

PUBLIC ART & RAC: STRATEGY REPORT

NOVEMBER 2023

Written by Justice + Joy

PREPARED ON
BEHALF OF



REGIONAL ARTS
COMMISSION
OF ST. LOUIS

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Justice + Joy is a purpose-driven arts and culture strategy consultancy. Our team is experienced in community-centered arts and culture work from the local to the national level, including bringing arts and culture strategies into the public sector. Justice + Joy facilitates cross-sector collaboration amongst urban planning teams, government agencies, designers, community engagement specialists, artists and other sector leaders, to integrate traditionally siloed methods in order to create more just and joyful civic processes and places.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building on Justice + Joy's January 2023 report, *Public Art & RAC: A Historical Primer*, this report summarizes Phase 3 of RAC's Public Art: History, Strategy & A Path Forward: Public Art Education, Ecosystem Mapping and Strategy. Since spring 2023, Justice + Joy has worked with RAC staff and commissioners to develop a strategy for RAC's role in public art in the region through gaining a better understanding of the region's public art ecosystem, as well as how RAC's interests and skills align with the ecosystems' gaps.

We have found that historically, within the region there has been great interest in and passion for public art, but activities, resources and funding have been limited. Presently, the regional ecosystem has a wealth of public art advocates and enthusiasts but not many formal pipelines and structures to channel the interests of advocates and makers that would create a public art-friendly and public art-filled community.

Building on these findings, Justice + Joy explored how RAC contributes to a thriving public art environment. Phase 3 involved research, surveying, capacity-building and strategy conversations that helped assess the best role for RAC to play in public art in the region.

PROCESS

Over the process of 6 months, Justice + Joy worked closely with Forecast Public Art to facilitate a process of educating, surveying and co-developing a framework for a public art strategy alongside RAC. Each segment of the process built upon the last, and staff and commissioner input were paramount to the process. Below are the core components of that process.

Public Art Education

Justice + Joy and Forecast Public Art created the curriculum for two consecutive workshops to train RAC staff to gain a foundational understanding of public art. Chloe Smith of RAC conducted the workshops. The curriculum surveyed national best practices in public art and creative placemaking, and emphasized local examples. Workshop #1 familiarized RAC staff with basic terminology, manifestations and typologies of public art. Workshop #2 exposed RAC staff to examples of public art programs and their components, including commissioning and an activity where staff emphasized priorities around defining public art, local history, the expressive power of public art and regional culture.


Peer Interviews

Peer public art models in regions with similar challenges, demographics and cultures provide insights from which RAC might learn. The peer regions of Pittsburgh and Indianapolis provide examples of processes used to develop public art programs, their structures, programmatic approaches and ecosystems.

From interviews, it is clear that peer cities have similar ecosystems with similar challenges and assets to St. Louis. In most ecosystem roles where St. Louis experiences a dearth, these peer cities do as well. One key difference, however, is that Pittsburgh and Indianapolis both have dedicated technical assistance providers and educational resources for public art, which has allowed their public art environments to grow.

To build a healthy public art ecosystem, interviewees highlighted the importance of:

- prioritizing collaboration and creating clarity around roles and responsibilities within the ecosystem.
- creating a balanced mix of local and non-local contributors, and a diverse set of makers locally.



A full write up for each interview can be found in the appendix, and a summary of key learnings can be found below.

Pittsburgh

The Office for Public Art (OPA) of Pittsburgh is a nonprofit organization with a history of regional collaboration. They envision a region in which the creative practices of artists are fully engaged to collaboratively shape the public realm and catalyze community-led change. OPA builds capacity for this work through civically engaged public art, artist resources, public programming, and technical assistance.

Strategic Approach

The public and civic art strategy of OPA focuses on the civic and social impact of art in the public realm, the creative power of artists and prioritizes the partnership of community members. OPA is interested in serving as a regional collaborator, and takes its time to work through political complexities to ensure its outcomes are sustainable long term. OPA also strategizes around a funding landscape that involves one large philanthropic funder.

A Collaboration Framework

The City and OPA are finalizing a “collaboration framework” that defines the roles of each party for public art projects based on their type and scale. The City will take on larger commissions of \$100,000+ budgets, while OPA will focus on public art under \$100,000, temporary works, and providing programs to build capacity to help artists and administrators prepare for bigger projects. Other distinctions include the recognition that the City has land, which is an important asset for public art production, and that the City sets and makes policy. This collaboration framework is the result of 2 years of talks between the City and OPA.

Policy Reform

Pittsburgh’s Percent for Art Program was updated in late 2022. Major changes included the creation of a Public Art Trust Fund to collect contributions to the Public Art Performance Point program. The fund will also be able to receive private charitable donations, matching funds from charitable entities, and transfers from the general fund, as budgeted. Other changes include centralized budgeting, and the creation of 2 separate commissions, one for public art and one for civic design.

Indianapolis

The Arts Council of Indianapolis (IAC) is similar to RAC in that it is a nonprofit that more broadly supports the local arts ecosystem with services, and is not formally connected to the City. The organization fosters meaningful engagement in the arts by nurturing a culture where artists and arts organizations can thrive. IAC funds arts organizations and individuals to do public art, commissions public art, facilitates maintenance, maintains a public art directory for the City and provides consulting, including to the City.

Strategic Approach

IAC can function like both a consultancy and a public resource. It has ongoing contracts with the City, and one-off contracts with private developers and city departments. IAC is seen as the local expert in public art. They aspire to amend the public art ordinance to be able to put more money into the fund to manage versus having developers build whatever they want without oversight. They also seek to inform public perception around public art.

Consulting Services

IAC supports the City in a for-fee advisory capacity and runs the public art directory, typically working with the Parks or Metropolitan Development Departments. Their Public Art team can function like both a consultancy and a public resource. It has ongoing contracts with the City, and one-off contracts with private developers and city departments. IAC is seen as the local expert in public art.

Broad Support For Public Art

In an arts management capacity, IAC manages a mural project and billboard project. As a regional communicator, the organization manages the City's [public art directory](#) and provides public art opportunity lists to local artists. They also partner extensively and have worked on City planning efforts, collaborating beyond more traditional realms of public art to engage in city design and community development.

