

# Morongo Basin Strategic Plan for Culture and the Arts

## Strategic Plan

*Economic and Community Development Through Arts and Culture*

July 2018

Commissioned by the County of San Bernardino Board of Supervisors and managed by  
the Land Use Services Department  
In collaboration with the communities of Morongo Basin

Consultants

The Cultural Planning Group  
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## Introduction

In summer 2017, San Bernardino County's Land Use Services Department commissioned the creation of this Morongo Basin Strategic Plan for Culture and the Arts. The project is grounded in the extraordinary artistic and cultural community that has developed in the region over the past twenty or more years, and which community leaders believe is now facing an unprecedented opportunity for a great step forward in its evolution.

The purpose of the strategic plan is to advance the culture and arts of the communities of Morongo Basin, while strengthening the economic impact of these treasured resources. Planning focused on identifying the goals of the artistic and cultural people and organizations in the communities of Morongo Valley, Pioneertown, Yucca Valley, Yucca Mesa, Flamingo Heights, Landers, Joshua Tree, Twentynine Palms and Wonder Valley. Planning encompassed a full range of artists and artistic work present in the region. Artists include the visual artists, musicians, theater artists, dancers, writers, media artists, designers, arts entrepreneurs, arts educators, technicians and other production people, and more.

A Communities Committee guided development of this plan. It is composed of 20 leaders representing the diversity of the region, in several different dimensions. Diversity means representation from the demographic and cultural diversity of the people in Morongo Basin's communities. Diversity also means geographic representation as well as representation from the arts, education, business, local government, military, National Park and other sectors. The diversity of the group is an essential way of informing the plan and of devising strategies rooted in the region's communities. The Communities Committee was assisted by a team of consultants and supported by the County staff members.

The plan is informed by community engagement and supplementary research conducted between September 2017 and April 2018. A total of more than 500 people in the region participated directly in planning. Engagement and research activities included:

- Work sessions of the Communities Committee and sub-committees, or Strategy Teams, which included additional community members
- Stakeholder interviews and discussion groups
- Public community activities and discussions, including the Joshua Tree Farmers Market, Saturday Art Walk, Beatnik Lounge and Palms Restaurant
- Community survey, conducted online and via intercepts at locations throughout Morongo Basin

- Inventory and mapping of arts and cultural assets
- Market study
- Existing conditions analysis
- SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats)
- Case studies of organizations and programs relevant to the strategic plan
- Research into potential funding sources
- Review of relevant plans and studies

A key characteristic of this strategic plan is that the community will be the lead in its implementation. This aligns with the practice of the Land Use Services Department, which has assisted in the development of many local community plans, created by community members. These are designed for local stakeholders to take charge of issues of immediate importance, within the overall framework of the County's planning.

One objective of this strategic plan is to build capacity for Morongo Basin's arts community and its partners to take the next steps in cultural development for themselves and their communities. It is envisioned this Morongo Basin Strategic Plan for Culture and the Arts will serve as an exemplar and motivation for other arts communities in the County to assume leadership for their cultural development.

# Community Context and Existing Conditions

Morongo Basin is a unique and special region, exhibited through the arts, the environment, the distinct culture, and through its residents. It is an extraordinarily rich artistic environment facing distinct challenges in the midst of rapid change. This strategic plan is grounded in the current conditions of the region, its needs and opportunities, its shifting economic realities, its heritage, and its natural bounty.

## Background

The Morongo Basin of San Bernardino County is named after the larger drainage basin that lies within the Mojave Desert and the High Desert regions of Southern California's Inland Empire. It stretches approximately 1,000 square miles from the Little San Bernardino Mountains north of Interstate 10 on the south and Interstate 40 on the north, and lies directly east of the County's principal city, San Bernardino. The boundaries of this plan cover approximately 720 square miles and include the communities of Morongo Valley, Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree, Landers, Pioneertown, Flamingo Heights, Yucca Mesa, Twentynine Palms, and Wonder Valley. It is also the home of the Twentynine Palms Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC) and the northern portions, including the headquarters of, Joshua Tree National Park.

For the purposes of this context summary, Morongo Basin is defined as closely as possible to the geographic boundaries provided by San Bernardino County for this planning effort. It includes 40 U.S. Census block groups<sup>1</sup>. The population within these boundaries is estimated to be 73,475 in 69,017 households, with 74% identifying as White, 6% as African American or Black, 6% American Indian/Asian/Pacific Islander, and 14% as multi-racial. 25% identify their ethnicity as Hispanic. The region's population is defined in part by disparity – about 30% of households have annual incomes below \$25,000 while about 15% have incomes greater than \$100,000. Similarly, fewer than 20% of the adult population has a college degree. There are a number of retirees in the Morongo Basin including 1,300 military retirees, and many “weekenders” who own second homes in the region.<sup>2</sup>

Morongo Basin is the home of the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians, descendants of the Chemehuevi. In addition to a larger reservation in Riverside County, the tribe has a 402-acre reservation near the City of Twentynine Palms, established in 1895. In 2014, the tribe opened the Tortoise Rock Casino in Twentynine Palms. The

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<sup>1</sup> *Morongo Basin Market Demand Study (2018)*

<sup>2</sup> *MCAGCC Economic Impact Study (2015)*

tribe supports cultural education programs and provides annual funding support to community groups, including arts and cultural organizations.<sup>3</sup>

Also located in the Morongo Basin is the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC). It is currently home to one of the largest military training areas in the nation and is the largest employer in Morongo Basin, and one of the largest employers in San Bernardino County. The installation is geographically large, with a total area of 972 square miles, while within that area, the base itself is about 1.4 square miles. The base has a military and civilian population of approximately 12,500 active duty, 24,000 family members, and another 21,000 DoD/Contractors.<sup>4</sup> MCAGCC has significant economic impact on Morongo Basin supporting approximately 24,300 jobs in Morongo Basin, equal to 77% of the estimated total Morongo Basin employment.<sup>5</sup>

Joshua Tree National Park is located on the southern edge of Morongo Basin. Two main entry points to the Park are in Joshua Tree and Twentynine Palms. While a National Monument since 1936, it was established as a National Park in 1994 and encompasses a land area of 1,235 square miles. The Park is named for Joshua trees (*Yucca brevifolia*), native to the area. The Park's visitorship recently doubled to more than 3 million visitors annually, coinciding with the 2016 National Park centennial and expanded marketing efforts. During interviews with Park staff, they acknowledged it lacks the current capacity to handle the increased traffic and other impacts of increased visitorship.

Joshua Tree National Park staff remind us that the National Park Service was founded in 1916, in part based on the work of artists whose paintings and photographs helped promote the natural beauty of the parks and bolstered public opinion in favor of establishing parks. In recent years, the Park has supported arts programming, through partnerships with associated organizations: the Joshua Tree National Park Association helps produce an annual Arts Festival in April and is hosted at the National Park's Headquarters in Twentynine Palms; the Desert Institute is a part of the Association and offers a rich lineup of educational and art-related public programs in the park for a fee. The Joshua Tree National Park Council for the Arts organizes an annual Juried Show and Art Expo each September and is hosted at the 29 Palms Gallery and 29 Palms Inn. Additionally, through a grant-funded arts initiative - the Joshua Tree Art Innovation Laboratory (JT Lab) - the Park has been exploring ways the creative community can support the park service's mission of preservation and engagement and help solve problems using more creative approaches. The Park has a long-standing Artist-In-Residence program that is currently being restructured, and, more recently, convenes

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.29palmstribes.org>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil/MOS/f?p=MI:CONTENT:0::::P4\\_INST\\_ID,P4\\_CONTENT\\_TITLE,P4\\_CONTENT\\_EKMT\\_ID,P4\\_CONTENT\\_DIRECTORY:790,Installation%20Overview,30.90.30.30.0.0.0.0,1](http://www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil/MOS/f?p=MI:CONTENT:0::::P4_INST_ID,P4_CONTENT_TITLE,P4_CONTENT_EKMT_ID,P4_CONTENT_DIRECTORY:790,Installation%20Overview,30.90.30.30.0.0.0.0,1)

<sup>5</sup> MCAGCC Economic Impact Study

local artists to build a sense of community at a weekly park program - Artists' Tea. It is continuing to develop a local Volunteer Artist Program to support interpretive programming in the park.

