



Strategic Plan

2022 - 2030 | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Front Cover:
Detail of basket weaving created by members of the Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation for the *Ah-Lo'-Mah'* (basket) installation along the Mariposa Creek Parkway, 2020.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Arts Council is an incorporated not-for-profit organization, created to promote and support all forms of the cultural arts, for all ages, throughout Mariposa

VALUES STATEMENT

We believe that the arts contribute significantly to the vibrancy and health of Mariposa County, and our programs and the services we provide are designed to benefit our community in the following ways:

- Utilize the arts as an equalizer that can create a level playing field where underrepresented voices can be heard, amplified and engaged
- Foster awareness of the wide range of artistic voices and media offering different lenses of interpretation for our community, environment and world
- Contribute to the health of all people by engaging them in the creation and appreciation of art
- Leverage the many positive facets of art for constructive community engagement, civic dialogue, environmental preservation, and social change
- Act as a conduit to better connect the community of Mariposa to issues, movements and opportunities beyond its boundaries
- Serve the diverse interests of residents living in and around Mariposa County
- Positively increase the visibility of Mariposa
- Provide opportunities for collaboration among individuals, organizations, businesses and civic leaders in Mariposa and beyond
- Support the local economy

Introduction

There is a connection . . . between achievement in public life and progress in the arts.

- John F. Kennedy

The Mariposa County Arts Council, Inc. (Arts Council) is honored to serve as Mariposa County's local arts agency and its designated State Local Partner to the California Arts Council. Our work is situated at the intersection of cultural and civic life and we work to support the social, cultural, ecological, and economic vitality of our community through the arts in the following ways:

- Produce and present artistic and cultural programming
- Provide and support rigorous and relevant arts learning (preK-12, adult education, creative aging, etc.)
- Engage in community development through creative placemaking and cultural projects, programs and policy as informed by community stakeholders
- Foster local, regional and statewide partnerships and collaboration
- Lead and promote arts advocacy efforts at the local, state, or national level
- Provide support to cultural organizations, artists, and creative initiatives
- Facilitate economic development efforts that support the creative economy through arts industries and creative placemaking

While our mission and the ways in which we do our work remain constant, the nature of work and the community needs and goals we support are dynamic and evolving. With this in mind, over the course of 2021, the Arts Council's board and staff engaged in a planning process that examined the organization's past and present in terms of programming, infrastructure and governance and carefully considered extensive community assessment, feedback, and recommendations from two ambitious county-wide planning projects we completed in partnership with the Mariposa County Planning Department and the Mariposa County Office of Education:

[Mariposa County Creative Placemaking Strategy](#) (adopted in August 2021)

[Mariposa County Office of Education's Strategic Arts Education Plan](#) (adopted in April 2021).

These plans' assessment, stakeholder engagement, and recommendations components all identified equity and representation as a critical priority - a priority that we carried forward and used as guiding North Star in the development of this Strategic Plan.

This plan also considers the impact of the global pandemic, new opportunities and needs in Mariposa County, and the many ways the Arts Council can evolve and grow to positively respond to and support our community. Finally, because the world, and thus our work, is ever changing, our organizational strength and viability is dependent on strong governance and executive leadership that prioritizes equity, transparency, sustainability, agility and growth, all of which are of high importance in this Strategic Plan.

The aforementioned planning priorities are manifested in a number of place throughout this Strategic Plan, starting with our Equity Statement which articulates our highest priorities as an organization and grounds every aspect of our work. The Background/ Current Conditions (not included in this Executive Summary) piece paints a picture of the Arts Council's organizational journey over the past ten years, contextualizes the current moment in which we find ourselves, and provides helpful insight as we intentionally chart a course for the future. A desire for: deeper transparency and equitable practices; stronger alignment with community goals, needs and county-wide planning process; and intentional organizational growth and relevance informed the development of the Decision Support Tool piece of this plan. Borrowing

heavily from the decision support tool created by the California Arts Council and found in their 2019 Strategic Framework, this tool has been adopted to help strengthen the Arts Council's governance through the thoughtful and transparent presentation of data, opinions and insights in order to facilitate careful decision making in which a representative plurality of voices are considered, respected, validated and deliberated. Finally, informed by this internal planning process, the Mariposa County Creative Placemaking Strategy and the Mariposa County Office of Education's Strategic Arts Education Plan planning processes and recommendations, this document concludes with specific and tangible recommendations that pull everything together and chart an ambitious and exciting course for the future.