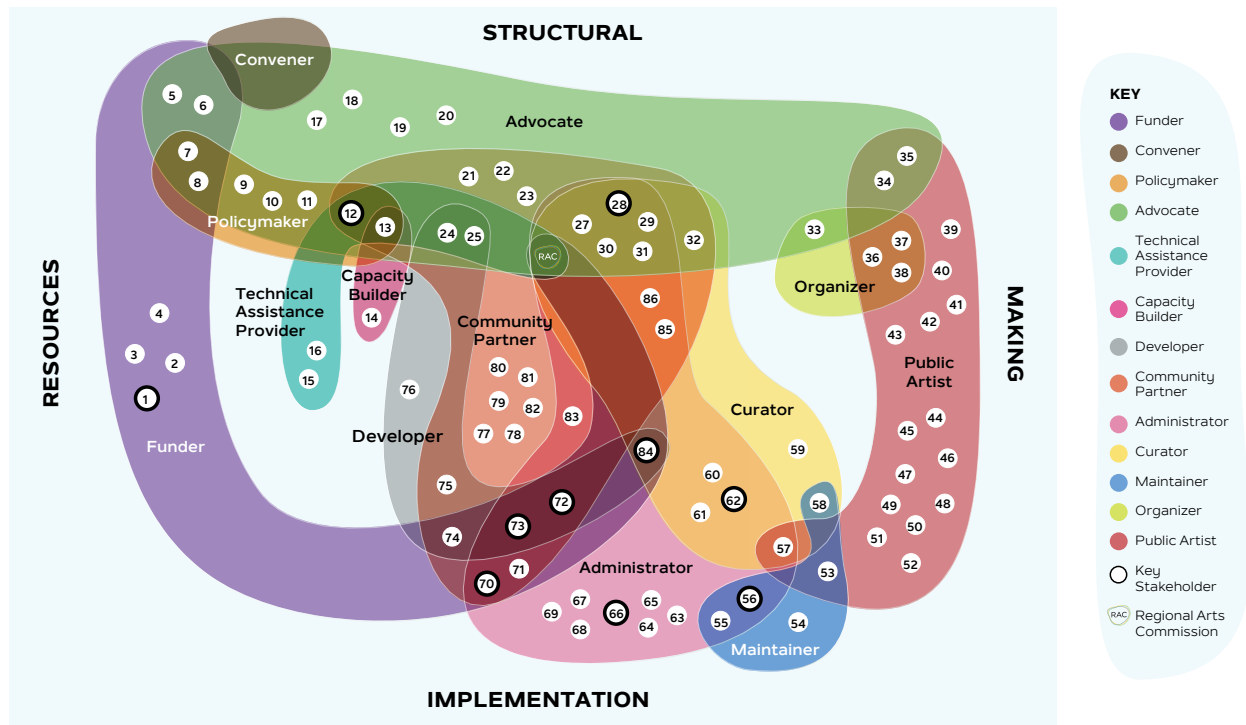
Public Art Policy

Not managed by IAC, but important to the ecosystem and context is Indianapolis' one-percent public art ordinance, which was enacted in 2016 and focuses on funding from developers but not City projects. Developers' contributions are put into a fund, or they receive a credit if they instead create public art on their property. Most elect to do the latter so the fund is limited. There is no arts staff at the city level. The City's [Public Art for Neighborhoods Selection Committee](#) manages the fund, which gets redistributed as neighborhood grants.

Public Art Ecosystem

According to RAC’s strategic plan, the organization aims to be “intentionally collaborative, finding ways to work together—across organizations and sectors—breaking down silos, leveraging resources, and maximizing our reach in ways that none of us can accomplish by working alone.” Further, RAC values “investing with partners and encouraging groups to work together where there is synergy and opportunity”. To support this collaborative approach, J+J and RAC developed a public arts ecosystem analysis, building a stakeholder database and a visualization of the ecosystem, in order to assess the best role for RAC in public art.

ST. LOUIS PUBLIC ART ECOSYSTEM



- | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gateway Foundation 2. Whitaker Foundation 3. Bank of America 4. Clayton Community Foundation 5. Arts & Education Council 6. NAACP 7. Missouri Arts Council 8. City of Chesterfield 9. St. Louis County District 5 Councilwoman, Lisa Clancy 10. LGBTQIA+ & Arts Liaison, City of St. Louis Mayor's Office, Nick Dunne 11. City Councilor, City of Chesterfield, Dan Tierney 12. Via Partnership 13. Justice + Joy 14. Community Arts Training Institute (RAC) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Volunteer Lawyers & Accountants for the Arts 16. Midwest Artist Project Services 17. Roseann Weiss 18. STL MADE 19. Murals of St. Louis 20. McElwain Fine Arts, Mary Walsh 21. Arts in Transit 22. Greater St. Louis Inc 23. Vacancy Collaborative 24. Dutchtown south Community Corp. 25. Spinaker St. Louis 26. Regional Arts Commission 27. 21C Museum Hotels 28. Counterpublic 29. Kemper Museum 30. Contemporary Art Museum 31. Pocket Parks 32. Explore St. Louis | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 33. Creative Communities Alliance 34. Delmar Main Street Initiative 35. St. Louis Shakespeare Festival 36. Painted Louis 37. Painted Black STL 38. Paintings for Peace 39. Simiyu Sudduth 40. Bob Hansman 41. Brock Seals 42. Catherine Magel 43. Cbabi Bayoc 44. De'Joneiro Jones 45. Killer Napkins 46. Jane Birdsall-Lander 47. Occupy Vacancy 48. Phil Jarvis 49. Story Stitches | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 50. Sukanya Mani 51. Thomas Sleet 52. Damon Davis 53. Perpetua Iron 54. JM Fine Art Services/Bad Girlz Studio 55. City Museum 56. St. Louis City Parks Department 57. Community collabARTive 58. Emily Pulitzer 59. Angad Arts Hotel 60. Laumeier Sculpture Park 61. Jeske Sculpture Garden Commission 62. Great Rivers Greenway 63. City of St. Louis Comptroller 64. St. Louis Zoo 65. St. Louis Lambert Airport 66. Board of Public Service | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 67. Grand Center, Inc. 68. Zoo Museum District 69. St. Louis Science Center 70. Cherokee Street CID 71. Luminary 72. Kranzberg Arts Foundation 73. Kingsway Development 74. St. Louis City SC 75. St. Louis Art Place Initiative 76. Beyond Housing 77. Ballpark Village 78. Tower Grover Park 79. Missouri History Museum 80. Missouri Division of Tourism 81. Green City Coalition 82. SLAM 83. The Griot Museum 84. Pulitzer Arts Foundation 85. Granite City Art & Design District 86. Washington University |
|---|--|--|--|---|