The economy of Morongo Basin is what might be expected for a largely rural, isolated area. There is a small corporate presence, including some discount retailers. Tourism, Indian enterprise, and MCAGCC are major employers in the region. There are limited hotel facilities, compared to the number of tourists, and a demand for additional capacity so tourist spending is not lost to the Coachella Valley. Most eating establishments are chain restaurants, with a limited choice of independent restaurants. Workforce development, job creation and visitor “capture” – enticing visitors to remain and stay overnight in Morongo Basin communities – are important economic development objectives. Unemployment in the civilian labor force over age 16 is 6%, nearly 50% higher than the California average of 4%. Roughly 45% of the population over age 16 are not in the labor force (in part due to the large retired population). In Morongo Basin, 48% of the housing units are owner occupied, 36% are renter occupied and 16% are vacant.<sup>6</sup>

## State of the Arts

Morongo Basin is a place of inspiration. It has long been a destination for artists, particularly painters, photographers, sculptors and musicians. However, in more recent years, the artist population has greatly diversified to include all disciplines - performing, literary, design, media, production, multi-disciplinary, and more. Artists often experience a linkage with the austere, beautiful landscape and the isolation from urban life, and draw creative motivation from the qualities of the place.

Artists in the region are described as independent and self-sufficient. Cited as a factor of this in-migration of creative individuals, is the availability of relatively inexpensive real estate. Evidence of their presence is readily visible – in the sculpture along the highways, at artist studios, in the recording studios, and at arts and cultural festivals and events.

The arts ecology of Morongo Basin is described by many planning process participants as fragmented - lacking systems of communication and coordination among artists and cultural organizations. No central agency has emerged to take responsibility for coordinating arts and cultural development in the region, although there are a number of organizations that seek to fill a portion of this need. The arts community is characterized as proudly independent, underground, and at times, resistant to working within formal structures.

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<sup>6</sup> *Morongo Basin Market Demand Study (2018)*



## Individual Artists

As noted above, artists in Morongo Basin are self-reliant and often do not depend upon traditional systems of support. Focused on their individual careers, coupled with the geographic separation in the region, some artists cite that they experience isolation and a lack of community connection. Many artists are successful but may not derive a substantial portion of their income from local sales or gigs; many rely on sales or performance opportunities from outside the region to support their work. In the community survey, artists rank exhibition, performance, and/or sales opportunities as the most important issue. This corresponds with other issues ranked as important including live/work studios, and professional development for artists to be successful in their careers. Like artists everywhere, many must subsidize their art-making through outside employment, although few well-paying jobs are available in the Morongo Basin area.

While this environment can be conducive for independent artists – visual artists, writers and musicians – it is less so for other performing artists – as stated by dancers and theater professionals. This reflects the need for performing artists to work within an institutional framework less available in the region.

The survey identified the critical need for artists' housing, live-work spaces and studios, and the County should explore zoning that encourages artist live-work and studio spaces. Real estate prices are rising and the conversion of homes and other spaces to short-term rentals through Airbnb and VRBO has taken many properties off the market that may otherwise be available to artists.

While Morongo Basin's environment is arts-rich, there is a lack of support systems for artists. There are a number of galleries, although few have strong sales and the local market for art sales is limited. There has been expressed need for more and higher quality galleries. Morongo Basin shows limited potential for growth in arts participation, although addressing barriers faced by many living in Morongo Basin and providing better connections to the abundant arts opportunities may increase this potential. The larger regional market (Coachella Valley, Bear Valley, and the Victorville Area) shows stronger potential for growth.<sup>7</sup>

There are several artist residencies, including BoxoPROJECTS, Joshua Tree Highlands Artist Residency and the Harrison House Music, Arts and Ecology. Joshua Tree Second Saturdays and Highway 62 Open Studio Art Tours provide some visibility and sales, although not enough for a livelihood. Perhaps the most visible marketing program, the Highway 62 Open Studio Art Tours is in its 16<sup>th</sup> year and provides a self-guided tour of 80+ artist studios in the area. Few grants for individual artists are available in the region.

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<sup>7</sup> *Morongo Basin Market Demand Study (2018)*

For musicians, an active live music scene exists at establishments such as 29 Palms Inn, Landers Brew, Pappy + Harriet's in Pioneertown, Palms Restaurant in Wonder Valley, other small-scale commercial venues, and local music festivals. The Joshua Tree Music Festival happens twice annually and there are additional music festivals at the Joshua Tree Retreat Center.

Through discussions and the survey, artists expressed a desire for a new cultural center and maker space with well-designed performance space, artist work spaces, exhibition spaces, and community spaces. 82% of artists and 66% of non-artists think the development of this type of center is important to Morongo Basin. Additionally, the center would be a visible focal point for visitors, and a place for the community to better connect with artists.

Some organizations exist to support individual artists. For example, Morongo Basin Cultural Arts Council has a mission *“to inspire and enliven the community through the arts and to enhance the cultural and economic health of the region.”* They operate Gallery 62 yet remain volunteer-based and operate on a limited budget. They do provide four additional exhibition venues, including the 29 Palms Inn and Restaurant, the Joshua Tree Library, Los Palmas Mexican Cuisine, and Pie for the People Pizzeria.

High Desert Test Sites is the best known contemporary art program in the region offering periodic events featuring artist installations and performances, regular programs including a desert book club and desert cooking club, workshops, solo projects and publications. Dating to 1947, the Hi-Desert Cultural Center is a multi-faceted organization that operates several venues and recently opened the largest local art exhibition space which also includes technical and performance training facilities.

The Town of Yucca Valley provides several opportunities for artists. The Town hosts two annual fairs where more than 100 artists sell their work to the community – the Earth Day Celebration and the Holiday Craft Fair. It supports local artists to provide arts classes at the Community Center. The Town's Hi-Desert Nature Museum hosts an annual Reduce, Reuse, Recycle exhibit that features local artists' works. The City of Twentynine Palms' Public Art Advisory Committee oversees public art installations, supports Youth and the Arts projects in the community, and sponsors Art in Public Places exhibitions.

## Arts and Cultural Organizations

Morongo Basin boasts a number of high quality arts and cultural organizations. Still, the region is a challenging environment for these nonprofit organizations. During interviews and discussions, many described their organizations as being in “survival mode.” Most are volunteer managed and operated with few paid staff. The region offers limited sources of ongoing financial support; there is little or no public funding available, and corporate and foundation support is scarce. Most organizations operate without

significant operating revenue or reserves. Many are subsidized by their founders or a relatively small number of members and donors. With some exceptions, their exhibition or performance spaces are inadequate for their artistic needs. Since organizations are focused first on their own programming and funding, there is relatively little capacity for cooperation and collaboration among these groups. While they are willing, there are few instances of coordinated programming or cross-fertilization.