Equity Statement

Adopted November 2020

The creative use of perspective gives artists the ability to engage viewers in dialogue, inviting the audience to see both the world from another’s point of view and bring their own experiences to bear on the subject - resulting in an infinite universe of possible intersections of beauty, truth, ideas and empathy where the unique voices of artists and their viewers intersect. This dynamic is made all the more powerful when the voices in conversation equitably represent all facets of the human experience. It is at this point that art transcends personal aesthetics and individual interpretation and becomes catalytic in civic discourse, community engagement and social change. The Arts Council endeavors to grow an inclusive organization and creative culture in Mariposa buoyed by multiple perspectives, prioritizing equity and strengthening our ability to see each other more clearly. Therefore, we:

- Actively commit ourselves to the just and fair inclusion of all people into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential¹, celebrating the complexity and strength that equity brings to every facet of life in Mariposa County.
- Embrace the work of confronting and addressing systemic inequities, historic oppression, and racism seeded throughout our social, cultural, environmental, and economic landscape.
- Recognize the power of representation and honor our community by welcoming people from all backgrounds and life experiences to our leadership table, partnership network, staff family, and community of program participants and audience members.
- Proceed guided by kindness, honesty, grace, openness, generosity, humility, and inclusivity.

¹

PolicyLink, The Equity Manifesto.
<https://www.policylink.org/about-us/equity-manifesto>

Decision Support Tool

Adopted June 2021

Designed to support an organizational culture of intentionality, transparency and consistency, this decision support tool is a series of considerations developed for the Mariposa County Arts Council’s Board and Staff to guide the decisions and assessment of new or existing programs, projects, policies and practices.

STEP 1	Mission, Values and Priorities Alignment
<p>How does this opportunity/action align with the Mariposa County Arts Council’s Scope of Work, and Mission and Values Statements?</p> <p><i>Does this opportunity/action align with the Mariposa Creative Placemaking Strategy or the Mariposa County Arts Council’s Arts Education Strategic Plan? If so, how?</i></p>	
STEP 2	Equity Alignment
<p>How does this opportunity/action support and align with the Mariposa County Arts Council’s Racial Equity Statement?</p> <p>Additional Equity Considerations - How does this opportunity/action impact and/or inclusively engage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Potential beneficiaries with disabilities?</i> • <i>Potential beneficiaries who communicate in languages other than English?</i> • <i>Potential beneficiaries who face social stigma, trauma, and/or safety concerns?</i> • <i>Potential beneficiaries living in remote or isolated areas?</i> • <i>Potential beneficiaries with fewer technical resources and/or expertise?</i> 	

STEP 3	Capacity Considerations
<p>Financial Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is the cost?</i> • <i>What are the sources of funding and how sustainable are these sources?</i> • <i>Can the program scale on balance with income/expenses?</i> <p>Staff/Personnel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How does this impact existing staff capacity issues?</i> • <i>Are additional personnel resources required - FTE, PTE, contractor (take into consideration AB5 and timeline/other priorities)?</i> <p>Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What partnership potential exists? Or does this complement an existing partnership?</i> • <i>What is the capacity of potential partners in terms of financial support, staff hours, audience, infrastructure, venue, networking, program design/ implementation/evaluation, resources, etc.?</i> • <i>What type of partnership is this?</i> <p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Based on experience and existing data, does the community have the capacity and/or desire to support this programming in terms of audience, participation, fee-based revenue?</i> 	

STEP 4	Impact Considerations
<p>Who is expected to benefit from this opportunity/action and what is the desired impact and expected outcomes (on an individual or collective level, community goals, etc.)</p> <p>What might be the unintended consequences/drawbacks from this opportunity/action?</p> <p>Beyond Mariposa, how might this opportunity/action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Leverage resources?</i> • <i>Cultivate partnerships?</i> • <i>Foster advocacy opportunities and grow awareness?</i> • <i>Demonstrate innovation, develop best practices for and/or contribute to the larger field?</i> • <i>Address issue of concern affecting both Mariposa and the larger world?</i> 	