Figure 1: St. Louis Public Art Ecosystem

To build out the database, J+J developed a survey that was shared with public art stakeholders identified by RAC. Through the survey, stakeholders self-identified the roles they played in public art, their level of engagement, interest in future engagement, and recommended additional key public arts stakeholders. The survey was distributed to about 150 entities that were identified as potential public art funders, artists, policymakers, administrators, collaborators, curators, maintenance providers, public art sites, advocates, innovators, developers, organizers, technical assistance providers, and others. We received 35 responses spanning all role categories. While survey participation rates were lower than expected, the process helped reveal stakeholders who are particularly enthusiastic. The ecosystem database (not presented in the report) is intended to be a living document that RAC can continue to update and utilize when strategizing around public art.

The database forms the foundation of the ecosystem visualization, which is designed to illustrate the roles within the public art ecosystem and their interactions. The graphic (see Figure 1 on page 7) delineates 13 public art roles along two axes: structural to implementation and resources to making. These roles, identified through the national practices of J+J and FPA, act as key roles in the public art ecosystem, include funder, convener, policymaker, advocate, technical assistance provider, capacity builder, developer, community partner, organizer, curator, administrator, maintainer, and public artist.

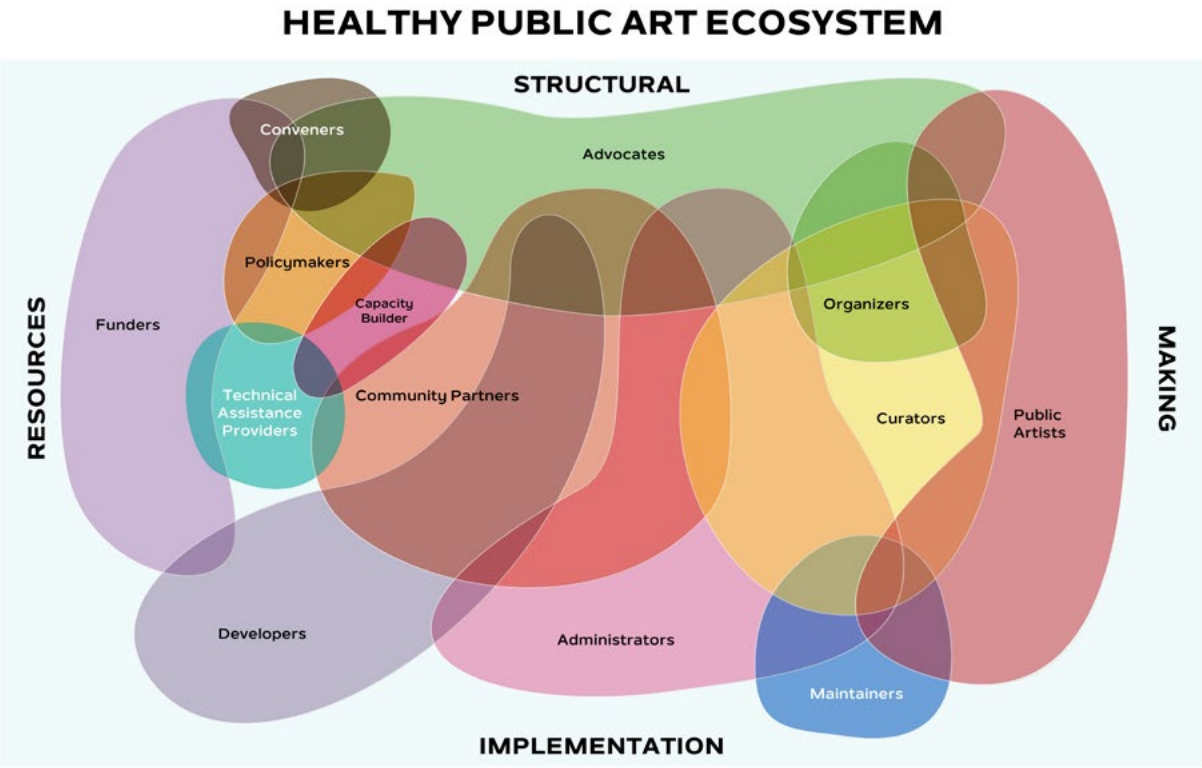



Figure 2: Healthy Public Art Ecosystem



administrator, curator, maintainer, organizer, and public artist. This ecosystem diagram showcases the ways in which the region's public art ecosystem functions.

Alongside the St. Louis Public Art Ecosystem, Justice + Joy developed a graphic of a healthy public art ecosystem—similarly developed from J+J and FPA's previous work—and conducted interviews with peer practitioners in Pittsburgh and Indianapolis (see Figure 2, page 8) to compare St. Louis' ecosystem to its peers'.

When including survey data, J+J found that while all surveyed entities intended to keep or grow their commitment to public art in the region, no funders expressed a plan to deepen their involvement. With this in mind, growing the presence of developers' involvement as resource providers may be important moving forward. Ultimately, the ecosystem map visualization served as a key tool during the Public Art Strategy Workshop with RAC staff and Commissioners.

