



Downtown San Rafael Art District (DSRAD)

CULTURAL DISTRICTS: FIRST-FIVE YEARS REPORT

December 7, 2022

Please answer every question, even if it is a restatement of a previous question. Thank you.

YOUR CULTURAL DISTRICT:

1. Describe your Cultural District in one paragraph.

- a. The Downtown San Rafael Arts District (DSRAD) partners with local arts leaders, businesses, city officials, and community members to create a vibrant and engaging environment that promotes well-being, equity, and inclusivity through the arts. The DSRAD endeavors to provide access to world-class arts and culture education and experiences for everyone in San Rafael, and values serving all members of the community; Embracing the arts to build inclusive community relationships and dialogue to confront and address pressing social and economic issues; Engaging the historically under-served and marginalized populations in our community to promote greater equity and diversity; and creating a welcoming and innovative downtown community anchored and unified by a thriving arts and culture scene.

2. Who were your initial Cultural District partners?

- a. Initial partners included:
 - i. [City of San Rafael](#)
 - ii. [Art Works Downtown](#)
 - iii. [Youth In Arts](#)
 - iv. [California Film Institute](#)
 - v. [Downtown San Rafael Business Improvement District](#)

3. Who are your current partners?

- a. All of the initial partners are still participating stakeholders. In addition, the District welcomed the [Marin Society of Artists](#) as a stakeholder following their relocation to the Downtown District. The DSRAD has contacted other organizations about potential partnership, and is open to collaboration with other organizations that reflect our values and would help the District advance our mission.

4. Do you have a local:

- a. Arts Commission?
 - i. The City of San Rafael currently does not have an official Arts Commission, however, the City's [General Plan 2040](#) and Downtown Precise Plan includes an [Arts & Culture Element](#), that could be implemented as part of the DSRAD strategic plan, and includes goals that recognize that Arts and Culture are integral parts of San Rafael's quality of life and civic identity.

- ii. One of the stated priorities of the City’s Arts & Culture Element is to prioritize development of an Arts & Culture Master Plan, which would consider options for development of an Arts Council, Commission, or similar organization:
 - 1. *Program AC-1.1C: Arts and Culture Master Plan. Build on the work done by the County of Marin and San Rafael-based arts organizations to create a San Rafael Arts and Culture Master Plan. All segments of the community, including residents and workers, should be encouraged to participate in this process. The Plan should promote participation of the arts community in civic life, enhance arts programming, promote cultural inclusion, and maximize opportunities for arts events. Potential funding sources for a Master Plan and its implementation should be explored. As part of this process, options for ongoing leadership and arts advocacy should be considered, potentially including an **Arts Council, Commission, or similar organization.***
- b. Economic Development Agency?
 - i. Yes – The City of San Rafael has an [Economic Development Department](#).
 - ii. In addition, the City is supported by the Downtown San Rafael Business Improvement District.
- c. Chamber of Commerce?
 - i. Yes, San Rafael has a [Chamber of Commerce](#).
- d. Redevelopment Agency?
 - i. No, the City doesn’t have a Redevelopment Agency. In accordance with 2012 State legislation, the City of San Rafael is the successor agency for San Rafael’s former redevelopment agency.
- e. Local Tourism/Visitors Bureau?
 - i. Yes – the [Marin Convention and Visitors Bureau](#)
- f. Historic preservation commission/society?
 - i. Yes – the [Marin Historical Society](#)
- g. Parks and Recreation Department?
 - i. Yes – the City of San Rafael [Library & Recreation Department](#) is comprised of two Divisions - the [Recreation & Childcare](#) Division, and the [Library & Arts](#) Division. Parks maintenance is coordinated with the [Department of Public Works](#)
- h. Libraries?
 - i. Yes – the City of San Rafael Library & Recreation Department has a [Library & Arts](#) Division that operates three public branch libraries.
- i. Public Arts program or Arts Masterplan?
 - i. Yes, two local agencies have public arts programs
 - ii. Marin County Cultural Services adopted their first [Arts & Culture Master Plan](#) in 2019, and elements of that plan can help inform the strategy going forward for DSRAD.
 - iii. The City of San Rafael is developing a Public Art program, and recently developed a new [Public Art Policy](#) and [Public Art Review Board](#), specifically designed to promote inclusivity and access to Public Art and creative placemaking initiatives. The policy and Board are the result of collaborative, community-based efforts that came together in fall 2020 and were supported by DSRAD stakeholders. Those efforts began with the development of a pilot Public Art Advisory Group that was comprised of community members and local artists, including DSRAD stakeholders, who provided feedback to groups proposing public art projects in San Rafael, and