STEP 5	Input Considerations
<p>What input has been collected and considered from the following stakeholders?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Staff</i> • <i>Special Advisory Groups</i> • <i>Partners</i> • <i>Impacted Community Members</i> • <i>Experts in the Field</i> • <i>Funders</i> 	

STEP 6	Wildcards
<p>Acknowledging not all things can be quantified or fit nicely into metric-based evaluation, Step 6 invites the inclusion of a compelling narrative in support of an opportunity/action that doesn't score well in STEPS 1-5 but still feels like an opportunity/action we should pursue. Or vice versa, narratives in opposition to an opportunity/action that does score well in STEPS 1-5, but doesn't feel right are also welcome.</p>	



Decision Support Tool Resources:
Arts Council Vision & Mission Statement

Mission Statement

The Arts Council is an incorporated not-for-profit organization, created to promote and support all forms of the cultural arts, for all ages, throughout Mariposa County.

Scope of Work

Our work focuses on the development and implementation of artistic programming and creative placemaking policy designed to support the economic, social, ecological and cultural vitality of our community.

Values Statement

- *Serve the diverse interests of residents living in and around Mariposa County*
- *Foster awareness of the wide range of artistic voices and media offering different lenses of interpretation for our community, environment and world*
- *Utilize the arts as an equalizer that can create a level playing field where underrepresented voices can be heard, amplified and engaged*
- *Contribute to the health of all people by engaging them in the creation and appreciation of art*
- *Positively increase the visibility of Mariposa*
- *Leverage the many positive facets of art for constructive community engagement, civic dialogue, environmental preservation, and social change*
- *Act as a conduit to better connect the community of Mariposa to issues, movements and opportunities beyond its boundaries*
- *Provide opportunities for collaboration among individuals, organizations, businesses and civic leaders in Mariposa and beyond*
- *Support the local economy*



Decision Support Tool Resources:
Mariposa County Creative Placemaking Strategy Priorities

The Mariposa County’s Creative Placemaking Strategy promotes the county’s economic, ecological, social, and cultural vitality, balancing historic narratives with contemporary ones and reflects the community’s richness and diversity. By engaging artists and embedding artistic practice into the community experience, the Strategy will support a culture of creativity that contributes to livability in Mariposa County. The Mariposa County Creative Placemaking Strategy recommends specific artistic interventions that adhere to and honor the following creative placemaking and placekeeping values:

- *Articulate and deepen the connections that Mariposa County residents feel to each other and their community*
- *Reflect the county’s diverse range of perspectives and experiences;*
- *Inspire interaction, curiosity and inquiry*
- *Expand our community’s comfort with and capacity for creativity and expression.*



Decision Support Tool Resources:
Mariposa County Office of Education:
Arts Education Strategic Plan Priorities

Values

- *All of the Students in Mariposa County will have access to equitable, sequential creative arts- PK-12th Grade*
- *Increased capacity and support for arts integration*
- *Student centered Arts Education that empowers students through choice and voice*

Programming Recommendations/Implementation

1. Create a more focused, leaner, impactful, representative, responsive and dynamic approach to the programs and projects we directly produce/ implement. Prioritize filling service gaps and needs in our community, giving special attention to issues of equity.
 - a. Re-imagine the organization's physical space to be as accessible, impactful, sustainable and compelling as possible
 - b. Adapt our arts education/public and partnership programming to be more representative, agile, responsive, data driven (with respect to community input given during planning processes, larger community outcomes as informed by our partners, and participant data) and integrated with the Creative Placemaking Strategy, MCOE's Strategic Arts Education Plan, and other community planning projects

2. Create capacity for the creative community in Mariposa to do impactful work - be an aquifer of support
 - a. Develop granting/re-granting and fiscal sponsorship programs;
 - b. Expand our capacity to offer technical assistance and capacity building efforts for other arts organizations and cultural/creative placemaking efforts in the County;
 - c. Continue to work with the Mariposa County Planning Department, Mariposa County Office of Education and other community partners to develop policy that opens doors for individuals and organizations wanting to contribute to Mariposa's creative placemaking portfolio and/ or arts education initiatives;
 - d. Focus on developing the creative placemaking projects and programs informed by Creative Placemaking Strategy and Strategic Arts Education Plan (and thus extensive stakeholder engagement) - integrate art deeper and more significantly into partner projects with positive community outcomes;