Key Takeaways

Upon review of the current and healthy ecosystem graphics, and incorporating data from surveys and peer interviews, J+J uncovered the following key takeaways:

- There are many advocates for public art in the region
- While there are many advocates for public art in the region, they are not coordinated
- Many stakeholders inhabit multiple roles, with few stakeholders focused on singular roles
- Many roles overlap
- No stakeholder serves as a convener, an important feature of many public art ecosystems
- Fewer entities exist in the resource/structural quadrant, highlighting a need for more resources and structural support for public art as a regional practice
- St. Louis lacks professional maintenance providers, with only one professional maintenance firm
- The region could benefit from increased capacity in professional public art curation
- There is an opportunity for upskilling and developing more knowledge and training in public art for practitioners in various roles



Strategy Workshop

Justice + Joy conducted a half-day public art strategy workshop with RAC staff and commissioners, building on earlier components of the process, to determine a general framework for RAC's public art strategy. The key findings from the workshop are synthesized into the public art strategy framework are described in the next section.

PUBLIC ART STRATEGY FRAMEWORK RESULTS

The process in Phase 3 helped determine that there are powerful starting points to build upon an emerging public art ecosystem, and that there are multiple needs to be met in order to grow a strong ecosystem. Of the roles that need to be bolstered, those of funder and communicator have been determined by RAC staff and Commissioners to be where RAC can make the most impact, and where the institution ought to consider its focus. These roles are meant to be integrated alongside the work that other stakeholders in the region are already doing and new roles and practices that could be developed. More broadly, RAC may also consider its role in supporting regional stakeholders to further develop their own roles and to work together to foster the ecosystem.

The RAC staff and commissioners devised the following collective vision for RAC's role in public art in the region during the September 2023 Strategy Workshop.

What could public art do for the region?

Public art could be the basis of providing a creative life for every St. Louisan across neighborhoods and wards.

Public art can help further the CREATIVE values of RAC: connected, respectful, excellent, accountable, trusted, inclusive, valued and enjoyable. RAC is also invested in working with stakeholders in the regional ecosystem to set a collective agenda around common public art concerns like neglected maintenance, inaccessibility, economic disparities and regional divisions.

The next page showcase the 3 key outcomes that RAC believes public art can facilitate in the region, as well as the 2 ways (roles) RAC has determined it can contribute to those outcomes.

OUTCOMES OF PUBLIC ART

Belonging

Public art in St. Louis contributes to a sense of belonging for all residents by crafting a sense of place through public aesthetic and narrative that reflects residents' lived realities and interests, facilitating healing, connection and joy.

Unity

Public art in St. Louis fosters unity by engaging regional stakeholders in collaboration to improve the public realm.

Equitable Economic Growth

Public art in St. Louis facilitates equitable economic growth by creating attractions, excitement and a sense of unique local identity throughout diverse parts of the region, and with a prescient understanding of how arts interact with the economic forces of development.

ROLES FOR RAC TO PLAY

Funder

As RAC continues to focus on its core work of grantmaking, it can support public art through funding opportunities. RAC can integrate its values around public art into its grantmaking approach.

Communicator

In the role of communicator, RAC may focus on sharing public art content and resources. RAC might share with the community public art best practice, information regarding public art education and professional development, public art opportunities, information about public art in the region, and more.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

To achieve the outcomes of **belonging, unity** and **equitable economic growth**, below are short, medium and long-term steps the organization can begin to take.

RAC AS A FUNDER

2024

- Evolve RAC’s grantmaking policy and process to include public art
- Establish shared terms and definitions for public art
- Build & leverage policymaker relationships
- Invest in more education on public art for artists and the public
- Gather a collection of resources for public artists
- Provide training for RAC staff to be able to take on more public art tasks
- Review past grantees for public art activities

2025

- Develop RAC’s practice and policies for commissioning public art
- Amend the Public Art Ordinance
- Coordinate inter-departmental parties to actualize Public Art Fund
- Begin utilizing the Public Art Fund
- Launch a digital public art platform
- Celebrate public art during RAC’s 40th celebration
- Develop advisory bodies around public art
- Establish guidelines for funders and developers for all municipalities
- Add human resources support to fulfill public art tasks

ACTION AREAS

● Share, create and provide public art resources and support

● Strengthen internal and external infrastructure for public art

● Encourage enthusiasm, advocacy and investment

2026+

● Assess public art activities for successes and improvement

RAC AS A COMMUNICATOR

2024

- Develop and/or share a public art advocacy toolkit
- Develop and/or share a public art glossary
- Develop a roster of public artists
- Share the public art ecosystem map
- Promote and partner with organizations who already have maps/collections of public art
- Create a municipal public art policy map of the region
- Begin conversations around the ecosystem map
- Communicate clearly RAC's role in public art

2025

- Develop a public art incubator space
- Develop or share a public art map of the region
- Tell the impact of public art over RAC's 40 years
- Continue conversations around the evolving ecosystem map
- Consider adding human resources support to staff up at RAC to fulfill public art tasks around public and stakeholder communications

2026+

- Awards and recognitions
- Top SMU DataArts ranking

ACTION AREAS

- Share, create and provide public art resources and support
- Strengthen internal and external infrastructure for public art
- Encourage enthusiasm, advocacy and investment

NEXT STEPS

To align with the larger outcomes of public art and their recommended actions, this is a set of next steps to consider over the coming year. These break down more immediate steps to take to begin taking action towards larger aspirations.

1. Define RAC's public art role

- Craft a **mission-aligned definition, vision and goals for public art** for the organization that can be used in all communications and grantmaking
- Develop a **theory of change** around public art
- Create a **public art communications plan**
 - Begin to communicate RAC's role in public art and what RAC believes public art can do
 - Strategize around how this connects to RAC's other organizational efforts or regional priorities
- Work public art goals and activities into **RAC's 2024 workplan**
- Build and leverage **relationships with policymakers**

2. Compile and create resources


- Compile already existing **resources into a platform** on the RAC site for easy access from the public
- Develop **St. Louis-specific resources** to make creating, funding and experiencing public art easier
- Share a public-friendly version of the **ecosystem map** to partners and stakeholders

3. Support professional development for public art

- Additional and more specific **public art training for staff**
- Public art **training opportunities for artists** interested in applying for public art funding
- Equip RAC with the **tools to pilot a successful public art grant opportunity**

4. Develop a public art grant process and program

- Aggregate RAC's **past grant recipients** to gather further insight on public art activities
- Draw on RAC's current grant models to **integrate public art as funding area**
- Consult with **peer models**
- Determine RAC's specific **public art funding priorities**
- Develop **selection criteria**
- Determine **outreach strategies**



In the longer-term, the goal is to develop RAC’s systems and to advocate within the public art ecosystem to sustain its role as a public art funder and communicator in a way that contributes to a sense of belonging, regional unity and equitable economic development.