resulted in approval of two pilot art projects – the installation of a large, colorful mural in the Canal neighborhood that was coordinated by a new organization called **The Canal Arts**, comprised of local volunteers, arts organizations, and community-based organizations; and a public art installation at Arbor Park in North San Rafael, which was coordinated by **The San Rafael Social Justice Community Art Group**. The group of concerned neighbors, local arts organizations, and city officials was formed in October 2020 in response to community tension and events regarding the defacement of public, grassroots artwork honoring Breonna Taylor. The mural designed and created by 10 youth artists celebrates the core themes of Freedom, Justice, Liberty, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion through the lens of a Marin-based, BIPOC youth. In addition, the creative process illustrated how our community can come together to heal, learn, and unify through the arts. The project culminated in the creation of a [new public art Mural, which was unveiled on October 22, 2022](#).

1. Additionally, the City recently adopted their [General Plan 2040](#) which includes an [Arts & Culture Element](#). The element has identified that Arts and culture are integral parts of San Rafael’s quality of life and civic identity. Program Goal AC-1.1C directly addresses the goal of development of an Arts and Culture Master Plan:

- a. Program Goal AC-1.1C: Arts and Culture Master Plan: Build on the work done by the County of Marin and San Rafael-based arts organizations to create a **San Rafael Arts and Culture Master Plan**. All segments of the community, including residents and workers, should be encouraged to participate in this process. The Plan should promote participation of the arts community in civic life, enhance arts programming, promote cultural inclusion, and maximize opportunities for arts events. Potential funding sources for a Master Plan and its implementation should be explored. As part of this process, options for ongoing leadership and arts advocacy should be considered, potentially including an Arts Council, Commission, or similar organization.

j. Other local agencies/entities who support or could support your mission?

There are a variety of local agencies, businesses, and organizations that may be interested in supporting the mission and goals of the DSRAD. One of the DSRAD goals is to conduct an arts & culture inventory assessment and community outreach as part of a Strategic Planning process to better understand which organizations and entities may be interested in partnership and supporting this mission.

Below is a non-exhaustive list of entities located either within the Downtown San Rafael Arts District or within the San Rafael Planning Area the DSRAD feel reflect our values and mission and may be interested in future partnership or advancing the mission of the District.

- i. **Other Local Arts and Community organizations:** In addition to DSRAD stakeholders, San Rafael has a range of community-based arts and cultural institutions including Marin Arts, Artes LatinX Marin, the Multicultural Center of Marin, Belrose Performing Arts Center, Marin Dance Theatre, the Marin Symphony, The Canal Arts, Marin Shakespeare, DrawBridge, Enriching Lives Through Music, The Canal Arts, Marin Ballet, Canal Alliance, the

Multicultural Center of Marin, and the Kanbar Center for Performing Arts (at the Osher Jewish Community Center). These organizations generate substantial revenue for San Rafael's economy and provide opportunities for San Rafael residents to engage in the arts.

