



Coos  
Art Museum



STRATEGIC  
PLAN

2009 - 2014

*Prepared by:*

**Shoji Planning, LLC**

# STRATEGIC PLAN



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# Coos Art Museum

## MISSION

Coos Art Museum is the cornerstone of visual arts on Oregon's Southern Coast. Through collections, exhibitions and educational programs, we are building an arts and cultural community and promoting the appreciation, understanding and expression of visual art.



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# CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

## **The Value of Art**

Coos Art Museum (Museum) establishes the cornerstone of the visual arts in Southwestern Oregon. As the only art museum in the region, it contributes to personal, economic, and community development through education, exhibitions, advocacy, and expressions of art.

The arts have been recognized for their importance in community life throughout history. Visual art forms continue to contribute to communities that convey individuality and a sense of place. People choose to live, work, and visit communities because of the presence of unique and attractive visual aspects. Art reflects life and portrays history through creating, viewing and responding, activities that provide both private and shared experiences. The 2005 U.S. Committee on the Arts and the Humanities Cultural and Heritage Tourism Summit found that cultural and heritage tourism is one of the fastest growing segments of the travel industry. According to the American Association of Museums, museums rank nationally as one of the top three family vacation destinations.

Many studies over the years link the contributions of the arts to human development. Art boosts self-confidence when young children are encouraged to create something that interests them. Young children delight in drawing, painting, and working with clay. Art utilizes distinct mind functions including memory, storing information, communicating feelings, and making choices that are beneficial throughout life. Art contributes to a long and satisfying life; many correlations have been discovered. One of the most comprehensive studies has recently linked the development of the human brain to artistic training and expression.

In 2004, the Dana Foundation, a private philanthropy organization with interests in brain science, immunology and arts education brought together groups of cognitive neuroscientists from seven universities across the United States to understand the relationship of arts training and cognition. The findings of the scientists involved in the Dana Arts & Cognition Consortium show tight correlations between artistic endeavors and cognitive abilities. Michael Posner, a professor of psychology at the University of Oregon utilized surveys, tests, and brain scans of children in his work.

“If we are able to engage children in an art form for which their brain is prepared, and they have an openness and creativity, we can train them in this and see improvement in attention, as well as intelligence and cognition in general,” Posner said.

The Museum recognizes and values all of the contributions that art provides towards building satisfying lives for individuals, and in the cultural and economic life of the community. This strategic plan is all about directions that the Museum would like to pursue to maintain and grow the Museum and its positive influence within the Southwestern Oregon region (region).

**The combined use of hands and imagination makes an important contribution to what it means 'to know' something.**

Jerome Kagan, Ph.D.  
Harvard University

Excerpt from lecture at the Learning, Arts, and the Brain Conference, Baltimore - May 6, 2009

### **Coos Art Museum**

Coos Art Museum, a nonprofit corporation with members was established in 1966 through the efforts of the former Coos Artists League, which was active from 1950 – 1966. With a facility in historic downtown Coos Bay, Oregon, the Museum provides exhibitions and educational programs, and advocates for expression of the arts. The organization's history, collections, ongoing exhibitions, educational programs, and location in an historically significant and imposing Art Deco building (formerly a federal office building, Coos Bay Post Office) all contribute to a demeanor of stability and dignity.

The Museum brings art to the region, fosters its creation, and promotes art education through workshops and classes, off-site exhibits, and presentations to groups. Exhibitions at the Museum are provided in five galleries that are utilized to present between twelve and twenty-four exhibits annually. Examples include the annual *Expressions West* exhibit of art by painters from thirteen western states, the annual *Maritime Art Exhibit* cosponsored by the American Society of Marine Artists, and *Vision*, a successful competition for high school students from the region. Other exhibitions include Pacific Northwest artists, and exhibits featuring children's artwork. Approximately 10,000 visitors attend Museum exhibitions each year.

The Museum is undertaking this strategic plan to expand its influence and prepare the organization for a strong and stable future. This is necessary so that the Museum can provide art experiences within the region where funding for arts in the schools, and other traditional opportunities for exposure to the arts has been eroding. To enhance service to the region and address needs, the Museum must find ways to expand its own eroding funding base. This strategic plan has been developed to provide vision and strategies for the future by integrating the needs of the community with the focus of the Museum.

The Museum building is owned and maintained by the City of Coos Bay. Contributing members support the Museum through payment of annual dues. The Board of Directors (Board) serves as the governing body of the organization, and

those who serve on the Board are required to be current members of the organization. The Board has regular meetings, maintains minutes of those meetings, approves an annual budget, and oversees programs and activities. An executive director, several part-time staff members, volunteer standing and ad hoc committees, and a number of artists and other volunteers are involved in carrying out the programs and activities of the organization.

Coos Art Museum is a respected nonprofit organization with up-to-date bylaws, a current mission statement, a vibrant and current web site, updated publications, and many ongoing programs and events. The organization's Bylaws are included in the Appendix.