CONCLUSION

In its next steps to further develop a strategy and plan of practice for public art, RAC can build upon its strengths, and continue to work, as it always does, in coordination with local stakeholders to strengthen the regional ecosystem. In order to channel the advocacy and support for public art already in the region, RAC and its partners have an opportunity to build a more coordinated system, develop the region’s public art capacities in strategic ways, learn from peer models and align its public art ecosystem with larger goals for St. Louis. Public art has the power to create a region of belonging, unity and a place of equitable economic growth. As RAC steps into its roles as a public art funder and communicator, other partners will be vital to create a thriving and coordinated ecosystem.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX CONTENT

1. Workshop attendee roster
2. Public art 101 + 102 workshop agendas (**contents can be shared internally but not externally**)
3. Strategy workshop agenda
4. Peer interviews
5. Strategy workshop responses
6. Survey results
7. Ecosystem database

1. WORKSHOP ATTENDEE ROSTER

Public Art 101 Workshop 5/24/2023

Vanessa Cooksey
Nichole Belford
Tony Chance
Rita Dillard
Ann Haubrich
Angie Peters
Jay Scherder
Jason Schipkowski
Chloe Smith
Lea Sutherlin
Leigh Winter

Public Art 101 Workshop 6/21/2023

Vanessa Cooksey
Tony Chance
Rita Dillard
Ann Haubrich
Tracey Morgan
Angie Peters
Jay Scherder
Jason Schipkowski
Chloe Smith
MK Stallings
Lea Sutherlin
Leigh Winte

Strategy Workshop 9/14/2023

Staff

Vanessa Cooksey
Nichole Belford
Charlie Bosco
Tony Chance
Rita Dillard
Gregory Maurice
Tracey Morgan
Angie Peters
Chloe Smith
MK Stallings
Lea Sutherlin
Leigh Winter

Commissioners

Jerry Generia
Sam Fiorello
Beverly Isom

2. PUBLIC ART 101 + 102 WORKSHOP AGENDAS

Workshop 1: Public Art 101

Goal: Familiarize RAC staff with basic terminology, typology and manifestations of public art

May 24, 2.5 hours (9-11:30p)

Agenda:

Welcome and Grounding (10 min)

Bring staff into community, establish a culture of relation for the workshop, ground in RAC's history

- Welcome
- Group Agreements
- RAC's historic role in STL, pulled from RAC's History of Public Art Report

Public Art Survey (35 min)

As materials and social contexts have changed over time, so too have public art and artists' self expression

- Scales of Work
 - Monuments to Digital
 - Petroglyphs to Graffiti
 - Programming to Static objects
 - Educational to Aesthetic
 - Ephemeral to Permanent
- Group Dialogue about local context/examples

Impact + Purpose of Public Art (35 min)

The role public art plays in our communities

- Public art's function in communities
 - Identity -> Pride -> Community well-being
 - Tourism -> Economic Development -> Libraries -> Parks
- Group Dialogue about local context/examples

The public realm in public art (35 min)

- Who and what is considered public
- The role(s) of the local community
- Stakeholder outreach and engagement, funding sources
- Site selection and why it matters
 - Sidewalks, parks, plazas, library, transit, apartments, museums, pop up spaces
 - Site specificity: public, private, mixed
- Group Dialogue about local context/examples

Wrap up and Look into Workshop #2 (5 min)

Workshop 2: Public Art 201

Goal: Familiarize RAC staff with public art programs and their components.

June 21, 3 hours (9-12p)

Assembly + Group Agreements (5 min)

- Welcome
- Reminder of Shared Group Agreements
 - Opportunity to add more agreements

Public Art Commissioning Processes (30 min)

- How public art gets made
 - RFQs/Commissions
 - Artist + Community + Site
 - Management
 - Timeline, budget, press, unveiling, education, inventory
 - Competition/Open Call
 - Invitation/Direct Selection
 - RFP
 - RFQ
 - Grants

3 Peer Comparisons (30 min)

- What regional organizations similar to RAC do are doing
 - Organizational structure
 - Mission
 - Programming

Facilitated Discussion (15 min)

- What resonates?
- What seems challenging?
- What is inspiring?

Break (10 min)

Putting idea into practice: prototyping a future (1h 5min)

- Group sorting (5 min)
- Divide the staff into 4 groups and allocate a RAC Principles of Practice to each group
 - Remain in dialogue with community voice
 - Remain flexible and open to new ideas

- Emphasize our shared humanity
- Be a constant catalyst for connection, collaboration, and change

Based upon that Principle, have each group draft a concept of a future role of RAC in public art - this could be inspired by any of the examples in previous presentations, personal observations, and local context. Concepts can reboot current RAC programming or be entirely new - think big. You are welcome to come up with ideas that focus on one role, or a menu of connected activities.

- Group brainstorming (20 min)
- Group share out and reactions/responses (40 min; 10 min per group = 5 min sharing/groups, 5 min responses from room)

Full group synthesis & discussion (15 min)

- What is RAC doing in the region now?
- What does the region need that is missing?
- What could or should RAC be doing?

Wrap up and Look into Workshop #3 (5 min)

3. STRATEGY WORKSHOP AGENDA

Workshop 3: Public Art Strategy at RAC

Goal: Develop a strategy framework for RAC's role in public art
Sept 14, 5 hours (10a-12p; 12-1p LUNCH; 1p-3p)

10-11:15 | PART 1: CONTEXT

- Icebreaker
- Grounding
 - Scope of the workshop
 - Strategy first; implementation plan to come, but not in this workshop
 - Articulate goal: Develop a strategy framework for RAC's role in public art
- Context Setting
 - Main Findings
 - Summary of what's been done up to now
- Ecosystem map
- Survey results: what role should RAC play in public art in the future?