- ii. **Other County Arts and Cultural entities:** As the County seat, San Rafael benefits from the presence of a number of County-operated arts and cultural programs, facilities, and events. The County operates the Marin Center in partnership with the Marin Cultural Association. Facilities include the Marin Veterans Auditorium, with seating capacity of 2,000; the 315-seat Showcase Theater; meeting rooms; and a 22,500 square foot Exhibit Hall. The County also sponsors the yearly Marin County Fair, and sponsors art and music festivals and other events at Lagoon Park. Docent-led tours of the County of Marin Administration Building, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, attract visitors from around the world.
- iii. **Local Arts Education:** Performing and visual arts programs are offered at some public and private schools throughout San Rafael, and instruction is supplemented in other schools through partnerships with local arts organizations like Youth in Arts. San Rafael and Terra Linda High Schools offer multidisciplinary arts programs, and both have theaters for live performances, as does Marin Academy (high school) and the Osher Marin JCC. San Rafael is also home to Dominican University, with renowned arts and music programs, including exhibitions, concerts, lectures, and performances. Dominican University provides degree programs in creative writing, arts management, graphic design, visual studies, literary and intercultural studies, and performing arts and social change.
- iv. **Special Events and Festivals:** Thousands of visitors are drawn to special events and festivals that take place in San Rafael, including annual Marin Open Studios, the May Madness Downtown Classic Car Parade, the Annual Holiday Lighted Boat Parade, the Sunset Criterium Bicycle Race, the Food and Wine festival, the Mill Valley Film Festival (which includes screenings at the California Film Institute's Rafael Theater), the Marin County Fair, Cinco de Mayo, Dia de Los Muertos, and numerous special holiday events. There are also local Farmers Markets, and a Second Friday Downtown ArtWalk featuring open studios and exhibits.
- v. **Museums:** San Rafael is home to several niche museums, with specialty collections ranging from classic cars to political art. They include: the Marin History Museum, Museum of International Propaganda, The Mission San Rafael/St. Raphael's Church is a local landmark, with historic exhibits and a gift shop on-site. The Planning Area is also home to China Camp State Park, with interpretive displays and historic structures that tell an important story about Marin County's early history.
- vi. **Literary Scene:** San Rafael has a vibrant literary scene. There are several groups that teach and support local writers. The Falkirk Cultural Center, San Rafael Public Library, and the Marin Civic Center provide resources for research and education. Locally-owned bookstores, Rebound Bookstore and Copperfield's Books are DSRAD assets.
- vii. **Arts & Entertainment Venues and Businesses:** San Rafael is home to numerous performance and concert venues, and private galleries. There are also a number of businesses offering private instruction in dance, music, and the visual arts. San Rafael is also home to several recording studios, and businesses serving the film industry and other media enterprises. The city

has been a popular movie and television filming location, and there are several cinemas in the city.

1. In addition, there are a variety of other entities that the DSRAD has identified may be able to support the mission of the Downtown San Rafael Arts District, which may include:
 - a. San Rafael Chamber of Commerce
 - b. Marin County Visitors Bureau
 - c. Marin County Cultural Services
 - d. Marin Cultural Association
 - e. Marin Community Foundation
 - f. Commercial businesses located within DSRAD
 - g. Local restaurants located within DSRAD
 - h. Marin Agricultural Institute
 - i. Commercial real estate developers
 - j. Downtown property owners
 - k. San Rafael Federation of Neighborhoods
 - l. Mission Rotary of San Rafael
 - m. Local artists of all disciplines
 - n. Artist and creative-led businesses
 - o. Local nonprofits
 - p. Local civic organizations

FUNDING:

1. **Do any of your partners provide funding to the CD? If so, how much and for what?**
 - a. The DSRAD is in the process of assessing funding contributions partners contributed in the first five years. Stakeholders estimate that since 2018 they have collectively contributed \$47,400 of in-kind marketing, branding, advertising, programs, and creation of collateral materials.
 - b. In addition, stakeholder partners made significant contributions to the District in the form of in-kind staff time. Since 2018, partners estimate they have collectively contributed more than \$300,000 of in-kind staff resources to meet with partners, support DSRAD projects, programs, and initiatives, and meet with stakeholders and community groups to increase recognition.
 - c. These in-kind contributions have supported programs like the Second Friday ArtWalk, Free and affordable space for arts and culture activities (e.g., blind & vision impaired workshops), parking garage mural projects, donations of art supplies, and creation of collateral materials, websites, advertising, and marketing.
2. **What other funding or in-kind support does your CD receive from grants (including CAC grants), arts organizations, local government agencies, other nonprofits, local incentives/support, federal incentive/support?**
 - a. In 2018-19, the District received California Arts Council funding of **\$10,000 (\$5,000/yr. for two years)**. The District has not received any additional outside grant funding, local incentives, or financial support since that time. This initial funding was used to develop collateral materials such as District signage, branded bike racks (used as geographic markers to outline the boundaries of the District), website design, social media and other marketing efforts. The District has not received any additional outside grant funding or local incentives or support.
3. **What projects/initiatives are you currently working on?**
 - a. Strategizing ways to fund development of a District Arts & Culture Strategic Plan.