There is an expressed need for technical assistance to allow for the development of these organizations. Being largely volunteer-led and -managed, they generally do not have the requisite skills in critical areas, such as marketing and financial systems. Lack of this expertise is reported to hinder their growth and organizational development.

There is a compelling need for branding and marketing of Morongo Basin as an arts destination. Even though 3 million people visit Joshua Tree National Park each year, few are captured for the arts. Lack of marketing and a comprehensive guide to arts and entertainment makes this engagement difficult. There are some online and print calendars and guides, but each has limited reach. Local radio station KCDZ 107.7 publicizes arts events but this serves more local residents than visitors. In addition, local arts groups have limited resources for marketing and generally lack professional marketing capacity within their organizations.

As identified through discussions and interviews, there is a significant lack of connection between the artists' community and the general resident population. Residents who may have latent interest in the arts for themselves and their families are struggling with barriers such as family and work commitments, costs, and not knowing what is available to them in the artist community.

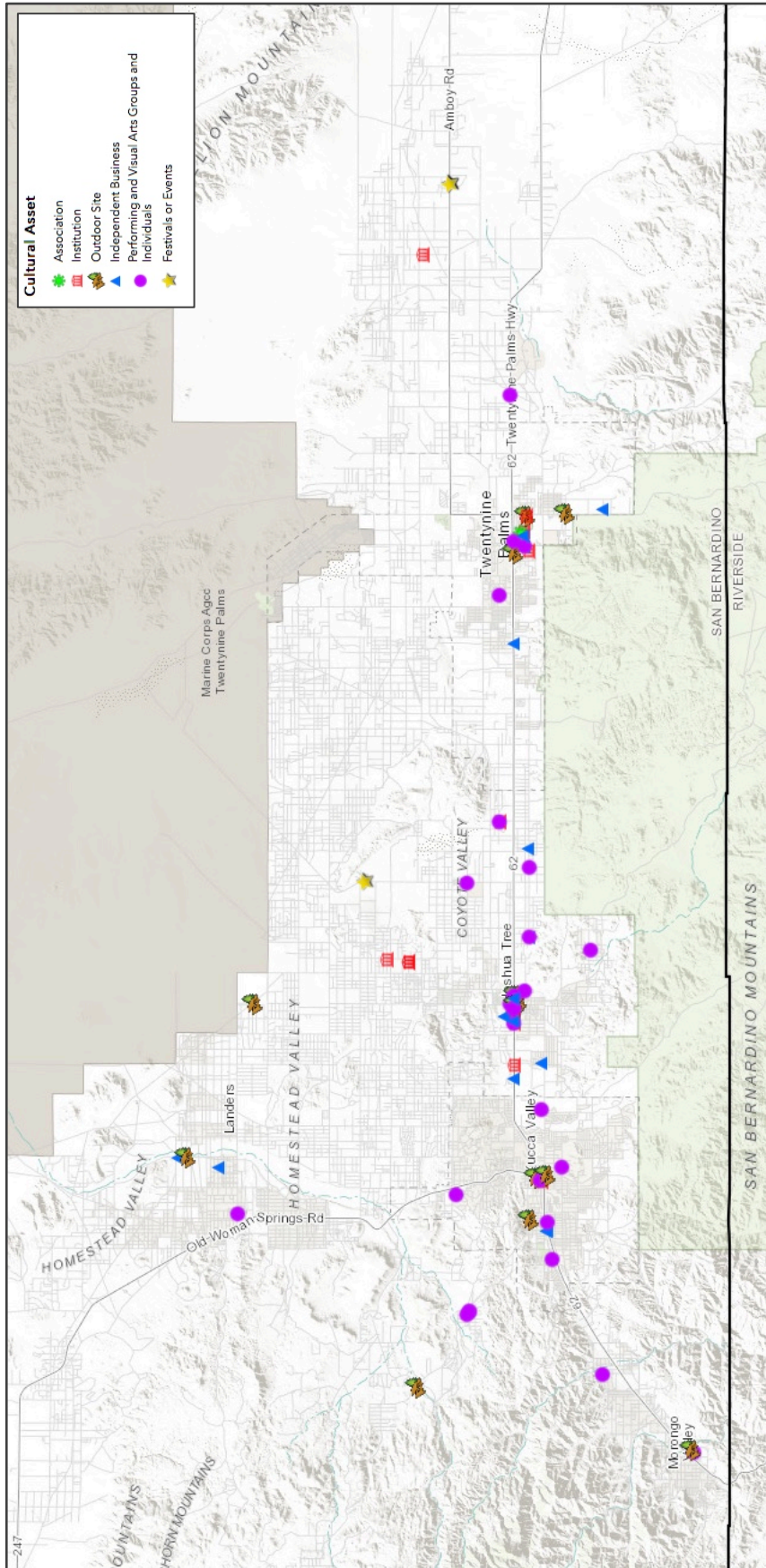
## Morongo Basin's Cultural Ecosystem

Despite the challenges described in the Existing Conditions section, this plan arose because Morongo Basin has an extraordinarily rich arts and cultural ecosystem found throughout the region's nine communities. To better understand the nature of this arts community and its potential, the planning team met extensively with artists and arts organizations of all disciplines to discuss their observations and priorities. The team compiled an inventory and map of more than 80 arts and cultural organizations, art works, artist gathering places, festivals, events, museums, schools, studios, galleries, ateliers, theaters, music venues, arts businesses, and more. The list was developed from existing databases, contributions from Communities Committee members and other stakeholders, and suggestions from the survey. This list is certainly incomplete and will be updated as people and organizations ask to be listed. Reflecting the character of the region, some cultural assets prefer to not be listed and remain low profile (they are left off this list and map). The online map is below and available on Arts Connection's website: [Cultural Asset Map](#).

This cultural ecosystem has several defining characteristics:

- First, by any measure, the region has a large and diverse collection of cultural assets. Especially for a rural area, the community of organizations, venues, art works, events, and more is numerous. Moreover, this community is growing. In recent years, many new artists and residents have moved into the area. The perception is real that Morongo Basin is an arts destination and is a distinctly magnetic place for creativity. This underscores the opportunity to leverage greater participation by visitors, especially the cultural tourist.
- Second, the region's geography – rural and dispersed – impacts the nature of the arts community. People and places are spread out across an enormous land area separated by long driving distances. And each community is small yet highly concentrated, so that arts venues and gathering places have a stronger presence than in a larger urban area. For many, this factor, coupled with the natural beauty of the desert, adds cachet to the experience of visiting the region.
- Third, the arts community is diverse. There is a strong backbone of the visual arts but also robust representation of performing artists, arts businesses (arts retail, recording studios, artist-friendly cafes, performance venues, etc.), media artists, writers and other disciplines. There is truly something for almost any artistic interest and taste.

- Lastly, the arts are everywhere in the region. The map shows that there are concentrations in the three towns – Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree and Twentynine Palms. But it also illustrates that each community, no matter how small or far, has cultural assets. It is worth noting again that some artists chose to not have their arts places included on the map, to preserve some essential quality of their artistic experience from over-exposure.