BREAK

PART 2: BUILDING A PUBLIC ART STRATEGY FRAMEWORK FOR RAC

- What is a strategy framework?
- What are peer regions doing?
- With RAC's future role in PA, what don't we want to see, what do we want to see
- Public art outcomes exercise

LUNCH

PART 2 cont'd: BUILDING A PUBLIC ART STRATEGY FRAMEWORK FOR RAC

- Share back activity results
- Scenario workshopping in groups: roles and outcomes
- Refine and upvote
- Short, medium and long-term steps

4. PEER INTERVIEWS

Peer public art models in regions with similar challenges, demographics and cultures provide insights from which RAC might learn. The peer regions of Pittsburgh and Indianapolis provide examples of processes used to develop public art programs, their structures, programmatic approaches and ecosystems. From interviews, it is clear that peer cities have similar ecosystems with similar challenges and assets to St. Louis, with one major difference being that Pittsburgh and Indianapolis both have dedicated technical assistance providers and educational resources.

Sallyann Kluz of Pittsburgh's major piece of advice on how to create a healthy public art ecosystem is to prioritize collaboration and create clarity around roles and responsibilities within the ecosystem. Julia Muney Moore of Indianapolis believes that a healthy public art ecosystem has a balanced mix of local and non-local contributors, and a diverse set of makers locally.

Pittsburgh

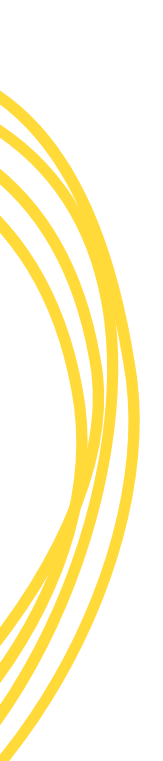
Justice + Joy interviewed Sallyann Kluz, Executive Director of the Office of Public Art in Pittsburgh. The Office for Public Art (OPA) envisions a region in which the creative practices of artists are fully engaged to collaboratively shape the public realm and catalyze community-led change. OPA builds capacity for this work through civically engaged public art, artist resources, public programming, and technical assistance.

Structure

Because of OPA's history and structure, it has had the ability to be nimble and adapt. OPA was established in 2005 with private foundation funding to fill the gap caused by the 2005's City budget cuts, which left no City staff in charge of public art, despite having inventory and a public art commission. The organization focused on providing technical assistance to the City, managing the inventory, repairs, and providing education to the public. OPA functioned as a pseudo public art department until roughly 2008 when the City hired a public art manager.

Strategic approach

The public and civic art strategy of OPA focuses on the civic and social impact of art in the public realm, the creative power of artists and prioritizes the partnership of community members. OPA is interested in serving as a regional collaborator, and takes its time to work through political complexities to ensure its outcomes are sustainable long term. OPA also strategizes around a funding system that involves one large philanthropic funder.



OPA's structure is distinct from RAC's in that it is presently a 501(c)(3), but started in close collaboration with the City, and as a fiscally sponsored initiative of the local arts council. Eventually OPA separated itself from the arts council and became its own non-profit and now takes on commissioning projects directly, as well as providing training and opportunities for local public art practitioners.

Public art ecosystem

Of our identified roles in the public art ecosystem, Pittsburgh's ecosystem reflects similar challenges and opportunities to those in St. Louis. Ranked high are funders, community partners, innovators and makers (St. Louis does not rank high in public art funders nor makers). They too struggle with a dearth of maintenance providers, capacity-building stakeholders, technical assistance providers and public art policy makers. OPA specifically takes on the roles of administrator, advocate, innovator, technical assistance provider and convener.

The City's Public Art and Civic Design Division in the Department of City Planning runs the Public Art and Civic Design Commissions, maintains the City collection, commissions new works and manages the Percent for Art ordinance. The City and OPA are finalizing a "collaboration framework" that defines the roles of each party based on the types and scales of projects. The City will take on larger commissions of \$100,000+ budgets, while OPA will focus on public art under \$100,000, temporary works, providing programs to build capacity to help artists and administrators prepare for bigger projects. Other distinctions include the recognition that the City has land, which is an important asset for public art production, and that the City sets and makes policy. This collaboration framework is the result of 2 years of talks between the City and OPA.

Public art policy

Pittsburgh's Percent for Art Program was recently updated in late 2022. Major changes included the creation of a Public Art Trust Fund to collect contributions to the Public Art Performance Point program. Established in the Zoning Code in 2018, the performance point system allows developers to increase their density by incorporating community priorities into their projects such as affordable housing, public art, and energy-efficient design. The fund will also be able to receive private charitable donations, matching funds from charitable entities, and transfers from the general fund, as budgeted. Other changes include centralized budgeting, and the creation of 2 separate commissions, one for public art and one for civic design. For further details on the changes to their ordinance, view a summary [here](#).



Public art programming

Once the City was able to manage its inventory, OPA began consulting with private companies and other municipalities. For example it was hired by the Urban Redevelopment Authority on how to engage artists in development. In 2014/15, they began commissioning themselves. They began artist residencies in the public realm, programs that partner with local institutions to embed artists to address challenges and educational programs.

Indianapolis

Justice + Joy interviewed Julia Muney Moore, Director of Public Art for Arts Council of Indianapolis (“the Indy Arts Council” or IAC). The organization fosters meaningful engagement in the arts by nurturing a culture where artists and arts organizations can thrive. The IAC has a broad mission which engages in art throughout Indianapolis; public art is one of its programs.

Structure

Similar to RAC, the nonprofit more broadly supports the local arts ecosystem with services, and is not formally connected to the City. Public art is one of the program areas of IAC. Muney Moore shared that IAC effectively functions as the local arts agency for central Indiana. IAC can work separately for-hire for large capital improvement projects.