- b. Exploring funding for a personnel position to support District operations and administration, and better define the District leadership structure.
- c. Developing and evaluating District goals and objectives in alignment with available resources.
- d. Continuing to support and expand the Second Friday Artwalk program, which is rebounding post-pandemic.
- e. Collaborating with Stakeholders, Partners, and Community Businesses and Artists to galvanize support for the DSRAD, enhance recognition, and build capacity.

4. What is on your wish list of projects/initiatives if fully funded?

The District has a variety of projects that they would like to build capacity to work towards. Some of those projects would be possible to complete in the near-term, while others would take more significant capacity development to accomplish. The list below is categorized into short-term (1-3 years), medium term (3-5 years) and long term (5-10 years) goals:

Short Term Project Goals (1-3 years)

- a. **Develop an Arts & Culture Strategic Plan** that is committed to an equitable and inclusive community process and includes a guide for implementation and sustainability.
 - i. The DSRAD has recognized that since designation, other agencies such as the City of San Rafael and Marin County Cultural Services have developed new documents that may be useful as guides and resources to help further shape a strategy specific to furthering the Cultural District, and that the specific District strategy will be paramount to ongoing implementation and sustained success.
- b. **Create a leadership position**, along with additional resources to support DSRAD operations and San Rafael arts and culture goals.
- c. **Marketing and Promotion:** The DSRAD will work to increase recognition of the local arts and culture organizations and the DSRAD by expanding marketing efforts. These strategic efforts will increase participation in art-focused programs and events, as well as bolster commerce at stakeholder organizations and businesses.
- d. **Develop new programs and expanded existing programs**, which may include public and community art opportunities, new cultural festivals, activation of public spaces for cultural and artistic expression, new digital assets that promote the District, and expansion of our current successful cultural programming. Additionally, initiatives such as an artist in residence programs, poet laureates, concerts, music in the park series, and similar events designed to showcase the work of local artists and performers will be considered.
- e. **Improve cultural equity and access to arts programming among lower income and non-English speaking residents** (for example, through new partnerships, training, outreach strategies, multi-lingual initiatives and signage, and reduced fees for qualifying residents).

Mid-Term Project Goals (3-5 years)

- f. **Support Downtown Beautification:** Beautification efforts will help improve the visual image of properties and generate pride in the Downtown community.
- g. **Develop new Community Public Art Projects:** The DSRAD Steering Committee will partner with the local community and businesses to create new public art installations that represent the unique diversity and culture of San Rafael.
- h. **Expand Local Arts & Culture Education Programs:** The DSRAD will support FREE community arts education opportunities for local youth including: self-led visual arts projects at Youth in Arts' ArtLab and Mobile ArtLab connected to in-school arts

curriculum; sponsoring hands-on art-making at Downtown events and festivals; and promoting various youth-focused outdoor dance and music workshops.

- i. **Increase resources for current DSRAD anchor arts organizations** to include capacity building, program and staff support.
- j. **Explore and identify additional funding sources** or funding relief mechanisms such as sales taxes, tax credits and property tax abatements, or corporate partnership and foundational support.
- k. **Promote Economic Recovery Efforts** through strategic advertising and promotions by:
 - i. Leveraging the Downtown San Rafael Arts District designation to encourage, promote, and support arts activities, attract visitors and business patrons, promote equity and inclusivity, and create a more welcoming and exciting downtown environment. Encourage multi-disciplinary art activities and events that showcase local talent and provide opportunities for all residents to experience the arts. Regularly renew the Arts District designation to sustain arts and cultural opportunities.
 - ii. Promoting cultural tourism (for example, visits to the Mission San Rafael Arcangel or Marin History Museum) as a way to support and sustain the local arts community and hospitality industry.