## Morongo Basin Cultural Assets

29 Palms Art Gallery	Harmony Inn	Pappy & Harriet's Pioneertown Palace
29 Palms Creative Center and Gallery	Harrison House Music and Arts Concerts and Events	Pioneertown Preserve
29 Palms Historical Society and Museum	Hi-Desert Cultural Center	Pioneertown Wild West Theatre
29 Palms Inn	Hi-Desert Fringe Festival	Project Sheba/Thought Theatre
Art Colony of Morongo Valley	Hi-Desert Nature Museum	Public Arts 29 Palms
Art Queen Gallery and World Famous Crochet Museum	High Desert Test Sites	Rancho De La Luna
ART TRAP	HWY 62 Open Studio Art Tours	Simi Dabah Sculptures
ArtFx & Furnishings	Integratron	Sky Village Market Place
Artist's Tea at Joshua Tree National Park	Joshua Tree Art Gallery (JTAG)	Sky's The Limit
Beatnik Lounge	Joshua Tree Astronomy Arts Theatre	Space Cowboy bookstore
Beauty Bubble Salon and Museum	Joshua Tree Farmers Market	Sunset Cinema
Big Morongo Canyon Preserve	Joshua Tree Highlands Artist Residency	Taylor Junction
Bijoux Theater	Joshua Tree Inn	The Dream Wanderer
BKB Ceramics	Joshua Tree Music Festivals	The Palms Restaurant
BoxoPROJECTS	Joshua Tree National Park	The Roost
Brilliant Dance Academy Recitals	Joshua Tree Retreat Center	The Station
Chuck Caplinger's Desert Art Studio	Joshua Tree Saloon	Theatre 29
Cooper Mountain Mesa Community Center	JT Lab Field Office	Tortoise Rock Casino Live at the Rock
Copper Mountain College	JT Lab Headquarters	Twentynine Palms Community Center
Curate Joshua Tree	Kokopellis Kantina	Wind Walkers Medicine Wheel
Daper Dates & Queer Arts Venue	La Matadora Gallery	Wonder Valley Community Center
Desert Christ Park	Landers Brew Co.	Wonder Valley Experimental Music Festival
Desert Lotus House for Writers	Love Armada	World Famous Crochet Museum
Desert Oracle "The Voice of the Desert" Publication	Luckie Park	Yucca Mesa Community Center
Frontier Café	Mane Street Stampede Wild West Show	Yucca Valley Earth Day Celebration
Furstwurd	Mojave Desert Land Trust (MDLT)	Yucca Valley Gourd Festival
Gallery 62		Yucca Valley Holiday Celebration
Garth's Yurt/Drum Circle	Morongo Basin Cultural Arts Council	Yucca Valley Summer Music Festival
Giant Rock	Noah Purifoy Foundation	Yucca Valley Visual and Performing Arts Center
Glass Outhouse Art Gallery	Oasis of Mara	Zannedelions Boutique
Groves Cabin Theatre	Open Art classes	
Gubler Orchids	Outpost Projects	



# The Plan

## *Economic and Community Development Through Arts and Culture*

This strategic plan is informed by the resources, needs, gaps, and opportunities identified during the planning process. The research results support the purpose of planning, to advance arts and culture in the region and strengthen their economic impact.

The plan is organized around four goals:

**Goal 1: Model and Expand Cultural Equity Practices in Morongo Basin’s Arts and Cultural Community.**

Strategy 1.1.: Adopt an Equity Lens in Implementation of All Recommended Actions of this Plan, Based on the Principle of Inclusion.

**Goal 2: Build the Market for Arts and Culture.**

Strategy 2.1. Advance Artists’ Career and Financial Path to Success Through Small Business Supports.

Strategy 2.2. Provide Affordable Space and Facilities for Artists to Work and to Serve the Community.

**Goal 3: Expand Arts Education for Children and Lifelong Learning in the Arts for Adults.**

Strategy 3.1. Expand Access to K-12 Arts Education.

Strategy 3.2. Expand Access to Preparation for Arts Careers for Young Adults.

Strategy 3.3. Expand Lifelong Learning Opportunities in the Arts.

Strategy 3.4. Provide Communitywide Education about the Role and Value of the Arts.

**Goal 4: Increase the Economic Impact of Visitation to Morongo Basin by Enhancing Tourism Marketing with Arts and Culture.**

Strategy 4.1. Improve Arts Marketing within the Region’s Tourism Marketing Programs.

Strategy 4.2. Produce and Promote Arts Events and Places for Visitors and Locals.



## Goal 1: Model and expand cultural equity practices in Morongo Basin's arts and cultural community.

Morongo Basin is a diverse set of communities and populations. The Communities Committee focused on cultural equity as a core value of the plan and created a definition to guide its work. Cultural equity refers to the inclusion of all communities within Morongo Basin in its arts and cultural life. This includes the following aspects:

- Reaching out to less visible cultures within our community, with the goal of developing long term viability to arts, arts programming and arts education
- Bringing cultural events to a wider audience
- Inclusion of resources that are within the community as well as bringing outside cultural events into the community, referred to as "tapping in" and "bringing in" respectively
- Language diversity
- Outreach to schools and the community college
- Inclusion of cultural events related to race, age, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic level, able-isms and ethnicities
- Providing equitable access to funding

These objectives are critical to providing long term visibility to all communities with regard to arts programming as well as arts education.

Cultural equity is intended as a framework to guide implementation of the entire plan. In fact, equity requires taking deliberate steps to counteract habits and practices that are not inclusive, and to proactively create approaches that can assure greater equity in the region's arts and cultural ecosystem.

### **Strategy 1.1. Adopt an Equity Lens in Implementation of All Recommended Actions of this Plan, Based on the Principle of Inclusion.**

Suggested Actions:

- 1.1.1. **Cultural Equity Festival:** Produce an annual multicultural festival – the working title is Experiencing Community Through Arts. Use festival planning and production as a laboratory for understanding and promoting equity in Morongo Basin, "getting people to the table." There are several potential partnerships, including Joshua Tree National Park (JTNP) Council for the Arts' annual Art Expo, Joshua Tree National Park Association's annual art festival, and JTNP's

planned 2020 new storytelling festival. The Joshua Tree Retreat Center has offered to serve as one venue.

- 1.1.2. **Cultural Competency in Communications:** incorporate culturally competent marketing (multiple languages; community-based communications and promotions; use of print and word of mouth as well as digital channels; inclusion of Indian tribes, etc.) throughout arts marketing efforts for the region. The Marine Corps Base is a potential partner for this work through its Navy Hospital Diversity Committee.
- 1.1.3. **Cultural Equity in Arts Education and Lifelong Learning:** establish equity criteria for diversity and access throughout arts education programming. Integrate diverse cultural expressions into curricula. Prioritize programming for students and adults with the least access. Participate in teacher and artist training to assure integration of equity principles into arts education programming in the region.

## Goal 2: Build the Market for Arts and Culture.

There is strong potential to increase Morongo Basin's arts market and produce economic growth, leveraging the region's existing concentration of artists, arts organizations, venues and events. This will improve the local economy by providing high wage jobs and developing workforce pathways for adults and young people to forge careers in creative occupations. The recent increase in regional visitation, the growing reputation of the local arts community, and the presence of successful arts businesses, ranging from artist studios to recording studios to festivals, are clear indicators of the market potential.

Artists produce a hidden dividend to a region's economy by contributing to the success of other businesses through creative work such as marketing, product design, and entertainment.

Building an arts market in Morongo Basin is best viewed as building capacity among the artists, organizations and businesses that form the region's creative sector. Artists are best viewed as entrepreneurs, forging their own careers as small businesses. Some are sole proprietors, some incorporate as an arts business, and still others work in the nonprofit sector. Yet they all articulate similar gaps in information and resources to promote their entrepreneurial success. They share a resourceful, do-it-yourself approach to business success, which suggests they can make great use of new assistance. There are already examples of successful self-starting arts businesses in the region. Building the market will require small business supports targeted to artists to accelerate growth.