### **The Community**

Coos Art Museum is located in the greater Bay Area, which is made up of the cities of Coos Bay and North Bend and adjacent unincorporated communities, with a population of approximately 35,000. However, the Museum serves a much larger region on the Southern Oregon Coast that includes nearly half the length of the Oregon Coast and several inland communities in Coos County. Coos County (population approximately 64,000), coastal Douglas County to the north, and Curry County to the south make up the region known as the South Coast. There are numerous small cities, and unincorporated communities -- mostly rural in nature.

Historically the South Coast region of Oregon has had a natural resource-based economy with logging, mills and shipping. At this time the industrial base that came from timber, fishing and shipping is declining. The region has been moving towards a service-based economy for nearly three decades. Demographics and income statistics from recent decades reveal an aging population, low wages, and an underserved population. The Coos Bay Area continues to be the commercial and industrial hub of the region, with Coos Bay being the largest and most diverse community on the Oregon Coast.

### **The Museum in the Community**

The Museum is a major cultural asset to the region and the State of Oregon. The organization provides art education (which is now becoming scarce or nonexistent in many of the public schools), and world-class exhibits that enrich the community and the region. Museum programs provide for cognitive development of youth by encouraging youth in the expression of art. Museum exhibitors and visitors topped all previous records during the 2008 *Biennial Student Art Show* with 503 attendees at the opening; more than 1,200 works from 27 participating schools in Southwestern Oregon were shown.

The Museum provides citizens of all ages and walks of life access to cultural opportunities not otherwise available. Serving as a cornerstone of visual arts for many emerging and recognized artists, the Museum contributes to attracting and retaining an educated work force in the greater Bay Area. Because of its location in the historic central downtown area of Coos Bay within walking distance of the Boardwalk and the Visitor Information Center, the Museum provides a tourist attraction that contributes to the community's sense of place. As the repository of historic information about Steve Prefontaine, a national and international track star who grew up in Coos Bay, the Museum attracts both art and sports enthusiasts from around the world.

### **Strategic Planning**

In 2008-09 the Board of Directors carried out local fundraising activities to raise match monies, and submitted a grant application to the Ford Family Foundation with the goal of undertaking strategic planning and Board training. A grant was provided, and the Museum contracted with Shoji Planning, LLC to assist with the project. The first decision was to determine a time frame for the plan, and Board members decided to utilize the time frame set forth in the bylaws.



Article IX of the Bylaws states, “The long range plan for the Museum shall be revised every five years by an Ad Hoc Committee appointed by the Board of Directors. The Long Range Plan shall be reviewed annually by the Executive Committee and revised prior to the annual meeting.”

This 5-year plan is the result of community information gathering, organizational and community analysis, and setting goals for the future. The following components were incorporated as part of the planning process:

#### Community Information Gathering:

- Quick open-ended surveys for students were developed and distributed to schools within the region to gather information and perceptions. The compilation of the surveys completed by the students is included in the Appendix of this document.
- Quick open-ended surveys for community members were developed and distributed to Museum members, artists, friends, and civic groups in the Bay

Area. The compilations of the surveys completed by the community are included in the Appendix of this document.

Board Interactions at Workshops and Planning Retreat:

- Reviewing compiled survey responses, and looking for patterns in the responses.
- Determining the 5-year time frame for this strategic plan.
- Reviewing organizational history.
- Identifying trends for the Museum, along with community, state, and national trends.
- Identifying customers, organizational values, successes, and critical issues.
- Defining existing applicable paradigms and suggesting new paradigms for the future.
- Identifying opportunities.
- Identifying goals and strategies, and suggesting programs and activities to be carried out in the future.
- Focusing on the needs and opportunities for financial resources.
- Reaching consensus.
- Reviewing and revising the draft plan.
- Reviewing directions and expectations to develop the implementation plan for year-one.
- Adopting this plan.

Participants:

In addition to Board members and the Executive Director who are listed at the beginning of this document, the following staff and community members participated in the strategic planning effort:

Suzanne Adams  
Deryl Beebe  
Archi Davenport  
Karen Hammer  
Mike Holm

Mike Lanza  
Rosalie Lanza  
Del Smith  
Belinda Strotheide

**Future Planning**

This 5-year plan has been developed utilizing accepted practices for strategic planning. Scanning the environment, identifying key issues, and developing strategies and action steps have all been part of the process. Strategic planning is a continuous loop that requires ongoing awareness of the environment, an understanding of the community's resources and opportunities, an awareness of state

and national trends that are likely to affect local decisions, and ongoing focus to maintain a strong and viable organization.

This strategic plan is not a final product. It is living document to help the organization focus on problems and opportunities. By developing and implementing this plan and the annual work program that is addressed within this document, the Museum will be better able to control its destiny.



