR ARTS COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING

Friday, July 23, 2021 - 10:00 a.m.

Virtual Meeting Link: <https://zoom.us/j/99642717543>

Call-in: (253) 215-8782 Meeting ID: 996 4271 7543

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Arts & Culture Element of the Gig Harbor Comprehensive Plan

ADJOURN

Next Regular Meeting: August 11, 2021

Chapter 14 – Arts + Culture Element

Introduction

The arts and cultural activities are valuable tools for accomplishing larger community goals including economic vitality, quality education, and community design. Investment in the arts is an investment in making Gig Harbor a better place to live and work.

This Arts + Culture Element identifies ways in which the City's goals and aspirations can be realized through inclusion of arts and culture among other considerations in comprehensive planning.¹ The vision for the City's arts and cultural future is expressed here, identifying relationships with other City policy, and presenting specific policies and strategies the City may pursue to realize desired outcomes.

This element also recognizes the essential nature of arts and cultural activities as ways to express, honor, and educate residents about the past, from the community's early formation to narratives rooted in native culture and pre-history.

Using this Element

The City of Gig Harbor hopes to realize the expansive potential of local arts and culture, addressing the community's needs for artistic involvement and expression and recognizing how powerful the arts can be in achieving multiple community aspirations. This element serves multiple roles and multiple audiences, seeking to:

- Clarify City policy related the arts;
- Guide decision-making and future investments by other City departments, the Gig Harbor Arts Commission and other local groups and organizations;
- Identify complementary policies and community initiatives including land use, community design, transportation, economic development, parks and recreation, and capital facilities;
- Jump-start implementation by providing a list of specific actions that may be undertaken by the City or partner organizations.

This element is organized to provide a brief introduction to arts and cultural advocacy in Gig Harbor and a summary of associated benefits, followed by a three-part listing of related policy. The policy is categorized and expressed from broad-brush and aspirational ("goals"), to more topical and directive ("policies"), to yet more specific and programmatic ("actions"). This relationship, together with common implementation tools, is illustrated in Figure <X>. Readers may note the facility of this approach as providing flexibility for implementation, where aspirational objectives are supplied to guide – rather than attempt to anticipate and direct – ever-evolving evolving behavioral patterns and activity needs. This entire array ("Policy Matrix") is dynamic, benefitting from regular review and coordination and updating with the rest of the comprehensive plan.

History

Arts and cultural activities have long played an important role in establishing Gig Harbor's visual identity and pride of place. But prior to 2001, there were no city-sponsored cultural art grants or monies for public art. In 1999, the idea for a memorial celebrating Gig Harbor's maritime history spurred formation of a group that championed the installation of such a feature and later became the City's first Gig

Commented [BG1]: The cover report should include info related to: It is intended to completely replace the text amendment "Cultural Arts Programs and Resources" (see Appendix X) added to the Parks & Recreation Element in the 2016 Gig Harbor Comprehensive Plan.

Commented [BG2]: We may need to include this figure in the covering report and not try to drop it into this element. It'll be the only element structured that way.

¹ Considerations regarding the Arts in this element to include "visual art, music, theater, dance, poetry and prose, film and other creative endeavors...", per 2018 Gig Harbor Comprehensive Plan amendment application.

Harbor Arts Commission (GHAC) in 2001.² Since then, the GHAC has helped lead and support a wide range of arts and cultural activities including art fairs, festivals, concerts, theatrical and dance performances, workshops and lectures – all helping draw tourists to Gig Harbor and boosting local revenues. In addition, the GHAC has led the commission of numerous artworks in the city, including several important installations in City Hall and sculptures at the Bogue Viewing Platform, Maritime Pier and in Ancich Park.

Gig Harbor incorporated arts-related policy in its 2012 comprehensive plan's parks and recreation element. In February 2018, City Council approved a work plan including the goal to create a separate and distinct arts and culture element for the Gig Harbor Comprehensive Plan. By this, the City set a course to more effectively coordinate its resources with arts and cultural activities, boosting the city's unique position in the region and helping realize the many of the community's long-term goals.

