

Greater Grand Rapids

ARTS & CULTURE STRATEGY

Community
Conversations

March 30th & 31st, 2026

What is ACCGR?

A volunteer-led coalition of artists, organizations, and community leaders working together to strengthen and advance the arts and culture sector across Greater Grand Rapids.

ACCGR Steering Committee



Steff Rosalez, Co-Chair
Grandville Arts and Humanities



Maggie Lancaster, Co-Chair
Grand Rapids Children's Museum



Cindy Foley
Grand Rapids Art Museum



Lisa Knight
Girls Choral Academy, GR City Commission



Tim Mroz
The Right Place



Kim Van Driel
Downtown Grand Rapids Inc

ACCGR MEMBERSHIP

Updated Sept 23, 2025

- 2RST Store
- Actors' Theatre Grand Rapids
- Alfield Reeves Photography
- AllArtWorks
- Artists Creating Together
- ArtPrize
- Arts in Motion Studio WM
- Atmospheric Productions
- Bamboo HR
- Broadway Grand Rapids
- CarpenBarry Theater
- City of Grand Rapids
- Collaborative Lab
- Community Circle Theatre
- Cultivate
- DAAC
- Dez Durden
- DGRI
- Dinderbeck
- DisArt
- Downtown Market
- Ebony Road Players
- Ella Dempsey
- Fancy Real Estate
- Festival of the Arts
- Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park
- Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum
- Ghost House Studios
- Girls Choral Academy
- GRAB Grand Rapids Artist's Bureau
- Grand Rapids African American Museum and Archives (GRAAMA)
- Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM)
- Grand Rapids Artists Bureau
- Grand Rapids Ballet
- Grand Rapids Children's Museum
- Grand Rapids Civic Theater
- Grand Rapids Community Media Center
- Grand Rapids Public Museum
- Grand Rapids Symphonic Band
- Grand Rapids Symphony
- Grand Rapids Urban League
- Grand Valley State University | Frederik Meijer Honors College
- Grand Valley State University Art Gallery
- Grandville Avenue Arts and Humanities (GAAH)
- GRCCT / HHAAE
- Hammerspace Gallery
- Heartside Business Association/ArtRat Gallery
- Jessica Kooiman Parker
- Jewish Theater Grand Rapids
- John Ball Zoo
- K. Grace Voges
- KCAD at FSU
- KConnect
- Kennari Consulting
- Kent County
- Kevin Buist
- Kirsten Ryzewski
- Kolbina Endeavors
- Lions and Rabbits Center for the Arts
- Little Space Studio
- Luis Fernandez
- Merchants and Makers
- Michigan Music Alliance
- Michigan Public
- Mosaic Film Experience
- Muse GR
- NIA Centre: Grand Rapids' African American Cultural Center
- one y one creative agency
- Opera Grand Rapids
- OPNR
- Optum Advisory
- Over the Top
- Poplar Media
- Public Thread
- Radiant Holistic Services
- RDV
- Reyna's Gallery
- Rhiannan Sibbald Studio
- Shayna Velasquez
- St Cecilia Music Center
- Steelcase
- Tamarra Campbell
- Ten Finger Fish Studio
- The Diatribe
- The Right Place
- The Schubert Male Chorus
- Walker Group USA
- Wealthy Theater
- Well Design Studio
- Wellspring Preparatory Schools
- West Michigan Center for Arts and Technology (WMCAT)
- Wrinkle Creative

ACCGR has...

- Convened over 100 organizations, artists, and leaders
- Established a cross-sector Steering Committee
- Completed a regional economic impact study
- Collaboratively with the City and County, hired Lord Cultural Resources to complete an Arts & Culture Strategy for our region

What ACCGR is Working Toward

- A comprehensive Arts & Culture Plan for the region
- A more coordinated, connected, and visible arts ecosystem
- Sustainable funding and long-term infrastructure for the sector

ABOUT LORD CULTURAL RESOURCES



As the **leader in cultural consulting services**, Lord Cultural Resources relies on a global network of offices in Toronto, Los Angeles, New York, Madrid, and Mumbai.

We share our knowledge in presentations, articles and publications.