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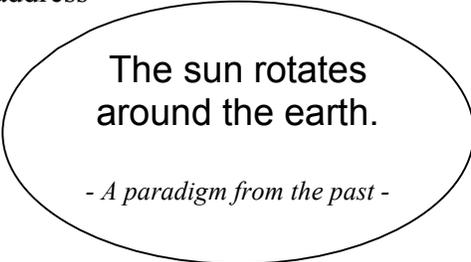
## CHAPTER 2 CURRENT STATUS

### Evaluating the Organization

To envision a successful future for any organization it is important to evaluate the current situation. This is how strategic planning participants began planning for the Museum's future. This chapter addresses the questions that were considered, and reflects the responses of the participants at the planning meetings.

Here are the considerations:

- What are the current trends? What is causing negative trends? How can we address the negative trends?
- What do we value? Do the programs and activities of our organization carry out those values? How can we strike a balance when there are competing values?
- What are the critical issues and how can we address these issues in the future?
- What are the paradigms? How do they limit us? What is assumed, and what if what we assume is not true? We want to understand our assumptions, and challenge our thinking and behavior so that we do not allow the past to serve as a restraint to the future.



The sun rotates  
around the earth.

*- A paradigm from the past -*

The remainder of this chapter reflects the responses to the above considerations. The information reflects a basis for the goals and strategies that were developed for the Museum's future.

### Trends

The Museum has existed as an art museum since 1966, with roots from the 1950's. People are joining at lower levels.

Membership is declining over time, though it is stable at this time.

Patrons are aging so that they do not participate in the same ways.

Young families are not participating.

Public schools are providing less art education and less exposure to traditional art forms.

Trends at the Museum are similar to national trends.

The community has less heavy industry and more service businesses.

Transfer income has increased.

There are many people within the community who have disposable income.

## **Organizational Values**

Creativity – active and participatory.

Museum - stability, preservation, collections.

Originality - “out of the box” thinking.

Art center concept.

Art education for all ages.

Striking a balance

Local art and artists.

Art in the schools.

Leadership in artistic endeavors.

Advocacy for art in the community and the schools

Advocacy for local art.

Advocacy for a visually appealing community.

Bringing professional art exhibits to the community.

Exhibitions that include recognized artists from around the nation.

Community oriented.

Professional organization.

Excellent art.

## **Critical Issues**

Funding for operations and programs is not adequate.

Visibility within and outside the region is lacking.

Membership is limited.

There is not enough youth involvement.

Coos Art Museum is not always embraced as a community asset for all of the people.

The community is not visually appealing.

The Museum needs to provide more influence within the community.

There is concern about long-term survival.



## Shifting Paradigms

The existing or current paradigms identified by the participants at the planning session reflect perceptions that were stated in the surveys. It is obvious that a paradigm shift to change thinking from one way to another will be beneficial to the Museum. This paradigm shift is a transformation, or a metamorphosis that is not likely to come about by chance because there must be some agent of change to drive the transformation. The Museum would like to be the agent that drives the change in perceptions. The following chart shows the paradigm shifts to be addressed in the future through implementation of this plan.

<b>Paradigm Shifts to be Addressed in this Plan</b>	
<b>Current Paradigms</b>	<b>New Paradigms</b>
Real art is in big cities – not in Coos County.	Our community is a rich and vibrant art community, and we attract talented artists.
The Art Museum represents people with education and wealth. There is nothing for me here.	Art is for everyone!
There is no money.	Money is available, but we must learn to tap into it.





## CHAPTER 3 VISION FOR THE FUTURE

### **Celebrating art**

- connect with art
- express art
- create art
- learn about art
- understand art heritage
- enjoy art
- know community art
- appreciate beauty and symmetry in nature
- interact with art
- advocate for art

### **Connecting art and community**

- art for all
- serves the region
- creative expression
- new perspectives
- wider horizons
- identify with art
- know artists
- bring people together
- interactive expressions
- celebrate sense of place
- enjoyment, fun, excitement

### **Visible and expressive**

- colorful
- thriving
- inclusive
- people centered
- gathering place
- destination

### **Stable, respected institution**

- collections
- established exhibitions
- education
- knowledge
- dedicated members
- professional staff
- financial stability
- organization with a heritage
- moving into the future



## CHAPTER 4 GOALS AND STRATEGIES

### **Implementing Goals and Strategies**

This chapter is organized into eight topics that set forth goals, strategies, and suggested measurements that will help the Museum carry out its mission. The topics are presented in no particular order within this document. Success in any one area is dependent upon a holistic approach, and carrying out activities to implement all of the goals will be necessary to maintain ongoing programs and incorporate new directions. Success over the long term will be dependent upon the organization's ability to "multi-task." This will require the involvement of numerous volunteers, including but not limited to those on the Board. Leadership from a strong active Board with professional management is essential. The Museum will need to carry out its strategies and keep the public informed and involved; coordination and positive communications are key elements.