The 2018 work plan also led to the creation of a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), which reviewed numerous other regional and state arts and culture plans, reports and economic studies.³ Among benefits seen in their research findings, the CAC noted numerous outcomes applicable to in Gig Harbor and its goals, including:

- Arts, culture and creativity contribute to the physical, mental, social, and economic well-being of communities;
- Arts and culture nurture creative thought and expression and encourage an exchange of ideas among citizens;
- The arts provide tools for accomplishing larger community goals such as economic vitality, quality education and community planning and design;
- The arts help strengthen the cultural fabric of communities and enrich the lives and spirits of residents;
- Arts and culture activities contribute to local prosperity by providing employment, attracting out of town visitors and boosting sales tax revenues;
- Arts and cultural programs can enhance the image of a community, thereby attracting new businesses and workers;

The CAC, with the help of the City's Tourism & Marketing Department, also created a widely-distributed and successful survey regarding arts and culture values in Gig Harbor. Findings from this questionnaire – reflecting responses from 915 community members – show strong support for the idea that arts and culture are essential in creating a healthy, vibrant and prosperous city. Highlights from questionnaire include:

- 96% of survey participants rated the need to "consider the residents of the city when planning for public and private arts and cultural events" as important, underscoring the need for this element's place in the comprehensive plan;
- 87% of respondents rated the arts as "Very Important" to the quality of life in Gig Harbor;
- 79% of respondents indicated members of their household are personally involved in artistic activities;

² The famed Fishermen's Memorial in Jerisich Park is a bronze statue by Russian artist Alexandre Safonov.

³ See <Appendix X> for a detailed listing of reviewed material and CAC findings.

- 87% rated the need for gathering spaces for art and culture events and activities as "Very Important."

These and other findings show that Gig Harbor residents understand and support the value of arts and culture as a means of strengthening the community and fostering economic growth.⁴

The Gig Harbor Arts Commission

The Gig Harbor Arts Commission (GHAC) plays a vital role in local culture by supporting and promoting the arts and arts organizations. The Commission oversees the acquisition and placement of public art, fosters arts and cultural programs for the enrichment of citizens and visitors, encourages an environment for the success of working artists and strengthens new and existing arts organizations. The Arts Commission supports the following statements:

- The arts provide tools for accomplishing larger community goals such as economic vitality, quality education and community planning and design.
- Arts and culture are essential to the continuing growth and development of our community's economy, education, and quality of life. Support of the arts is an investment in making our community a better place to live.
- The arts help strengthen our cultural fabric and enrich the lives and spirits of our citizens.
- Arts and cultural programs are a powerful economic development tool in their ability to enhance Gig Harbor's image and thereby entice new businesses to locate here.
- The arts can be a source of civic pride and Gig Harbor is a place where citizens and visitors alike can be engaged and inspired.

⁴ See <Appendix X> for additional findings and details regarding the 2017 Arts & Culture questionnaire.

Policy Matrix

The following Goal, Policy and Action listings (“Policy Matrix”) will guide City and community implementation of Gig Harbor’s arts and cultural objectives, deliberately expressed in three main groupings, defined for purposes of this element as:

- Goals – Broad statements indicating a general aim or purpose to be achieved. A goal is a direction setter, an ideal future end, condition, or state related to the public health, safety, or general welfare toward which planning and implementation measures are directed;
- Policies – Topic-specific statements providing guidelines for current and future decision-making. These indicate a clear commitment of the City’s legislative body, and extend this element’s goals, reflecting topical nuance as well as an assessment of conditions;
- Actions – These are budgetable steps envisioned or undertaken to implement plan policy. Actions may include the development of more detailed and localized plans, work to implement policies, formal agreements, regulations or other strategies.

Per the GHAC’s listing of supported objectives (Figure X), goals are sorted and prefaced by each of those objectives. Related and/or supporting goals and policies from other areas of the comprehensive plan are listed in parentheses following each listing, showing the inter-related nature of many of the plan’s elements – and how seemingly unrelated activities may in fact find mutual benefit through coordination.

Commented [BG3]: Sidebar style, clarify list.

Goals & Policies

Creative + Economic Vitality

Discussion: Creativity may be seen as a type of currency, whether expressed as forms of fine art or as inventive problem-solving. In all cases, providing an atmosphere in which creativity is encouraged and allowed to flourish provides a wide range of powerful, transformative benefits for cities. This category frames Gig Harbor's recognition of the important dynamic between creative enterprise and economic vitality.

Goal 14.1 Enhance the quality of life in Gig Harbor by creating an environment in which artistic and cultural activities flourish.

Commented [BG4]: Goals and policies are mostly intact as proposed, with some task-oriented policies shifted to the implementation section.

Commented [BG5]: "Discussion" attempts to relate issues and opportunities to specific goal, providing each goal with a sense of rootedness. But this can also be confusing, potentially vying for priority with goal statement.

Related Policies

P-14.1.1 Provide arts and cultural leadership for the city as advocates to the Mayor and Council for the development of arts and cultural activities for the benefit of its citizens.

P-14.1.2 Collaborate with the Gig Harbor Tourism and Marketing Department and Pierce County Tourism to increase artistic, historic, and cultural tourism in Gig Harbor.

P-14.1.3 Strengthen the operational capacity of the arts, heritage, and cultural community through the development of a city arts fund to support grants for artists/writers/performers and non-profit organizations that offer creative and cultural experiences.