5 OFFICES
2700+ PROJECTS
57 COUNTRIES
450+ CITIES



YOUR PLANNING TEAM

Greater Grand Rapids PM Team



Lauren Conrad
Senior Consultant,
Kconnect/ConnectUS



Steff Rosalez
Grandville Avenue Arts
& Humanities (GAAH)



Maggie Lancaster
Grand Rapids
Children's Museum



Doug Matthews
Assistant City Manager,
City of Grand Rapids



Joshua Spencer
Strategic Impact
Director, Kent County

Lord Team



Eve Moros Ortega
Senior Director
Project Lead



Magdiel Espinal
Consultant
Research & PM



Tiffany Lyons
Senior Consultant
Implementation Expert



Holly Shen
Senior Director
Project Advisor

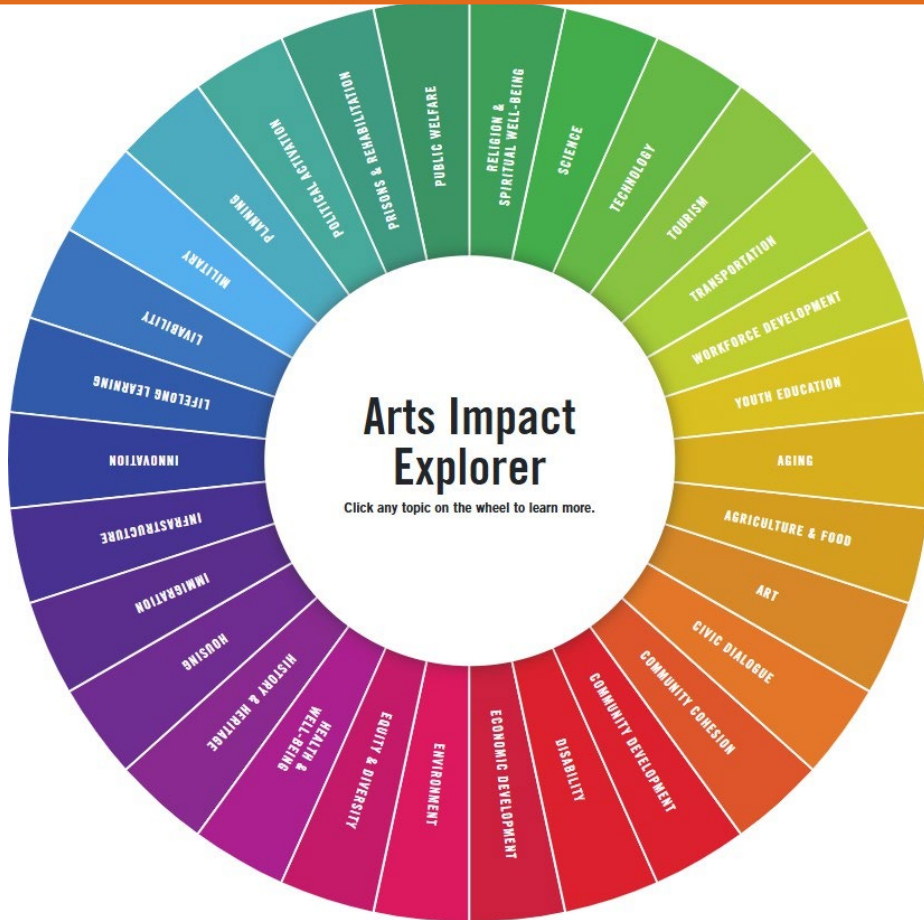


Jamie Bennett
Thought Leader
Project Advisor

LIST OF PAG MEMBERS

1. Brandon Copeland, WMCAT
2. Leigh Engelbrecht, West Michigan Arts Council; Advay Media Group
3. Steve Faber, Kent County Commission, Minority Vice Chair D18
4. Cindy Foley, Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM)/MACC
5. Victor Holt, GRAAMA Board; Huntington Bank
6. Linda Humbert, West Michigan Arts Council
7. Nathan Kemler, Director of Galleries and Collections, GVSU
8. Lisa Knight, Girls Choral Academy; GR City Commissioner
9. Melissa LaGrand, Kent County Commissioner
10. Kate Lieto, Experience Grand Rapids
11. Kate Luckert Schmid, Grand Rapids Community Foundation
12. Henry Matthews, Gerald R. Ford Airport Art Program Council Member
13. Liz Morse, Sparta's DDA Director; Kent County Commissioner
14. Tim Mroz, The Right Place
15. Kelsey Perdue, GR City Commissioner
16. Evette Pittman, Grand Rapids Special Events Manager
17. Stan Stek, Kent County Commissioner
18. Janet Teunis, Lowell Arts
19. Kim Van Driel, Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. (DGRI)
20. Tami Vanderberg, The Pyramid Scheme Bar & Venue
21. Tom Visco, Michigan Community Action, Lions & Rabbits Board
22. Jenny Waugh, Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce

BENEFITS OF ARTS & CULTURE FOR ALL



Americans for the Arts has created the **Arts Impact Explorer** tool to demonstrate how arts & culture can address community needs in many sectors:

- Health: Mental and Physical
- Education
- Community Cohesion
- Livability
- Tourism
- Economic and Workforce Development
- And many more!