Many of the strategies include implementation activities and examples. All of the strategies were suggested at the planning meetings. Measuring tools will need to be refined and utilized to assess outcomes of activities that are undertaken. While it is not envisioned that every strategy can be pursued due to limited staff and funding, developing and assigning responsibilities that identify specific action steps to be taken each year will keep the plan on track. The annual work program can be prepared in conjunction with an annual review of this strategic plan. Doing so will assure that any new Board members and staff are informed about the plan, while providing assignments, timelines, and expected outcomes for the year. Group involvement in planning on an annual basis will assure that there is broad understanding of actions that will be undertaken in the near future, and it will provide an opportunity to renew the organization's commitment to long term goals.

### **Topics for Goals and Strategies**

The following topics within this chapter provide the focus for future activities to implement this plan:

- Art for All
- Energize Youth for Art
- Market to the Region
- Market for Tourism
- Collaborate
- Increase Revenues
- Attention to Operations
- Annual Work Program

# Art for All

## Challenges and Opportunities

The Museum provides a unique element of community life within the southwestern region of Oregon with exhibitions, education, and community connections. Programming includes highlighting fine artists within the region, providing opportunities for young artists to create and excel, regional and national art exhibitions and workshops that provide for creative expression. However, some in the community view the Museum as an organization that is all about prestige; this image was mentioned in several of the surveys returned by community members as part of this planning process. Perhaps the idea that Coos Art Museum is separated from the working community is a paradigm that carries over from an earlier time when there were a number of wealthy patrons who were not of the working class, and women who were not expected to be in the work force carried out important cultural and societal causes on behalf of the community.

Today the community is not so linear. To provide the greatest benefit to the community, the Museum must seek widespread involvement and community ownership. Promoting community understanding and ownership of the Museum will foster genuine pride in the Museum as a community asset, and in turn promote art as one element of a long and satisfying life for members of the community from all walks of life.

Community members have a number of perceptions about the Museum that are expressed in the surveys. Of course, interpretations of the survey responses reflect perceptions of the interpreters. For example, “solid” and “traditional” are descriptive words that have a positive connotation with some individuals, but the words probably mean “old,” “stuffy,” or “outdated” to others. Coos Art Museum’s challenge is to foster an image that strikes a balance in order to appeal to diverse ethnic groups, ages and interests, while responding to the traditional expectations of all art museums. By doing so the Museum will have new and fresh ideas, but will continue to be a respected institution with ongoing traditions that are reminiscent of its heritage. Compiled survey responses that have come from the community suggest that providing art experiences with everyday objects could provide new audiences and help to dispel notions that art is something “stuffy.”

The Museum can benefit the community by being a highly visible gathering place with art activities that appeal to people of all ages and income levels. The challenge is to foster community identification with the Museum, and to enhance the enjoyment of art as an element of everyday life, while continuing to expand quality art collections and exhibitions.

## Goals

The goals within this section are about art and art interactions that the Museum provides for the community. The goals are broad in scope and ongoing; some of them are also addressed in other sections of this document. Success will be measured over time by new involvement from community members, increased membership in the Museum, and increased attendance at events. Methods used to measure activities included in the annual work program should be addressed during planning. For example, an overall increase in traffic at the Museum is a broad indicator of success, but an increase in attendance at one established annual exhibition is an indicator of success only for that particular event. Various communications with the public to advocate for the arts can be targeted in number. A successful measurable outcome would be an added interactive experience in conjunction with an ongoing exhibition.

- Continue to provide quality art through collections and exhibitions.
- Continue to enhance the Museum's permanent collection.
- Incorporate interactive elements in programming to provide memorable art experiences.
- Link exhibitions and education programs for more impact.
- Maintain the involvement of quality jurors.
- Integrate art forms that appeal to diverse audiences.
- Enhance connections with the region.
- Advocate for art.

## Strategies

- A. Maintain current frequency of exhibitions (12 – 24) each year.
- B. Build on successes such as the *Vision* high school art show, and the *Maritime Art Exhibit* through media promotion and partnership activities.
- C. Continue to employ jurors with the objectivity to recognize quality work from artists, and the ability to expand local artistic visions while being compatible with the character of the area. For example, in the recent “Expressions West” competition Gary Faigin challenged Museum visitors with his own vision,

encouraged participation from artists, and provided exposure to varied artistic expressions of experiences.

D. Curate exhibits from local resources when possible. For example, the *Artistic Microscopy* exhibition, tied the Museum into the activities of the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology. Such exhibitions contribute to the Museum's "sense of place" within the region, which appeals to the community and visitors, builds local partnerships, and provides affordable exhibitions that are unique to this location.

E. Bring the community together for interactive experiences with everyday objects to provide fun and inclusive activities for diverse audiences of all ages.

- Partner and participate with various groups that already exist in the community so that there is a built-in audience with specific common interests that may become a new audience for the Museum.



F. Develop an ongoing exhibition series with local Native American Tribal groups to highlight contemporary Native American artists and their art.

- Seek exhibition sponsorships by the Tribes.