Long Term Project Goals (5-10 years)

- l. **Assist the City with Implementation of the San Rafael 2040 Plan Arts & Culture Element and the Downtown Precise Plan:** As described above, the City of San Rafael has a Downtown Precise Plan and recently adopted a new General Plan 2040, which includes an Arts & Culture Element. The DSRAD would use funding to help support the City's goals to implement these plans.
- m. **Expand incentives for incorporating arts space and arts features in new projects** and in vacant and underutilized space. DSRAD will work with local building owners and landlords to seek out available space for temporary art installations focused on representing the diverse population of San Rafael. These efforts will both offer opportunities to showcase local artists of all ages, and help revitalize the downtown area.
- n. Explore opportunities to **create more affordable space for artistic production**, including live-work and studio spaces, public cultural facilities, and affordable performance space. Remove barriers to reusing vacant or underutilized commercial space for this purpose.
- o. **Create new central outdoor spaces suitable for community-wide events and performances in San Rafael.** Provide the necessary infrastructure (electric power, etc.) for these spaces to serve their intended purpose.
- p. **Establish a Cultural Equity Grant Program** or similar vehicle to foster the values of the DSRAD and increase the impact of cultural equity and neighborhood arts. A DSRAD Cultural Equity Grant Program would support San Rafael artists, arts organizations, and historically underserved communities through grants, technical assistance and capacity building, economic development, arts education initiatives and support for community-based Cultural Organizations.

5. What are the possible funding scenarios for your different priorities?

- a. The District will explore a variety of different funding sources to accomplish the goals and objectives outlined above. At present, the District is pursuing funding through the California Arts Council and exploring other foundational grant opportunities.

- b. At the moment, the District has extremely limited resources, and no dedicated staff time. All District operations, including pursuit of funding, are managed by DSRAD Stakeholders volunteers, and must be completed on a pro-bono or in-kind basis. For that reason, the lack of District funding has significantly hampered the District's ability to pursue additional funding sources.
- c. Limited funding was further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath. Nonprofit arts organizations face tough competition for funding, threatening their long-term vitality. Housing and studio space in San Rafael remains prohibitively expensive for many artists and teaching artists. Looking beyond the pandemic, San Rafael aspires to more strongly establish its role as an arts destination and a city that values creative enterprise, and supplemental funding to support the arts will significantly improve the District's ability to fulfill this goal.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

1. **Beyond direct funding, what are the most important things CAC could do to support your district's efforts?**
 - a. We would welcome any and all technical support expertise that could be provided by the CAC. Initially, we would appreciate support to help identify sustainable funding sources, assistance with identifying consultants that may be able to assist with the creation of an Arts and Culture Strategic Plan, and how to leverage the Cultural District designation to help promote cultural tourism.
2. **What other specific deliverables or benefits you would like to see associated with state-designation? (Annual convening? Branding/Advertising? Promotion?)**
 - a. We would appreciate opportunities to connect with other District stakeholders to learn about their process, successes and failures. We believe an annual convening and any opportunities to tap into cross promotional branding and advertising would be beneficial to all.

EXPERIENCE w/ VisitCA and CalTRANS

1. **Did you work with Visit CA? What was your experience?**
 - a. Due to limited funding and resources, we were unable to work with Visit CA in our first 5 years but will explore this moving forward.
2. **Did you work with CalTrans? What was your experience? If you purchased signage, can you share how you obtained it and an image?**
 - a. No, we did not work with CalTrans in our first 5 years, however, we are extremely interested in working with CalTrans to obtain freeway signage for our district. We have heard that other Districts have had positive outcomes from working with CalTrans.

GOALS/ACHIEVEMENT:

1. **What was your cultural district's initial mission or goal in seeking designation? Did you achieve that goal?**
 - The Cultural District was officially formed at its inaugural committee meeting of the partners on March 10, 2017. Although Downtown San Rafael and its core arts and cultural organizations have a long history of creating, hosting, and producing a myriad of cultural events for public consumption – of theater, film, art, music, and events – this initiative marked the first step in creating a specific cohort geared toward ensuring an opportunity to synthesize planning and facilitate joint efforts with the goal of boosting the arts foundation of Downtown San Rafael. When the

core partnership of five key organizations initially met, they identified several immediate goals:

- i. Contact other cultural organizations in the district and invite them to attend a larger committee meeting to discuss ideas, dreams, and concrete goals.
 - ii. Create a contact list with the information of each potential committee member, to facilitate and spark communication among businesses who have historically worked separately or in much smaller groups.
- Since inception, the District has made excellent headway in accomplishing these first two goals, and now meets monthly (plus ad hoc meetings as needed), including a myriad of stakeholders, partners, and community. The core partnership decided to build upon Downtown's well-established Second Friday Art Walk event, which links venues along downtown's Fourth Street, anchored by Art Works Downtown's galleries, artist studios, and augmented by live music and refreshments in the more than 15 Art Walk locations along the route. These highly attended events are great platforms for new ideas, including summer movie nights organized by the California Film Institute, family music nights in City Plaza produced by the City of San Rafael and the Downtown San Rafael BID, children's art-making events and contests hosted by Youth in Arts, and a springboard for the ideas presented by the other potential committee members and stakeholders.

2. How did state-designation help your district?

- Receiving the District designation has provided San Rafael focused community collaboration between differing groups that may not have worked together otherwise. Organizational stakeholders such as the community arts nonprofits, art centers and city government have come together for the first time in regular organized monthly meetings. Together, the group works on community centric art projects to bring excitement to the downtown such as an annual San Rafael Dia de los Muertos event, summer arts stroll, and during the Covid-19 pandemic — a collection of store window arts exhibitions to keep our community's spirit lifted.
- The Dia de los Muertos event included collaboration from the City of San Rafael, arts organizations, artists, and businesses featuring altars in the downtown windows. The event brought thousands of visitors to San Rafael and has been so successful that the event parade was rerouted to the main street (Fourth Street) in the downtown.
- The arts district in San Rafael has created a sense of community belonging and economic stimulus to artists, businesses, and the community in general.

3. After 5 years, how would you describe the existing goals and future needs of your district?

- The District has determined that the development of a strategic plan and building additional personnel capacity to help the DSRAD realize their goals would be greatly beneficial. This is a goal that the District outlined early in the first five years, however, it has been difficult to accomplish due to resource limitations and the unique challenges of the pandemic.
- The DSRAD Stakeholders recently met to review goals and objectives from the first five years. In that conversation, stakeholders reiterated a primary goal of the District is to promote equitable access, unify, and activate the community through Arts & Culture. The group developed several objectives aligned with this goal and the desire to have a collective impact through the power of collaboration, and adopted a working mission statement aligned with this goal: ***The Downtown San Rafael Arts District advances EQUITY by unifying, activating, and celebrating our diverse community through arts and cultural collective impact.***

- In addition to the above, the District is continuing to work on the following goals and objectives that have been established throughout the first five years of certification:
 - i. Galvanizing partnership among key stakeholders (community members, nonprofits, artists, local government and business).
 - ii. Expanding reach and impact of district influence and activities with equitable access to the arts as a primary driver.
 - iii. Identifying long-term, sustainable sources of funding for to help drive the district's mission forward.
 - iv. Supporting the Second Friday ArtWalk and other local arts programs, events and activities.

4. How does your district address the following areas?:

Due to limited resources and the impacts of the pandemic, the DSRAD was unable to specifically address some of the areas listed below in the first five years. However, the DSRAD intends to create an arts & culture strategic plan that will help define and align ways the below elements could be addressed:

-Economic Development

- Create job opportunities for local artists that could include public art projects, beautification, branding, placemaking and wayfinding projects
- Support local artist and creative led businesses through collaboration, tax credits, and economic development strategies to attract new artist enterprises

-Tourism/Visitation

- Stimulate more visitation through collaborative efforts with the local tourism bureau
- Create a destination marketing strategy that promotes the District, district assets, activities and amenities

-Equity and Inclusion

- Increase diversity by creating connections, collaborations and expanding opportunities for artists of color, people with disabilities, and other historically marginalized groups.
- Provide opportunities for diverse and free programming that will attract underrepresented audiences

-Community Engagement/Promotion

- Increase civic participation through cultural and artistic programs and inclusive celebrations
- Increase marketing and promotion to the broader community
- Engage the community in planning and execution of cultural and artistic initiatives, through volunteer opportunities and collaborations
- Engage youth of all backgrounds in artistic and cultural activities