Over \$ 1 trillion contributed to the US Economy annually

Sources: Americans for the Arts
<https://ww2.americansforthearts.org/explorer> and National Endowment for the Arts & U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account, 2023 (released April 2025)
<https://www.arts.gov/news/press-releases/2025/arts-and-cultural-industries-grew-twice-rate-us-economy-adding-12-trillion>

How Cultural Planning Drives Community and Economic Growth



Rockford Region Cultural Plan

Impact Highlights

- **Inclusive engagement** through advisory group and community ambassadors
- **Data-informed strategies** combining cultural ecosystem research and local input
- Tangible results: **\$200K City Public Art Fund + \$250K** in annual corporate support, **\$1.5 million** EPA funding towards new cultural center
- **Catalyzed new initiatives:** Youth arts partnerships, Business of Art program, and a new cultural center

Kingston and Ulster County Arts & Culture Plan

Impact Highlights

- Kingston plan helped lure Center for Woodstock to buy a photography building, (CPW) started by over \$2 million in NYS funds
- The Ulster County plan (inspired by Kingston success) resulted in the first county-level government position in arts & culture, the inaugural Director of Arts, Culture & Open Spaces
- County currently establishing Ulster County

Arts

Columbus Public Art Strategy

Impact Highlights

- Inclusive engagement with over 2,000 artists, and civic leaders residents,
- Established a new Art in Public Places with sustainable governance, staffing, programming
- Introduced innovative public-private model to expand investment
- Delivered a Public Art to build capacity among artists and developers

02

PROCESS OVERVIEW

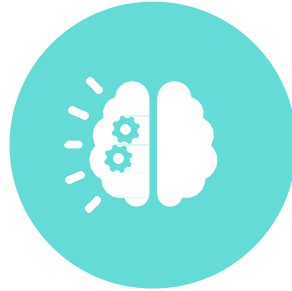
WHAT DO WE MEAN BY GREATER GRAND RAPIDS?

**This strategy is for
Grand Rapids and Kent County**

GGRACS GOALS



Leverage the network of arts and culture attractions, venues, leaders, and creatives in Grand Rapids and Kent County **as key community assets.**



Support arts and culture in Grand Rapids and Kent County as a driver for a thriving, creative, and inclusive place to live, work, and visit.



Integrate arts and culture into Grand Rapids and Kent County's **overall economic development strategy.**

OUR PLANNING PROCESS

Spring 2026

Research & Discovery

Conduct a 360° review of Greater Grand Rapids' arts & cultural ecosystem and existing reports

- Background Data Review
- Site Tour
- Engagement Strategy
- Governance, Infrastructure, and Funding Models Comparables

Deliverable: Draft Regional Landscape Summary

Spring-Summer 2026

Public Engagement, Needs Assessment & Priority Setting

Focused community engagement with diverse stakeholders and **synthesis of** findings into a compelling State of Culture report

- Stakeholder Interviews (up to 20)
- Sector Workshops (up to 10)
- Community Needs Survey
- Community Ambassadors (up to 10)
- Community Conversations Toolkit

Deliverable: State of Culture in Greater Grand Rapids Report & Presentation

Fall 2026-Winter (early 2027)

Development of Plan and Implementation Roadmap

Translate priorities into goals, strategies, and actions

- Funding Feasibility and Governance Recommendations
- Implementation Roadmap Co-created with Community Taskforces

Deliverables:

- Funding, Feasibility & Strategy Recommendations
- Governance & Structural Recommendations
- ★ Final Strategy

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Key Stakeholder
Interviews

Arts & Culture
Community **Survey**

Neighborhood
Intercept **Events** &
Site Visits



Sector **Workshops**

Community
Ambassadors

Community
Conversations
Meetings & Toolkit



THE **VALUE** OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

- Builds strong **community** relationships around arts and culture
- Fosters **advocacy** for the vital role of arts and culture in Greater Grand Rapids
- Connects grassroots community members with key **decision-makers**
- Educates all stakeholders on the benefits of a **thriving cultural ecosystem**

NEXT STEPS

- Take the **Your Voice, Your Culture - Greater Grand Rapids Arts & Culture Community Survey**
- Sign up for upcoming **sector workshops** (to be announced on the ACCGR website: accgr.org)
- **Start the conversation**—engage your peers, family, and friends using the Community Conversations Toolkit
- For youth, check out the [Mosaic Mobile](#) opportunity!
- **Stay informed and help spread the word!**