G. Produce an Art Deco exhibition to highlight local architecture, collections, and history.

H. Produce interesting high quality exhibitions that raise the Museum's profile outside the region.

I. Seek local art collectors that have collections worthy of exhibition, and provide opportunities for exhibits featuring such art.

J. Provide educational aspects linked to exhibitions.

- Exhibit instructors' work, provide lectures associated with exhibits, or develop other education programs in conjunction with exhibits.

- Develop exhibitions that include educational content. For example, an Art Deco exhibition could provide didactic labels, or an exhibition of print making techniques could be linked directly with art works.
- K. Add the works of more nationally recognized artists to the permanent collection.
- L. Build on strengths of collections such as printmaking.
- M. Challenge local artists and art groups to produce high quality art, and expand their artistic outreach.
- N. Establish higher museum standards of display, scholarship and collection care.
- Acquire vitrines and other casework for the Museum.
  - Improve exhibition lighting.
  - Improve building security, and maintain cleanliness and control.
- O. Open the Clare Wehrle Community Gallery to display the works of school children and local artists on a regular and consistent basis.
- P. Present a wide variety of artistic media.
- Q. Seek cultural diversity in programming exhibitions.
- R. Provide advocacy for the arts.
- Provide information about the benefits of expressive arts to the community at community events, in the schools, to city officials at their public meetings, through the media, and through Museum publications, including the web site.
- S. Provide visible art for all.
- Provide visible displays of art in public spaces such as local city buildings, the airport, and the Boys and Girls Club, recognizing that safety for art is a priority. Organize for locked displays, or display art that does not require protection. Assure that the Museum's sponsorship is highly visible.
- T. Promote the Rental Sales Gallery to bring high quality local and regional art to homes and businesses.



**Woman Reading  
By Will Barnet**

**1970  
Serigraph**

Coos Art Museum Permanent Collection

# Energize Youth for Art

## Challenges and Opportunities

Art is a basic human experience; very young children like to participate in drawing, creating and painting. Expressions of art provide benefits for creative problem solving, critical thinking, expressing emotions, and sensitivity to beauty and order.

Coos Art Museum provides successful youth programs for art education and the creative expression of the arts. At the present time, activities include classes in the Museum's upstairs classroom and youth art shows and competitions. The successful *Biennial Student Art Show* for K-12 students from Coos and Curry Counties had the highest participation ever in 2008 with 1,220 works, and the high school art competition, *Vision* included participants from the Oregon Coast, Southern Oregon, and Southwestern Oregon.



In spite of the fact that hundreds of area youth are involved in classes, exhibitions and competitions sponsored by the Museum each year, compiled survey responses from 197 elementary through community college age youth (primarily high school age) throughout the region revealed that more than half of area youth had not been in the Museum, and that less than 10% had taken art classes. The compiled surveys also revealed that many would like to be involved.

In many public schools, there is a declining emphasis on art education and traditional art expressions. The Museum would like to provide more opportunities for art education and find new ways to involve youth. Expanded youth involvement will bring new energy to the Museum, along with enhanced adult involvement, and new opportunities for membership, and it will carry forward the Museum's mission within the community.

## Goals

The goals within this section should be ongoing. Over time, success will be evidenced by an increase in youth involvement and evidence that youth are involved in leadership for art. Enhancing programs to advocate for art in the schools,

collaborating with the schools for art programming, and recognizing young artists are all desirable outcomes.

- Advocate for art in the schools.
- Enhance programs that provide art education for youth.
- Involve youth in planning and programming.
- Increase opportunities for highlighting art created by youth.
- Increase interactive youth art programs.

### Strategies

- A. Promote art education and artistic endeavors for youth of all ages.
- B. Continue to enhance and build excitement for the *Biennial Student Art Show*; this has been established for a decade.
  - The Museum should continue to seek funding from granting agencies, civic clubs, businesses, and individuals, including grandparents of youth who are involved, to enhance and expand the student art shows. Production costs for a student art show were more than \$8,000.00 for the past biennium.
- C. Involve youth in planning, programming and assessment of youth arts opportunities.
  - Organize a youth advisory committee or involve youth with Board members and volunteers in other ways.
  - Encourage “out of the box” creative thinking for program planning for youth art. For example, the local Oregon Coast (ORCO) Guild has currently been funded by the Coos County Cultural Coalition to carry out a youth Rattle Can Art Program.
- D. Enhance recognition of youth art in many forms that exists throughout the region.
  - Provide a youth mural at Southwest Oregon Regional Airport.
- E. Assist with art programs in the schools, and advocate for restoring youth art in the schools