Strategic approach

IAC can function like both a consultancy and a public resource. It has ongoing contracts with the City, and one-off contracts with private developers and city departments. IAC is seen as the local expert in public art. They aspire to amend the public art ordinance to be able to put more money into the fund to manage versus having developers build whatever they want without oversight. They also seek to inform public perception around public art.

Public art ecosystem

Within the region, there is no arts staff at the city level. Indianapolis has strong community partners. There is a lack of diversity amongst public artists and not enough consultants trained to keep this part of the ecosystem going. Indianapolis also has low levels of administrators and technical assistance providers, and an uneven mix of funders. IAC itself funds arts organizations and individuals, commissions public art, facilitates maintenance, maintains a public art directory for the City and provides consulting, including to the City. IAC supports the City in a for-fee advisory capacity and runs the public art directory, typically working with the Parks or Metropolitan Development Departments

Public art policy

Indianapolis' one-percent public art ordinance was enacted in 2016 and focuses on funding from developers but not City projects. Developers' contributions are put into a fund, or they receive a credit if they instead create public art on their property. Most elect to do the latter so the fund is limited. The City's Public Art for Neighborhoods Selection Committee manages the fund, which gets redistributed as neighborhood grants.

Public art programming

IAC manages a mural project, the City's public art directory, a billboard project, have worked on City planning efforts and provide public art opportunity lists to local artists.

5. STRATEGY WORKSHOP RESPONSES

WHAT ROLE COULD RAC PLAY?

RAC as Public Art Funder

RAC as a public art funder may be compelled to consider the following activities:

- grants to organizations and individuals developing public art, including funding:
- diverse artist, locations and art forms
- events that engage, heal and/or beautify
- educational programs and events around public art
- public art maintenance

Indicators of success

Success in RAC's public art funding might be indicated by the amount of funding RAC is awarding to public art in opportunity zones, an increase in projects that emphasize belonging and healing, an enthusiastic public, increased traffic and inquiries to public art-related web pages/content, increased tourism and awards.

Partners

Partners in this role would be organizations that promote regional healing and belonging, major donors, civic and community groups, neighborhood associations, organizations that organize artists and promote professional development.

Institutionalization within RAC

RAC should make it easy for artists to create public art and encourage a culture of innovation around grantmaking. To do so, RAC should do things such as share a public art glossary, establish guidelines for funders and developers for all municipalities and use ARPA fund distribution guidelines as a road map for equitable process, devise intentional language on grant applications that encourage applications that emphasize belonging and healing, conduct diverse community outreach when promoting opportunities, commit to dedicated staff or a department for public art.

Audience/Stakeholders

Residents, cultural groups, major donors, legislators, tourists, the business community, advocates, the media.

Pressure Points

[Public art ordinance](#) exceptions prevent public art funding, disinterest in regional unity/tribalism, TIF Set-Asides, economic pressures, government strong arming and contentious political agendas.

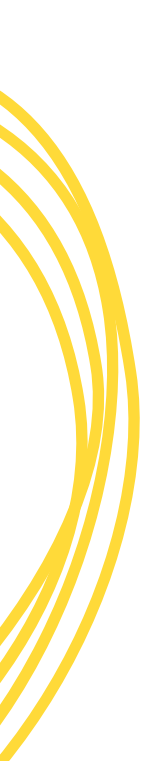
RAC as Public Art Communicator

RAC as a public art communicator might focus on communicating the following:

- Content
 - ensure compliance with the public art ordinance
 - promote stories of public art, including press and spotlights on public art
 - promote public art for tourism
- Resources
 - share public art opportunities
 - develop a website for public art information
 - create a public art directory
- Strategy
 - Align with RAC's strategic plan
 - Start local and expand message beyond local
- Platforms
 - Digital: website, social media, newsletters
 - Community gathering spaces like town halls and community meetings

Indicators of success

Success in RAC's role as a public arts communicator could be indicated by avid public buy-in to public art investment, increased awareness from the St. Louis



community about what RAC is and what it can do for them regarding public art, increased traffic and inquiries to public art-related web pages/content and increased compliance from developers.

Partners

Key partners in this role would include policymakers, Explore St. Louis, Via Partnership, Great Rivers Greenway, The Luminary, Counterpublic, Greater St. Louis, Inc., the City, LRA, the technology sector, public art advocates, property owners, public art funders and public artists.

Institutionalization within RAC


RAC's focus on communications practices would make it clear and simple to the community how they can engage in public art. RAC as a communicator can devise systems within the organization that provide public artists, public curators, interested organizations, potential funders, political allies, and aligned business community members with information about how to get started, train up, and provide specific opportunities available to them. Furthermore, RAC can share resources like the ecosystem map, a public art glossary, a roster of public artists, and a public art map, all which will provide informational tools for the community to create public art. RAC can also communicate around public art guidelines that might be helpful to multiple municipalities in the region. Further human resources could be committed to dedicated staff or a department for public art, and/or training for staff to conduct further advocacy around public art.

Audience/Stakeholders

The audience for efforts in this role include artists, residents, news media, tourists/visitors, advocates, curators, and the business sector.

Pressure Points

Public art ordinance exceptions that prevent public art funding allows for an opt out of public art conversations, disinterest in regional unity/tribalism, data privacy, government coercion and contentious political agendas.



What do we want PA to Do?

- Sense of Belonging
- Maintain DIY
- Connectedness
- Create energy and momentum
- Bring joy
- Catalyst for economic dev
- Equitable distribution
- Create sense of place
- Accessible
- Unify
- Act regionally
- Draw people to places
- Cultural vibrancy
- Uplift local artists
- Motivate discourse
- Encourage art literacy and engage (on ramp)
- Educate
- Create beauty
- Create sense of ownership
- Jobs
- Interactive
- Inspire future artists
- Inspire innovation
- Add value
- Appreciation for art in general
- Historical
- Heal
- Place for response (temp)
- Value: equity
- **Social, Economic, Vibrancy, Education, Place/space**

Communicator/Promoter

- Website for PA
- Promote stories of PA, press
- Share opportunities
- Social media
- PA directory
- Community PA Kiosk
- RAC do spotlights on PA
- Promote PA for tourism
- Global reach
- Strategic Plan
- Town Halls/meetings

What don't we want PA to Do?