### **Strategy 2.1. Advance Artists' Career and Financial Path to Success through Small Business Supports.**

While the region is arts-rich, it lacks some of the support infrastructure necessary for business or career success. The arts community, both nonprofit and for-profit, point to specific training, information and other resources that will improve their economic impact and artistic vitality. This assistance will also enhance their capacity to participate in and enrich the tourism marketing strategies in this plan.

Suggested Actions:

- 2.1.1. **Business Training for the Arts:** provide professional practices training for artists in topics such as marketing, financial management, proposal preparation, and contracts. For nonprofit arts and cultural organizations, provide training and services in nonprofit management. The Basin Wide Foundation already provides some technical assistance to area nonprofits and

has expressed interest in providing more training targeted to the region's nonprofit arts and cultural organizations.

- 2.1.2. **Information Resources for the Arts:** provide access to timely information on artists' work opportunities, funding, and other resources relevant to arts careers and management.
- 2.1.3. **Artists' Co-ops:** form and support artists' co-operatives to focus on shared needs, such as grant writing and marketing.
- 2.1.4. **Convening and Networking for the Arts:** improve communications within the arts community through convening around specific topics and networking events to increase ongoing connections among people and organizations in the arts community.
- 2.1.5. **Regulatory Assistance for the Arts:** establish a relationship with the Land Use Services Department to address arts-related permitting and zoning issues in the region. Identify, propose and enact regulatory changes to better accommodate the unique arts uses of the region, in support of the goals of this plan. In particular, develop artists live-work zoning provisions for the County areas, Town of Yucca Valley and City of Twentynine Palms.
- 2.1.6. **Annual Arts Conference:** continue to conduct an annual arts community conference in the region. Continue to provide sessions for information sharing, networking and technical assistance through the conference. Include sessions focusing on cultural equity to "bring people to the table" and develop definitions and policy regarding equity for the region.
- 2.1.7. **Online Arts Resource Directory:** develop an online resource directory to serve as an "arts hub" for the region and to support implementation of several areas of this plan, including: information resources for artists and arts organizations (Action 2.1.2); a directory of arts education programs and teaching artists in the region (Action 3.1.7.); and a directory of artists and arts organizations in the region (Actions 4.1.3 and 4.1.4.).

## **Strategy 2.2. Provide Affordable Space and Facilities for Artists to Work and to Serve the Community.**

Artists describe a range of challenges related to affordable spaces for their work. While the region has long been attractive to artists because of its relatively low cost of living, this has changed in recent years. Housing, studio and other arts spaces are becoming less available and less affordable. In addition, some of the recommended actions of this plan will require or be supported by well-designed spaces ideally located to best equip the arts community's service to the community. It is important to acknowledge that recommended actions for facilities are best viewed as ambitious and long-term

objectives and will require sustained effort to fulfill. Accordingly, one action (2.2.2.) is intended as a shorter-term objective.

Suggested Actions:

- 2.2.1. **Arts Center**: develop an “arts hub” for the region to fill a range of arts and educational needs and provide a collective space for artists and arts organizations. This is the ambitious and long-term objective, a centrally located facility including space for retail sales, a marketing/information center, classrooms, studios, other artists working spaces (e.g., recording, rehearsal, exhibition), meeting/gathering, events/performances, tool sharing, administrative offices, and a cafe. In addition to meeting the needs of the arts community, an arts center can serve as an important connecting point with the community for arts education, youth employment training, and public programming. Copper Mountain College is including an off-campus cultural arts center as part of its facilities master plan and, together with the Copper Mountain College Foundation, has expressed interest in a potential partnership to develop this space.
- 2.2.2. **Temporary and Pop-up Arts Spaces**: as a first step towards the arts center, create pop-up spaces for information and marketing, and for retail sales. Consider a partnership with the Hi-Desert Cultural Center’s new Yucca Valley Visual and Performing Arts Center. Consider a network of existing spaces, such as vacant retail properties, that can fill some of the needs for the arts hub and provide greater local access to educational activities.
- 2.2.3. **Artists’ Live/Work Spaces**: explore development of affordable artists’ live/work spaces through a partnership with a nonprofit developer, such as Art Space, PLACE, or Crisis Housing Solutions. Another long-term objective, this concept could be a multi-use facility partnership that serves arts as well as other sectors. Consider the possibility of a dispersed live/work community connecting existing and new spaces in a virtual mixed-use development. A dispersed approach could reuse existing homes and spaces within a geographic area and link them through wayfinding and programming, to provide a high-desert alternative to traditional artists’ live/work buildings. As an initial step, the County should consider the creation of zoning overlays specifically designed to permit and encourage artist live-work, studios and at home sales or arts and crafts.

### Goal 3: Expand Arts Education for Children and Lifelong Learning in the Arts for Adults.

Arts education means several things in Morongo Basin and this goal encompasses all of them. First, it is arts education for children and young people provided in schools and other educational settings. Despite the artistic richness of Morongo Basin, many young people have little access to arts education. All stakeholders agree providing greater access to arts instruction and experiences is highly desirable. Community leaders, residents, and artists in the region share the understanding that arts education helps students develop 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce skills, including creativity, cooperation and tolerance. Arts education also prepares students for arts careers and employment.

Second, arts education also means providing access to lifelong learning in the arts for adults in the community. In a place as arts-focused as Morongo Basin, there are many adults who seek ongoing professional training, new skills, job training, and amateur opportunities to pursue their artistic interests. This includes the military and veterans' populations. There is ample research showing the value of a population highly engaged in the arts, in terms of social capital and economic benefit.

Third, there is a need to communicate to the community the role and value of the arts. Not all residents have had the benefit of arts exposure or instruction, and they may not have information that illustrates the value of arts engagement for themselves and their families. Making the arts more visible and accessible to all sectors of the region's population can demonstrate value and provide new opportunities for people to participate in the arts in ways that have meaning for them, whether this is informal – singing in a choir, doing crafts at home, enrolling a child in dance lessons – or with a specific goal in mind – job training for arts employment, an internship at an arts business.

The Morongo Basin Unified School District values and supports arts education in multiple forms. The District offers elective arts instruction at the high school level and funds after school programs for Title 1 students at some schools. The District has developed, and is planning to expand, an arts curriculum within its Career Technical and Adult Education Program preparing students for creative sector jobs. Still, some schools face barriers to providing arts instruction for all students. Barriers include competing educational priorities, lack of available instructional time, and limited financial resources. Students' access to arts instruction is uneven and often dependent on the efforts of individual teachers or administrators. This results in instructional gaps and the lack of pathways for students to sequentially develop their skills.

A clear opportunity exists to make greater use of the region's extraordinary arts community to expand arts learning opportunities for all. Artists and arts organizations already provide arts instruction to children through a range of programs in schools and

in community settings. What's missing is a basin-wide commitment, building on the efforts of individual artists and organizations, to provide meaningful access to all students and a framework to support expanded programs. A similar approach can provide access to arts offerings for adults.

### **Strategy 3.1. Expand Access to K-12 Arts Education.**

The arts community as well as the community at large cite the specific importance of increasing access for students in grades K-12 at school sites as well as in community venues. This is viewed in part as an equity issue, since the people most likely to participate in and benefit from the arts are those that are engaged at an early age. Children from low income families, and communities of color, are less likely to receive arts instruction in their schools.