- Organize for liaisons with the public school districts including, Reedsport, North Bend, Coos Bay, Coquille, Bandon, Myrtle Point, Powers, Port Orford / Langlois, Gold Beach, Brookings-Harbor and Southern Oregon Community College
  - Encourage partnerships and participation with private schools.
  - Provide useful resources such as “Young at Art, Easy Art Lessons for Educators,” a book written by Merideth Ferrell and Ellen Gabehart that is available to assist teachers and lay people in teaching art on an ongoing basis.
- F. Promote youth art in highly visible venues.
- Participate in Coos Bay downtown events to promote youth art. Providing visible exciting interactive activities in conjunction with downtown events, and in collaboration with local partners will provide creative opportunities and promote the perception of art for all. For example, events that involve children working with clay in front of the Museum, or drawing with chalk on the sidewalks provide entertainment and fun for all ages.
  - Provide interactive opportunities for youth in conjunction with ongoing Museum events. This could be accomplished in partnership with other groups such as the Boys and Girls Club, or the Guild (ORCOARTS), which provides interest-based art enrichment activities for high school students working with volunteers who share special knowledge or life experience.
- G. Provide opportunities for interactive experiences with art, and integration of visual art with other art forms for youth of all ages.

## **Market to the Region**

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

Today, we live in a society where there is much “clatter” and much to compete for our attention. With so many expectations, public benefit organizations like the Museum must be proactive in marketing to the region so that programs and activities that they provide are not taken for granted.

The Museum is housed in a classic facility with beautiful lines, but the Art Deco design is not emphasized because the building is not painted to emphasize the design features. In addition, the sign outside the facility is not highly visible. While these

are just two examples of the Museum's communications to the general public, it is important that these and other communications be enhanced. The Museum's mission is for appreciation of the visual arts, and the visual message that is sent to the public each day is key.

The Museum would like to continue to enhance promotion, appreciation, understanding and expression of visual arts within the region. Raising the profile of the Museum within the region will increase support for the Museum, and benefit the arts.

## Goals

Promotion to the public must be consistent and frequent. The approach within this section is to carry out specific projects and organize a system for communicating with the public. This will involve a number of activities to be carried out on a one-time basis during this planning period, and others that are repetitive. Success will be measured by accomplishing the specific strategies such as painting the building, getting a new sign, developing a logo and "brand," and carrying out ongoing communications regarding projects and programs. Of course, technology provides for ever-changing communications, so communications must continually be evaluated for success.

- Increase visibility of the Museum and its activities within the region.
- Develop a message that builds a community-friendly brand for the Museum, and use it consistently.
- Communicate an exciting statement for excellence in aesthetics and art within the community.
- Utilize new mediums and venues to enhance the visibility of the Museum and its programs, and to communicate with new audiences within the community.
- Promote recognition of artistic endeavors of the Museum and individuals and groups within the community.
- Recognize monetary contributions to the arts from within the community as appropriate.
- Communicate with the general public to tell the story: i.e., how the Museum contributes the community, why art is important, to build on successes and tell the public why the Museum is successful, and to create ongoing impact.
- Provide promotion of ongoing programs and events.

## Strategies

- A. Continue to advocate with the city of Coos Bay regarding the painting of the exterior of the Art Museum facility, which is owned by the city to assure that the building can be featured in conjunction with an Art Deco exhibition in the future. Work with the city of Coos Bay to promote the painting of Coos Art Museum facility as an example and springboard for other fix-up and cleanup within the community.
- B. Add interest and color to the exterior of the facility.
  - Provide banners on the building to create excitement and promote exhibitions.
  - Provide new and more visible outdoor signage to identify the facility and promote programs.
- C. Seek opportunities to publicly recognize art and artists.
- D. Promote Coos Art Museum as an advocate organization for community art by honoring artistic endeavors that help beautify the built environment. When artistic endeavors are honored, provide information to all media and participate in the venues of partnering organizations as appropriate.
- E. Promote the Museum’s efforts to fill empty store windows with art. Provide signing that identifies the Museum.
- F. Review current publications including stationery, announcements of exhibitions, web communications and other communications to determine whether they will be likely to attract individuals who are not already “plugged in” with Museum programs. Where changes are needed, organize new examples and templates that express excitement and are promotional in nature.
- G. Assure that Coos Art Museum is appropriately identified in all media and correspondence when partnerships are involved.
- H. Utilize a slogan and logo that suggests a brand image, promoting a concept of “art for all” in our community.
- I. Develop an on-line newsletter to plug community members into opportunities at the Museum, and to educate and market to the public.



- J. Partner with the Bay Area Chamber of Commerce to assure that Museum events are included in the community calendar of events, and provided in ongoing e-mail notices to Chamber members.
- K. Develop promotional information such as a Power Point that can be updated regularly and provided to service clubs, other organizations, and businesses in the region.
- L. Build relationships with the cities of North Bend and Coos Bay for mutual benefits.
- Involve city officials in Museum events and programs.
  - Inform city councils concerning benefits of art, youth participation in the Museum, and about programs and events at city council meetings where members of the public and the media are also likely to be in attendance.
  - Seek opportunities to utilize Coos Bay and North Bend city publications to promote Museum events, programs and benefits.
  - Advocate for a visually attractive community.
- M. Communicate to reach new audiences.
- Continue to provide a staffed art display at the Coos County Fair utilizing art from the permanent collection. In the past, it is estimated that 20,000 visitors have viewed this display at the Fair each year.
  - Provide follow-up communications to families who have participated in youth events to get them involved with the Museum.
  - Participate in local events to take advantage of opportunities for communicating with new audiences.
  - Provide outreach to new sectors within the community as appropriate to specific exhibitions and events.
  - Recognize contributions to the Museum from businesses and individuals. Assure that programs are in place so that donors understand how they will be recognized, or how they can remain anonymous.