-Arts Programming

- Expand and create new arts and cultural programming opportunities, to include activation of public spaces and vacant lots and buildings

-Direct Artist Support

- Through collaboration, possible funding opportunities for artists to engage in the planning and implementation of new and expanded programming

-Cultural/Historic Preservation

- Provide opportunities for adaptive reuse of current cultural and historic buildings that are underutilized, through arts and cultural programming and creative placemaking efforts

5. Given the universal impact of Covid, what challenges did your Cultural District experience and how did the district respond?

- Initial business closures in early days of the pandemic, with ongoing impacts to public engagement in indoor activities had severe consequences ranging from significant loss of income to business closure. Downtown San Rafael now has numerous vacant storefronts, fewer customers and visitors, and is working to recover from those impacts. However, Cultural District partners and many other organizations discovered new ways to deliver services. Most are conducting online and outdoor activities and altering indoor activities to address ongoing health concerns. New partnerships were created as a result of the shared challenges the pandemic presents.
- Pandemic impacts did result in postponed progress on most of the goals and objectives that had been developed to later dates. Looking ahead, the group is optimistic about the City's recovery efforts, and is interested in resuming work on accomplishing many of the goals and objectives that they were unable to complete during the first five years.

6. What are some "best practices" that you plan to carry forward, or could benefit other districts with similar district attributes or goals?

- Working in partnership to identify common interests and to utilize the respective strengths of District partners to achieve shared goals, to improve artistic experiences for our community.

7. What local challenges do you face in achieving your goals for economic development, district expansion, cultural retention, artist/arts organization support?

San Rafael is facing several unique challenges. Like many California cities, San Rafael is working to support community members experiencing homelessness, and is developing a housing element that will address high cost of space and supporting the needs of a community that is expecting to increase in population by nearly 10,000 residents by 2040.

The District struggles to draw people to the downtown area due to perceived and real challenges such as high traffic, unsightly vacant storefronts, and limited parking. Artists are challenged by the high cost of space for arts and culture activities and housing. Additionally, lack of significant funds for arts and cultural activities limits the District's ability to strategically support improvements in these areas.

HUMAN RESOURCES:

1. How is your cultural district partnership managed?

- a. This partnership is committee-based, with various representatives from each partner organization contributing staff time to District activities, operations, and planning. In addition, the partnership has established a quarterly committee meeting schedule. At these meetings, members of the initial partnership are encouraged to contribute, but also representatives from the myriad other organizations and businesses in the cultural asset inventory are invited to participate.

2. Does your district have a designated, funded staff person?

- a. No - At the moment, our District does not have any paid or volunteer staff. DSRAD Partners have developed a steering committee whose members work collaboratively to manage District operations. However, the Steering Committee has identified that additional staff resources would be greatly beneficial to achieving goals and objectives.
 - b. At the moment no funding has been identified for this role.
- 3. What else would have been helpful support when you were newly designated?**
- a. Identifying and receiving ongoing funding to support a leadership position or consultant to assist the District in the development of a strategic plan would have been extremely valuable. While there are a lot of opportunities for partnership and collaboration, one of the areas our District has struggled in is finding capacity to pursue those opportunities.
- 4. How prepared/likely is your district to serve in a mentorship role for new districts?**
- a. DSRAD would be happy to share their experiences with new districts and does have good insight into some of the initial successes and challenges new districts may face. That said, at the moment, the District has limited resources to allocate towards formalizing mentorship roles. However, the steering committee is willing to share our experiences with new districts and support this effort in partnership.
- 5. Please list the name and contact information of your Cultural District's designated representative for CAC communication. (All information will be sent to this representative to be distributed to the entire partnership.)**
- a. At the moment, please list Craig Veramay as the primary contact for the partnership. We are evaluating the best structure for the District moving forward, and we may update this contact at a future date.

Craig Veramay, Assistant Library & Recreation Director
City of San Rafael
E: Craig.veramay@cityofsanrafael.org
P: (415) 485-3340
618 B Street
San Rafael, CA 94901