- Fall apart
- Intentionally divide/harm
- Loose relevance
- Economic displacement
- Gentrification
- Inaccessible to arts + public
- Gatekeeping
- Bureaucracy
- Cluttered to \$ and power
- Don't make it too vanilla
- Just stuck in past
- Be elitists
- Unhealthy mix for local and national artists
- Require policy for every municipality
- Deepen division
- **Inaccessibility, maintenance, economic displacement, division**

Funder

- Grants to PA
- Fund Maintenance
- Fund educational programs
- Fund diverse artists, locations & artforms
- Fund events that use art in community to engage, heal, beautify

Outcomes

- Sense of belonging & healing (funder)
- Collaboration/unification (communication)
- Economic Growth (both)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Outcome

- Data collection
- More murals/PA
- More tourism that is caused by PA (QR code + Ping tech)
- Awards & recognition rankings (3rd party validation)
- Content analysis (trends)
- More grantees (proactive)

Institutionalization

- Organize & communication
- Money & educational resources to make easy for artists to do PA
- Innovation
- Policy & advocacy work
- Public engagement

Partners

- Property owners (all sizes)
- LRA/City
- Developers/dev agencies
- Neighborhood associations
- Elected officials
- Technology

Audience/Stakeholder

- Artists
- Legislators
- News media
- Residents
- Visitors/tourists
- Donor (org/individuals)
- Fans/advocates
- Arts orgs
- Business/corporate sector (all size)

Pressure Points

- 1% for art to be real (amend to remove exceptions)
- Strengthening relationships with city & county
- Data privacy
- Artist anonymity/attribution
- IP
- Haters & trolls
- Poor policy in general

COLLABORATION/ UNITY OUTCOME: RAC AS COMMUNICATOR

Outcome

- Enthusiastic public buy-in
- Increased traffic/inquiries (web & physical)
- For every STL resident to know what RAC is and can do for them
- Increase compliance for developers

Institutionalization

- Share terms for PA
- Connecting artists & programs/orgs internally (more externally)
- Resources -> ecosystem map
- Establish guidelines/processes for funders and developers for different municipalities
- Roster of PAs tied to map
- Develop conveners
- Dedicate staff/department

Audience/Stakeholder

- Creative life for every St. Louisan across neighborhoods/wards
- Potential tourists/visitors
- Businesses coming to St. Louis
- Curators (in/out of St. Louis)

Partners

- Funders
- Advocates
- Public improvement districts
- Policymakers
- Luminary
- Greater STL Inc
- Via Partnerships
- Explore St. Louis
- Counterpublic
- GRB

Pressure Points

- Issue w/ maintenance -> difficulty in establishing conveners
- Municipalities separation / individual processes
- Varied community resources, discouraged to reach out for funding

- Lack of developer funding & comm w/ developers (int) on their responsibilities
- TIF Finance - 1% set aside

SENSE OF BELONGING/HEALING OUTCOME: RAC AS FUNDER

Outcome

- Comments, attendance, media acclaim, social media likes
- Approval of type of PA, location/access, census tract, prioritizing opportunity zones/work that has sense of B+H
- Break down barriers

Institutionalization

- Follow processes created for distributing ARPA funds (w/o external challenges)
- Ask related questions on grants app related to B&H
- Diverse community outreach

Partners

- Orgs that promote Art as Healer
- Funding educational programs & events
- Funding events that use Art in community to heal/beautify
- Major Donors - civic/gov & community groups

Audience/Stakeholder

- Community
- Other artists/cultural groups
- Major donors
- Government/legislators

Pressure Points

- Economy
- Cultural tourism
- Government
- Crime
- Pandemic
- Breaking down barriers

SUMMARY OF TOP RESPONSES IN SCENARIO WORKSHOP

Below is a summary of the top results from a scenario workshop which focused on RAC's roles as a funder and as a communicator in accomplishing its 3 outcomes. One team focused on RAC as a funder with the outcome of generating belonging through public art. Another team focused on RAC's role as a communicator with the outcome of fostering unity in the region. A third team focused on both roles of funder and communicator with the outcome of equitable economic development.

“Indicators” denote indicators of success, or how RAC will know it is taking steps towards an outcome. “Partners” refer to partners with whom RAC would connect in its new role and with its sense of desired outcomes.

“Institutionalization” refers to what RAC as an institution would need to do in these roles, aligning with these outcomes. “Audience” denotes which audience RAC would want to engage with to align with these outcomes and in this role.

“Pressure points” denotes likely challenges.”

Indicator

Data collection

More grantees

Public art-led tourism

Locals know to engage RAC on public art

QTCs prioritized

Increased developer compliance

Barriers have been broken down

Institutionalization

Make public art processes easy

Innovation

Strategies around policy and advocacy

Connect artists

Share resources and information

Audience

Enthusiasts

Advocates

Residents

Major donors

Curators

Cultural groups

Pressure points

Excessive exceptions in the public art ordinance

Disconnected relationship between the City and County

TIF set-asides

Economic pressures

Local government interests

Cultural conservatism

Partners

Artists

Developers

Neighborhood associations/community groups

Funders

Via Partnership

Organizations that can help educate

Organizations focused on healing

Tech sector

Elected officials

6. SURVEY RESULTS

RAC's current perceived roles in the public art ecosystem

Funder	17	
Advocate	13	
Collaborator	12	
Organizer	8	
Policy Implementer	6	
Administrator	5	
Curator	3	
Developer	2	
Maintainer	2	
Innovator	0	
Maker	0	

Top 3 selected functions that you think RAC should play in the region

Funder	17	
Communications/Promotion	11	
Governance	5	
Convener	5	
Technical Support	4	
Professional Development Leader	3	
Maintainer	3	
Resident Engagement	2	
Curator	2	
Steward	1	
Maker	1	