#### **Suggested Actions:**

- 3.1.1. **Artists in the Schools Program:** provide arts education directly in schools through artist-in-residencies, assemblies and after school instruction. Form partnerships with schools, teaching artists and arts organizations identified through the online arts resource directory (Action 1.1.7.). Draw on school site funds, PTAs and grants to provide the needed resources.
- 3.1.2. **Arts Education Coordinator:** create a regional staff position to coordinate arts education programming among schools, arts organizations, teaching artists, community-based organizations and others. Consider a position shared by the school district and a nonprofit organization, one that serves schools as well as community-based programming. Create programming matches and seek funding and other resources to support arts education.
- 3.1.3. **Artists/Arts Education in Community Settings:** Provide arts education opportunities for children, youth and adults in community centers, libraries, studios, etc. Create ways to serve home-school students.
- 3.1.4. **Teacher Training:** train teachers to use the arts in their curricula. The school district provides professional development to teachers and can incorporate this training through its existing program. The California Arts Program (TCAP), based at California State University, San Bernardino, is another potential partner.
- 3.1.5. **Artist Training:** train artists to teach arts in school settings. The school district can partner with another organization to provide this training for artists. The California Arts Program (TCAP), based at California State University, San Bernardino, is a potential partner.

- 3.1.6. **Marketing Arts Education to the Community:** incorporate arts education programs and opportunities for the community in the marketing program in Goal 3. Include classes, education performances and other opportunities in the event calendar to help parents and others locate learning opportunities for their children and themselves.
- 3.1.7. **Arts Education Directory:** develop an online directory of arts education programs and opportunities in the region, offered by arts organizations, artists, schools, businesses, venues and events. Include a roster of teaching artists who are available to provide arts education programming.

See also:

- 1.1.3. Cultural Equity in Arts Education and Lifelong Learning

### **Strategy 3.2. Expand Access to Preparation for Arts Careers for Young Adults.**

In addition to K-12 arts instruction for all students, arts education for the region should include access to training directed at professional careers in the arts, including in both the nonprofit and for-profit arts sectors. This should focus on young adults – teens and college-age students, as well as adult learners seeking professional training. There are clear opportunities to align arts job training with federal workforce development programs administered by the County.

Suggested Actions:

- 3.2.1. **Arts Internships and Other Work Opportunities:** identify and facilitate opportunities for youth and adult internships at nonprofit arts organizations and arts businesses in the region. Internships can focus on artistic, production, administrative, or business skills in the arts sector, including both nonprofit and for-profit types of work. Federal workforce development funding is a potential resource. Potential partners include the local arts organizations, artists, arts businesses, TAY Center, Black Rock High School, other high schools.
- 3.2.2. **Career Tech and Adult Education:** support and promote expansion of the Academy of College and Career Excellence (AC<sup>2</sup>E), which includes an arts curriculum within its overall career technical and adult education program. Led by Morongo Basin Unified School District and Copper Mountain College, the curriculum currently includes culinary arts and soon will include theater production. AC<sup>2</sup>E is geared for high school students and other young adults, as well as older adult learners.



### **Strategy 3.3. Expand Lifelong Learning Opportunities in the Arts.**

Lifelong arts learning refers to arts engagement of a broad range. It means amateur or informal participation, such as studying a musical instrument, singing in a choir, writing stories or poems, or taking a life drawing class. It can mean expanding one's professional skills through a skill-share with another artist or taking a professional class. It can mean community/group activity, such as neighborhood mural project or community theater. All of this activity builds civic value, such as developing group cohesion, beautifying the community, and developing new employment skills with economic value. Artists already provide many ways for residents of all ages to engage in lifelong learning. What's needed is better promotion, infrastructure and access. Many of the suggested actions in the first two strategies can be adapted to address the needs of adult learners.

Suggested Action:

- 3.3.1. **Adapt Arts Education Infrastructure, Marketing and Programming for Lifelong Learners**: Use an adult-learner lens in implementing recommended actions for arts education. There are many opportunities to leverage opportunities for children to be suited to adults as well.

See also:

- 3.1.3. Artists/Arts Education in Community Settings
- 3.1.6. Marketing Arts Education to the Community
- 3.1.7. Arts Education Directory
- 3.2.1. Arts Internships and Other Work Opportunities
- 3.2.2. Career Tech and Adult Education

### **Strategy 3.4. Provide Communitywide Education about the Role and Value of the Arts.**

Education and advocacy about the arts is an ongoing need not only for Morongo Basin but also for most communities. Not all residents understand the range of benefits that the arts provide to communities and can learn from targeted communications that articulate those benefits. For example, campaigns that reinforce the value of arts education to a child's development can result in an increase in children's arts participation. Promotion of available career classes in the arts can connect young adults and adults with pathways to arts employment. Greater visibility of the arts in a community generally increases appreciation of the sector in the larger civic arena. Morongo Basin is now in a position where greater communications can promote greater public awareness about the value of the arts to the region.

Suggested Action:

3.4.1. **Create Strategic Communications about the Role and Value of the Arts:**

Adopt an educational lens in implementing the recommended actions for marketing and promotion. This refers to Arts Education Strategies 2.1. through 2.3., and to Strategy 3.1. for regional and tourism marketing.

## Goal 4: Increase the Economic Impact of Visitation to Morongo Basin by Enhancing Tourism Marketing with Arts and Culture

Morongo Basin has experienced a dramatic increase in visitation, drawn primarily by the Joshua Tree National Park and by the arts scene throughout Morongo Basin. According to Park staff, total visitation has approximately doubled to 3 million in the past four years, spurred by the centennial of the National Park Service generally and in particular by better marketing to the Los Angeles region. This has resulted in increased hotel stays and related spending in Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree and Twentynine Palms.

Despite this influx of people to the region, tourism marketing stakeholders and the arts community recognize a missed opportunity. Many visitors have an interest in arts and culture but have few ways to learn about and access the artistic experiences of the region. They often pass through Morongo Basin communities, treating them as entryways to the park. The missed opportunities include increased time spent in the community, more local spending, and greater participation in the local arts scene.

Tourism stakeholders want to grow visitation, especially during the low season of July through October. They agree arts and culture are a draw for many visitors and there is a strong potential to leverage arts events and places through tourism marketing. They also acknowledge infrastructure limitations in Morongo Basin communities and the Park itself – too few hotel rooms, too few upscale restaurants or restaurant choices, and lack of sufficient Park capacity to handle the increased visitorship.

Morongo Basin's arts community seeks to grow public participation, boost sales and raise awareness of the region's unique arts world. Many artists and arts organizations participate in tourism marketing and some actively cultivate an out-of-region audience. However, it is important to acknowledge the concerns of artists and other residents about the ongoing impacts of increased attention and visitation to the region. Local communities throughout the region are experiencing gentrification that produces rapidly rising real estate prices, increased short-term housing rentals, and a corresponding decrease in affordable living and working spaces. This means the goal of this plan must be specific: to capture more of the spending and participation of the strong existing visitor base, and to target the arts consumer. Visitors should be encouraged to learn about, participate in and spend on arts experiences during their stay and, in some cases, to visit the region specifically for arts and culture.

Park staff actively seek a better partnership with the region's arts community to improve marketing and to better promote the region's arts offerings to visitors. The Park has policy limitations on promoting commercial interests. However, it has a robust marketing program, including effective social media, which can potentially benefit from better and more consistent content provided by the region's arts community. This can

focus on publicizing available opportunities as well as generating new offerings designed to attract visitors.

**Strategy 4.1. Improve Arts Marketing within the Region’s Tourism Marketing Programs.**

The key idea is making greater use of arts and culture to support tourism marketing for the region, partnering with existing tourism efforts. The tourism marketing partners include: Joshua Tree Gateway Communities, San Bernardino County Tourism (California’s Outdoor Playground), Twentynine Palms TBID (Tourism Business Improvement District), Joshua Tree National Park, the regional arts community, Marine Corps Base (MCAGCC), chambers of commerce, and others. In this partnership, the regional arts community is providing its information, contacts and events to enrich existing marketing. The arts community commits to providing information and partnering in promotional efforts, in exchange for stronger marketing by existing tourism campaigns on its behalf.