Recommendations

Adopted November 2021

Overarching Aspiration/Recommendations:

Intentionally create strong alignment with in the organization and our work in the following areas:

1. Programming
2. Governance
3. Finances
4. Operations

Programming Recommendations/Implementation

- e. Continue to foster local, regional and statewide partnerships and collaboration;
 - f. Continue to engage in programs that promote arts advocacy efforts at the local, state, or national level;
 - g. Prioritize contracting and hiring diverse, representative working artists/ student artists who have invested in their career and are trying to make a living as an artist/interested in supporting the community of Mariposa.
3. Create a range of personal and fun/accessible opportunities to connect with the community at large, particularly underrepresented populations (either by leveraging existing programs/projects, offered in partnership with other organizations/events, or structured as stand alone discrete events) in order to give us an opportunity to listen to hear from a variety of individuals and populations in our community and share the work we are doing (and how individuals and groups can benefit from the work we are doing).
- a. Leverage our existing program with additional community outreach (ex: pre-event receptions, participatory tangential programming, etc.)
 - b. Utilize partnership programming or creative placemaking efforts (example: National Trails Day, Sierra Foothill Conservancy events, etc.) Stand alone events (example: community art project at Mariposa County Fair, CoyoteFest etc.)
 - c. Continue to build opportunities to engage virtually
 - d. Enlist volunteers to help with this effort
 - e. Support and uplift our partners through these efforts

Governance Recommendations

1. Strengthen Board of Directors' governance capacity
 - a. Board Training with respect to governance, fiduciary responsibilities and duty of care
 - b. Develop clear understanding of the roles of the board and the roles of staff
2. Further develop board membership in a way prioritizes representation, a plurality of voices, experience and leadership gaps
 - a. Continue board development guided by our equity statement
 - b. Create a youth member position
 - c. Create advisory committee with a specific focus on representation, diversity, racial equity and inclusion
3. Develop metrics of success that consider the entirety of the work the organization does and measures it on balance.

Financial Recommendations

1. Grow local support for our work
 - a. Expand Membership
 - b. Expand Sponsorship
 - c. Expand Donation opportunities
2. Leverage Creative Placemaking Strategy/Creative Placemaking work and community goals partnerships work to compete for larger, more competitive grants, foundation, and private support
 - a. NEA, NHA, CalHum
 - b. Develop private sponsorship for specific projects
3. Grow County support through contracts with county organizations and increase in allocation (back to pre-pandemic level).

Operations Recommendations

1. Invest in professional development and competitive compensation packages for staff as responsibilities increase. Possibly invest in a new part time position, if need be. (Contingent on increased operational funding from the SLP program meant to directly support SLP staff).
2. Continue to develop backend infrastructure, systems, and communication modalities in alignment across the whole of the organization's work
 - a. CRM
 - b. Accessibility
 - ADA - physical and digital communication assets, policies, programming, and projects
 - User Experience
3. Focus on the best practice communication practices with end users across all communication platforms and channels
4. Organizational succession planning across with respect to operations and programming.

Acknowledgments

Deep appreciation to the public for contributing to insights and input through the [Mariposa County Creative Placemaking stakeholder engagement process](#) (an Arts Council partnership project) and the Mariposa County Office of Education Strategic Arts Education Plan's team for providing thoughtful, rich community engagement and feedback to guide this planning process.

MARIPOSA COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLANNING

Alex Vance, Mariposa County Arts Council's Board President
Carol Hart, Mariposa County Arts Council's Board Secretary
Mikey Goralnik, Mariposa County Arts Council's 1st Vice President
John Steward, Mariposa County Arts Council Board Director
Cara Goger, Mariposa County Arts Council Executive Director

MARIPOSA COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Alex Vance, President
Mikey Goralnik, 1st Vice President
Clay M. River, 2nd Vice President
Jim Mason, Treasurer
Carol Hart, Secretary
Carol Johnson, Director
Les Marsden, Director
Charlie Phillips, Director
Flora Savage, Director
John Steward, Director
Chris Thorpe, Director

STAFF

Cara Goger, Executive Director
Alicia Rodriguez, Operations Manager
Daisy Phillips, Programs and Communications Coordinator

EXECUTIVE REPORT, V.1 2022

www.mariposaartscouncil.org | 5009 Hwy 140, Mariposa CA 95338