**Mango Mango  
By Red Groom**

**1973  
Serigraph**

Coos Art Museum Permanent Collection

# Market for Tourism

## Challenges and Opportunities

Southwestern Oregon is a wild and wonderful place with beautiful natural scenery, a mild climate, and rich history. With the decline of the natural resource based economy over the past three decades, Southwestern Oregon has become increasingly dependent upon the tourism industry. The region lacks a large population base, and building a highly successful destination tourism industry continues to be a challenge. Bright spots for destination tourism on the South Coast include but are not limited to Bandon with its aesthetically appealing old-town that attracts destination tourism; Bandon Dunes, a private corporation with national recognition is an expanding national destination for golf between Bandon and Coos Bay; The Mill Casino in North Bend; and the fishing community of Charleston in the Bay Area. Port Orford was featured in the May 2009 edition of “Sunset” magazine for its many charms, with specific references to artists and art.

The Bay Area, the home of Coos Art Museum, is working to promote tourism, while struggling with an overall layout that scatters small shops by inhibiting walkability, and other factors. Because the community was historically an industrial hub, remnants of old industry that are not visually appealing continue to be visible along the Highway 101 route that is the lifeblood of the coastal communities.

Coos Art Museum contributes to destination tourism, but the Museum would like to be a larger player in building the arts and cultural aspects of the destination tourism industry. The Museum’s success as a visitor attraction provides opportunities for the Coos Bay downtown area because the Museum adds to the clustering aspect of small shops and attractions. The Museum’s success adds to the region because it is a cornerstone of the arts in an area with an abundance of artists, galleries, myrtlewood woodworking and other crafts, the Oregon Coast Music Festival, and other performing arts. With collaborative marketing, all of these attractions contribute to promoting this exciting cultural region.

In the past there was a gift shop at the Museum. Gift shops in museums serve a promotional role as a part of the “museum experience,” and they produce revenue.

## Goals

The objective is to increase the number of out-of-the-region visitors to the Museum. When the Museum is successful in carrying out the strategies, visitor increases will be evident. There are a number of goals to be carried out to market for tourism. All are easily measurable by numbers or accomplishments. Increases in promotional references can easily be counted. Brochures and web links are obvious marketing tools. The reopening of the gift shop in the Museum will be a recognized milestone.

- Promote the Museum as a cornerstone for tourism.
- Increase promotions through a variety of publications and media.
- Continue to maintain current brochures and web site links.
- Participate with businesses and tourism groups for joint marketing of the region.
- Organize a gift shop in the Museum.

## Strategies

- A. Increase references to the Museum in regional, statewide, and national publications.
  - Develop an ongoing relationship with the Coos Bay - North Bend Visitor & Convention Bureau and the director of the Visitor Center in downtown Coos Bay to keep the Museum informed and involved when opportunities arise.
  - Partner with the Coos Bay - North Bend Visitor & Convention Bureau for promotion and advertising of ongoing exhibitions, and to be included in promotion packages for destination tourism. Send a representative to Coos Bay – North Bend Visitor & Convention Bureau meetings to be part of ongoing opportunities such as travel writer visits, and other ongoing programs.
- B. Partner in developing and distributing tourism brochures that promote Coos Art Museum. Work with local arts groups, museums, galleries, the Oregon Connection and others that tell the arts and cultural story of our region, and promote the Museum as an attraction.

- C. Cross-market with other museums and cultural providers throughout the region and the state.
- D. Improve links to Coos Art Museum's web site from existing tourist promotion sites and businesses.
- E. Partner with the Coos Bay Downtown Association.
  - Promote the downtown area and Coos Art Museum jointly.
  - Participate in events that bring the public to downtown Coos Bay to take advantage of and contribute to the promotion and public activity.
- F. Organize a gift shop in the Museum to develop the opportunity for visitors to have a full and satisfying experience with the Museum, and promote the Museum. The gift shop at the Museum could function in conjunction with the Rental Sales Gallery for increased visibility.
- G. Seek grants from the Travel Oregon and others to assist with funding for tourism promotion projects.
- H. Utilize social media opportunities to promote the Museum.

## **Collaborate**

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

Southwestern Oregon has dozens of accomplished resident artists, numerous galleries, and many other venues that display art for the enjoyment of the public. There are hundreds of government, civic, service, cultural, and hobby groups within the region. The Museum has carried out programs with the schools, the Oregon Coast Music Association, the Coos Historical and Maritime Museum, and the Bay Area Artists Association for many years. The city of Coos Bay provides the Museum facility. The Boys and Girls Club promotes the Museum's classes. All of these partnerships are of benefit to the Museum and the community.