Suggested Actions:

- 4.1.1. **Vision and Branding**: develop an arts vision and brand for the region to serve as the basis for arts marketing efforts.
- 4.1.2. **Event Calendar**: develop an online event calendar to support arts marketing, based on or partnering with existing calendars, such as the Joshua Tree Visitors’ Guide. Supplement with social media and print elements, acknowledging the different ways people access information. Assure that the calendar is up-to-date and useable for residents as well as visitors.
- 4.1.3. **Artists Directory**: develop an online directory of artists in the region. The directory will double as a resource for residents and the arts community, as well as visitors.
- 4.1.4. **Arts Organization Directory**: develop an online directory of arts organizations, venues and places in the region, building on the asset inventory developed for this plan. The directory will double as a resource for residents and the arts community, as well as visitors.
- 4.1.5. **Mobile App**: develop a mobile app that incorporates the calendar and directories. This will double as resource for residents as well as visitors.

See also:

- 1.1.2. Cultural Competency in Communications

**Strategy 4.2. Produce and Promote Arts Events and Places for Visitors and Residents.**

The region is home to an extraordinary range of existing arts events and places that can enhance visitation. There is an opportunity to produce new events or augment existing events through partnerships and promotion to attract visitors to the region's arts and culture. The same events and places can also increase local participation.

Suggested Actions:

- 4.2.1. **Highway 62 Open Studios Tour:** Increase support for and promotion of this existing successful event. Improve coordination with tourism marketing programs.
- 4.2.2. **Art Fair Market:** Produce a new annual art market focusing on art sales and artists' interaction with the public.
- 4.2.3. **Augmentation and Coordination of Existing Events:** Support and augment existing successful festivals/events in the region. Include Marine Corps Base (MCAGCC) events and programs.

See also:

- 1.1.1. Cultural Equity Festival (Experiencing Community Through Arts)

## Financial Resources

This section presents a list of potential financial and partnership resources to support implementation of the plan. In addition, there is an accompanying white paper with additional funding sources. Each potential source will require follow-up and cultivation by members of the lead organization selected or created by the community (see next section, Lead Organization for Implementation of the Plan).

- **Community Foundation:** the foundation expressed general willingness to accept a proposal to fund some element of implementation, with the proviso that matching funds from the County would be a prerequisite. Capacity building is one of their areas of interest and arts education is also a possibility.
- **Regional Funders Alliance:** the foundation also offered to present the strategic plan to this alliance of corporations and foundations in the Inland Empire region to explore their interest in funding some element of implementation. A possibility for arts education and perhaps economic development?
- **Marketing funding:** there is an opportunity to align with County and other marketing programs and budgets. There are many existing marketing programs, e.g., Visit 29 Palms, Desert Regional Tourism Agency (DRTA)-Joshua Tree Gateway Communities, Coachella Valley Palm Springs Visitors Bureau, local Chambers (Yucca Valley, 29 Palms, JT), JT National Park. We recommend convening these potential partners to explore how they can better incorporate arts into their ongoing marketing, and what additional resources might be needed.
- **County and Federal workforce development budgets:** there is a potential to align with existing workforce funding for student internships and perhaps other arts education programs. There are certain sectors defined as eligible for funding, including construction, manufacturing, transportation and utilities, healthcare, hospitality, and education. There are arts/creative sector jobs that can be included within each of these sectors.
- **Ongoing public arts revenue source:** this is a shared goal for the arts community in the region and, in other communities where dedicated arts revenues have been established, it has provided greater sustainability for the arts accompanied by multiple community and economic benefits. To establish an ongoing public funding source would require a major and sustained advocacy campaign, and one that probably would need to be supported by a collaboration of communities, cities and organizations countywide.

- California Arts Council: the CAC has greatly expanded the scope of their funding opportunities. There are multiple opportunities for smaller grant proposals.
- National Endowment for the Arts: there are several relevant programs for these highly competitive awards.
- Morongo Basin Unified School District: MBUSD can partner in grant applications, has offered to help provide teacher training, and can perhaps allocate some of its “local control” funding to arts education.
- PTAs and other school-based groups: PTAs are already funding arts education in some cases. Convening the PTA presidents might be a good way to engage them in the arts education elements of this plan.
- Town of Yucca Valley and City of Twentynine Palms: we have not yet explored what the cities might consider partnering or investing in. Potentials include marketing and sharing the cost of a community/youth arts education staff, in partnership with the School District.
- Individual donors/philanthropists: this is a longer-term but important potential.
- Copper Mountain College and Foundation: as noted, they have expressed interest in exploring shared development of a cultural center off-campus.
- Property owners and developers: they are potential partners or investors for arts facilities/spaces.
- 29 Palms Band of Mission Indians: they describe themselves as a low-profile funder but one that is interested in the local community. They already fund arts education and might be interested in things like the Healing the Planet Through Unity Festival and other equity initiatives.
- Membership dues: the lead organization for implementation can consider a membership program for artists and arts organizations in the region. Probably not a major source of income but increases the network surrounding implementation.

## Lead Organization for Implementation of the Plan

Implementation of the plan requires the leadership of a nonprofit organization, with the support of individuals from the Communities Committee, artists, and additional residents committed to the success of the plan. The lead organization must have several key characteristics:

- Willingness to take responsibility for leading implementation
- Credibility with Morongo Basin communities
- Capacities suited to the tasks required, or the ability to develop new capacities
- Credibility with potential funders
- Ability to partner successfully with other organizations and people (partnerships will be a necessary component of implementing many of the recommended actions)

Joshua Tree Living Arts (JTLA), a nonprofit organization dedicated to “strengthening our community through the arts,” will serve as the lead organization for implementation of this plan. Founded in 1999 as the High Desert Living Arts Center, the organization has in recent years refocused on its current vision: to provide resources and programs that create an economically-viable, sustainable, vibrant, and interconnected living arts community for all generations.

Joshua Tree Living Arts will host the leadership team of the Communities Committee to continue and oversee the work implementing the strategies of the plan. They view leadership as a shared responsibility, coordinating the multiple partnerships, people and organizations needed to accomplish the goals of the plan. JTLA’s executive director will be the lead person, within this shared leadership model. Decision-making will continue to be based on consensus among the leadership team, which was a capacity and strength developed during the planning process. The existing staff and systems of JTLA will be available for use in the work of this plan. These include part-time executive and program staff, financial and reporting systems, fundraising, and grant writing.

Many organizations will be partners with JTLA. For example, Basin Wide Foundation has offered to provide technical assistance services to the nonprofit arts community. Arts Connection, the countywide arts council for San Bernardino County, was a partner in development of this plan and can also serve as a partner for implementation through its website and advocacy programs. Morongo Basin Cultural Arts Council would like to



define a role. There are other organizations, artists and community leaders ready to assist and partner.

## Benefits of the Plan

This plan will require investment on the part of partner organizations, people in the community, local governments, philanthropic foundations, and individual donors. What “return on investment” can they expect from implementation of this plan? There are multiple benefits anticipated in both areas of the plan: economic and community development.