P-14.1.4 Keep current with community arts and culture needs and trends, shaping actions to be adaptive and relevant to changing conditions.

Public Arts + Community Design

Discussion: The importance of "community design" relates not only to aesthetic beauty but also to what differentiates a place from all others, providing visual and functional anchors for resident pride of place, and ultimately, for the type of value that allows residents deem a location worthy of the term "home" – a place worth investing a lifetime in, and eventually, associating with one's personal identity. This category expresses Gig Harbor's commitment to enhancing public-realm features in ways that are truly unique to the community's identity, culture and character.

Goal 14.2 Strengthen and expand Gig Harbor's public art program to create visible landmarks and cultural points of reference to reinforce the harbor's identity, culture and character.

Related Policies

P-14.2.1 Participate in the development of creative public spaces; create a cohesive wayfinding and interpretive signage strategy, including the identification of unique city landmarks.

P-14.2.2 Expand the Public Art Fund to acquire and manage works of public art through commissioned works, temporary works, direct purchases, and community projects;

P-14.2.3 Include the Gig Harbor Arts Commission at the beginning of all private development and capital projects to advocate for the inclusion of quality public art in new construction projects; model on the 1 percent for art programs across the county and state (see Appendix for examples).

P-14.2.4 Empower and inform discernment in managing the community's resources dedicated to arts and culture and provide tools to guide grant programs for the arts, protocols for accepting donated art, a framework for arts commissions, locational criteria for public art, and other needs as they may arise in Gig Harbor's evolving arts environment.

Commented [BG6]: This is a new policy suggestion, one targeted to organizational capacity and the community's evolving sophistication in more actively curating the Gig Harbor arts scene.

Education + Engagement

Discussion: The history, values and essential qualities of a community are often simply reflected in the built environment but are more powerfully expressed – and understood in the telling – through more deliberate means. This category articulates Gig Harbor's commitment to arts and cultural education, supporting ways to engage its citizens in lifelong arts-related learning opportunities.

Commented [BG7]: May also be helpful to recognize benefits of and barriers to multi-organizational cooperation and collaboration. A shallow funding pool creates competition, and the competition diminishes ability to cooperate and inclination to fully communicate.

Goal 14.3 Foster a unique, plentiful and learning-oriented arts and cultural environment.

Related Policies

P-14.3.1 Demonstrate a commitment to quality arts education and life-long learning by advocating for comprehensive inclusion of the arts throughout our community.

P-14.3.2 Foster partnerships between the city, the business community and arts and culture organizations to create and produce education and engagement opportunities for Gig Harbor citizens through the sponsorship of arts and cultural programming.

P-14.3.3 Advocate the inclusion of the Arts in the Peninsula School District's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) programming - creating STEAM with the integration of Arts+ Design in K-12 education.

P-14.3.4 Create opportunities for the public to watch artists, conservators, and historic preservationists at work and to observe the creative process as well as participate in hands-on learning experiences.

Spaces + Places

Discussion: Related to the Creative + Economic Vitality and Public Arts + Community Design categories above, this category articulates Gig Harbor's commitment to aiding provision of the types of spaces and facilities needed to foster cultural activities and creative expression.

Goal 14.4 Encourage the development of adequate, affordable and appropriate spaces for artistic and cultural activities for all.

Related Policies

P-14.4.1 Respond to the growing need for artistic and cultural facilities; identify short-and long-term facility needs and priorities.

P-14.4.2 Encourage the development of venues suitable for cultural and artistic activities including visual and performing arts centers, marketplaces, performance and exhibition spaces and maker spaces.

P-14.4.3 Advocate for current and future arts-related businesses, open studio spaces and live-work housing.

Culture + Heritage

This category demonstrates Gig Harbor's understanding that its proper and complete story begins at the beginning of occupation, honoring the ways, means and values of residents dating as far back as stories began. Through policy and action, the City and its residents recognize the value of understanding the past in guiding plans for the long-term future.

Goal 14.5 Identify, preserve, and advance the city's cultural heritage and history.

Related Policies

P-14.5.1 Advocate for the preservation, interpretation, and adaptive reuse of historic and cultural sites in partnership with local entities devoted to preservation.

P-14.5.2 Recognize the value of heritage and cultural arts to promote tourism for Gig Harbor using geographic and historic themes that complement other types of visitation and travel experiences.

P-14.5.3 Support projects that use the arts as a vehicle for understanding and celebrating other cultures and Gig Harbor heritage.

adding impact fees to commercial, industrial and mixed-use permits, to support the incorporation of art in these building projects.

Commented [BG10]: These highlighted items were drawn from the Arts Commission's application and may deserve more complete inclusion in the policies above.