First, the economic benefits. In five successive national studies, Americans for the Arts has demonstrated that “the arts are not a charity, they are an investment.” While arts are valued in and of themselves, they are also an industry with a substantial return on investment. Throughout the nation, the nonprofit arts community generates state and local tax revenues that far exceed their government arts investments. Nonprofit arts venues and events are also significant attractors for visitors, who most often cite the arts event as the main reason for their visit and who spend more than local attendees. Moreover, the US arts and culture industry – nonprofit and commercial – comprises 4.2% of US gross domestic product (GDP), ahead of the construction, transportation, mining and travel industries (source: *Arts and Economic Prosperity*<sup>8</sup>). There is every reason to expect that investing in the marketing recommendations of this plan will yield economic benefits, given the market potential and the proven attractions that already exist in the Morongo Basin. Expansion of arts visitation and attendance in the region is a readily achievable objective, with effective marketing.

Additionally, the arts education and workforce recommendations of the plan can contribute significantly to the preparation of local young people and adults for employment, as well as creative occupations. Creativity is the number one skill employers look for in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce skills, including some arts background in college or high school (source: *Ready to Innovate*<sup>9</sup>).

The community benefits are equally compelling. Artists in the Morongo Basin play multiple roles in the community – art production, performing, educating, recording, retailing, designing and many other activities. Beyond this, artists serve in leadership positions and serve as civic problem-solvers. Often referred to as “social practice,” some artists view their action in the world as a form of artwork. In Joshua Tree National Park, for example, artists have applied “design thinking,” as well as their artistic skills, to solve Park problems, such as reducing unwanted visitor behaviors. Investing in the region’s artists will increase their individual and collective capacity to serve the community. Artists will be better enabled to take leadership roles, to educate young

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/research-studies-publications/arts-economic-prosperity-5>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/legislation-policy/naappd/ready-to-innovate-key-findings>

people currently lacking access to creative skills, to address local government challenges, and to contribute to the social capital of the community.

Lastly, the Morongo Basin has long faced mixed perceptions. While many value the region for its beauty and creative accomplishments, others view the area as rife with social and economic problems. Investing in arts and culture is an excellent way to not only address regional challenges, but also to demonstrate a positive identity to the world.

# Planning Participants

The following 90 people participated directly in planning through interviews and discussion groups. Boldface names are members of the Communities Committee, which was the steering committee for the plan. In addition, 324 people completed the online survey and 35 completed intercept surveys. Dozens more participated through community activities and discussions at venues such as the Joshua Tree Farmers Market, Saturday Art Walk, Beatnik Lounge and Palms Restaurant. A total of more than 500 people contributed to the development of the plan.

Name	Affiliation
Jennie Kish Albrinck	Joshua Tree National Park
<b>Cathy Allen</b>	Copper Mountain College
Jessica Arthur	Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center
Tom Baumgarten	Morongo Unified School District
Kristina Becker	29 Palms Marine Base
Sarah Bliss	Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians
<b>Kevin Bone</b>	Desert Bone Fest
<b>Brad Brimhall</b>	Marine Corps Community Services
Kristen Burkins	Joshua Tree Chamber of Commerce
Vanessa Cabrera	City of Twentynine Palms
Laren Callan	Brilliant Dance Academy
Chuck Caplinger	Chuck Caplinger's Desert Art Studio
Giselle Cashin	
Dawn Clark	Armed Services YMCA
LeeAnn Clarke	Action 29 Palms (The Mural People)
Rhonda Lane Coleman	Art & Artists
Randy Councill	City of Twentynine Palms
Celia Cudiamat	The Community Foundation
Paul Cullum	
<b>Jennifer Cusack</b>	Basin Wide Foundation
Cindy Daigneault	
<b>Gary Daigneault</b>	Theater 29, Z107.7 Radio
<b>Sue Earnest</b>	Town of Yucca Valley
<b>Barnett English</b>	Joshua Tree Music Festival
Thomas Fjallstam	Joshua Tree Vacation Rentals Association
<b>Pat Flanagan</b>	Art in Public Places/Public Arts Advisory Committee (PAAC) City of Twentynine Palms
Meg Foley	Joshua Tree National Park Association
Daniel Foran	Daniel Foran Music/Voice Lessons
Frederick Fulmer	Joshua Tree Highlands Artist Residency
Paul Gattuso	Condor Elementary School

Name	Affiliation
Jill Giegerich	Transition Joshua Tree
Ursula Gilmore	Twentynine Palms Chamber of Commerce
Mark Goodale	Morongo Basin Transit Authority
Steve Gralla	Tortoise Rock Casino
Gretchen Grunt	29 Palms Creative Center & Gallery
Paul Hoffman	Rotary Club of Joshua Tree Foundation, Inc.
Cheryl Hopton	Oasis Elementary School
Raymond Huaute	Morongo Band of Mission Indians
<b>Dr. Miri Hunter</b>	Project Sheba, Hunter and the Wick'd
Shadee Johnson	Morongo Unified School District
Joanne Karl	Integratron
Nancy Karl	
Ed Keesling	Ed Keesling Clayworks, Morongo Basin Cultural Arts Council
<b>Sant Khalsa</b>	Cal State San Bernardino
Casey Kiernan	Joshua Tree Visitors Guide
John King	29 Palms Art Gallery
Elizabeth Kirkland	Valley Star TAY Center
Joshua Klein	Joshua Tree Studio
Jonell Kosa	Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center
<b>Linda Krantz</b>	Pappy & Harriet's Pioneertown Palace
Kayla Lawrence	Mojave Desert Land Trust
<b>Bernard Liebov</b>	BoxoPROJECTS
Davina Lira	Marine Corps Community Services
Robert Lopez	Valley Star TAY Center
John Lowe	Landers Elementary School
Rebecca Lowry	Joshua Tree Art Innovation Lab (JT Lab)
Frank Luckino	City of Twentynine Palms
Anthony Madrigal, Jr.	Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians
Dr. Kurt McLachlan	Yucca Valley Elementary School
Debbie Medina	Friends of the 29 Palms Library
Justin Monical	Yucca Valley High School
<b>Cheryl Montelle</b>	Mil-Tree (Bringing Military and Community Together)
Tammie Moore	Joshua Tree Recreation and Parks
Kaz Newman	Positional Projects
Megan Pfau	Twentynine Palms Elementary School
Randy Polumbo	Plant NYC
Georgianne Pope	Morongo Valley Elementary School
Kimberly Pope	Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center
Jarrod Radnich	Hi-Desert Cultural Center
Bill Rahmy	
Brian Rennie	Joshua Tree NP Council for the Arts
Cynthia Ressa	San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board

Name	Affiliation
Carlos Reyes	ArtFX & Furnishings
Janet Riberdy	MCCS Operations Deputy Director
Michael Ruggiero	Twentynine Palms High School
Jennifer Sands	Black Rock High School, Friendly Hills Elementary School
<b>Danielle Segura</b>	Mojave Desert Land Trust
Stacy Smalling	Twentynine Palms Junior High School
David Smith	Joshua Tree National Park
Dr. Daniele Snider	Joshua Tree Elementary School
Les Snodgrass	Twentynine Palms Historical Society
<b>Eva Soltes</b>	Harrison House
Wanda Stadum	Yucca Valley Chamber of Commerce
<b>Terry Taylor-Castillo</b>	Joshua Tree Retreat Center
Reese Troublefield	CSA 20 - Joshua Tree Recreation and Parks District
<b>Dr. Deborah Turner</b>	Morongo Unified School District
Delos Van Earl	Delos Van Earl Studios
<b>Vickie Waite</b>	City of Twentynine Palms
Curtis Yakimow	Town of Yucca Valley
Vanessa Zendejas	A-Z West
Andrea Zittel	High Desert Test Sites