This document addresses partnerships with the cities of Coos Bay and North Bend in various sections. The previous topic, "Market for tourism," addressed partnerships with tourism related groups, and the importance of working with city governments has been addressed in various sections within this document. Increasing

collaboration with these groups and others in the future will help the Museum extend its reach and maximize influence.

## Goals

The goals and strategies within this section are aimed at bringing in new audiences, and strengthening art for all. Positive outcomes will be evidenced by increased alliances that involve the Museum, and ultimately by the ongoing success of those alliances in increasing audiences and enhancing art for all.

- Create and strengthen local and regional partnerships for promotion, programming, and sponsorships.
- Work with local Tribes to showcase Native American art.
- Collaborate and cross-promote with other cultural groups throughout Oregon and the nation.

## Strategies

- A. Explore the concept of selling unlimited prepaid individual or group admissions to the Museum for a higher membership fee so that businesses will in turn provide admission as a courtesy to their own guests. Larger businesses in the region could be approached for such a sponsorship after careful planning and consideration on the part of the Museum's Board. A sponsorship of this sort would provide promotion for the Museum, and build partnerships between the Museum and regional businesses with mutual benefits.
- B. Continue to partner with other Southwestern Oregon arts groups including, but not limited to Bay Area Artists, the Coquille Valley Arts Association, the ORCO Guild, and Sage Gallery in Bandon. A weekend for artists with an art fair could be incorporated



during a downtown festival. Such an event could provide opportunities to view artists at work, and include appraisals of art.

- C. Collaborate with groups in all communities from Brookings to Lane County on the Oregon Coast, and the inland communities in the Coquille Valley, Powers and Lakeside.
- D. Invite Bay Area civic clubs and community groups into the facility for their meetings. Explore sponsorships and other opportunities for civic groups to contribute to art in the community.
- E. Collaborate with the Boys and Girls Club of Southwestern Oregon. The Museum currently provides discounts for Boys and Girls Club members, and the Boys and Girls Club promotes the Museum's classes for youth. The Boys and Girls Club has an excellent model for fundraising, and the Museum would like to learn from them.
- F. Partner with the Bay Area Sportsmen's Association and other sports-related organizations to promote exhibits that feature sports.
- G. Seek exhibition sponsors from businesses, organizations, and individuals.
- H. Incorporate Native American exhibitions by working with the local Tribes who may in turn provide connections with other Tribes. The first step is to acquire designated liaisons from the Tribes so that communications are enhanced.
- I. While partnerships with the school districts are not new, it may be advantageous to ask for designated liaisons with school districts where communications are not occurring on a regular basis so that there is a pathway for making the necessary connections in the future.
- J. Enhance partnerships with Southwestern Oregon Community College (SOCC). SOCC is a cosponsor of the successful high school art competition, *Vision*.
- K. Partner with the Coos Historical and Maritime Museum.
  - Organize mutual opportunities to borrow objects for exhibitions. The Museum provided the Victor West historical collection to the Coos Historical and Maritime Museum in the past.
  - Encourage the Coos Historical and Maritime Museum to connect with the Coos Art Museum's successful annual *Maritime Art Exhibit*, while

maintaining and enhancing the status of the Art Museum as the lead organization for this event.

- L. Collaborate for joint promotion with recognized groups throughout Oregon and the nation as opportunities arise. For example, the co-sponsorship of the annual *Maritime Art Exhibit* by the American Society of Marine Artists enhances the value and prestige of the exhibit for both artists and visitors to the exhibit.
- M. Maintain connections with statewide cultural organizations where feasible.
- N. Establish ongoing relationships and communications with various groups to be aware of opportunities for mutual advertising, fundraising, and programming.
- O. Assure that Coos Art Museum and all participating partners are appropriately identified in all media and correspondence when partnerships are involved.
- P. Enhance sponsorships from businesses and individuals, and assure that all sponsorships are appropriately recognized in Museum publications, on the web, in the media, and at events.
- Q. Promote the Oregon Cultural Coalition, and work with the Coos County Cultural Coalition.

## **Increase Revenues**

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

Funding for operations is an ongoing challenge. Financial support for the Museum comes mainly from within the region through multiple sources, but the small population base of the region is a limiting factor. The city of Coos Bay owns and maintains the building. Two endowments are administered through the Oregon Community Foundation, as are advised donor funds. Sources of support include private and corporate grants, fundraising events, and an annual membership drive. Income is also derived from admissions, exhibition fees, and room rentals. The Museum has instituted active grant seeking with success.

While the Museum has been the recipient of donations from wills, and contributions to set up specific programs or develop new areas in the Museum, there is not an organized planned giving program. Such a program is essential for the long-term future and success of Coos Art Museum.

Some foundations are now providing funding that can be used for operations. Funding for operations would provide a wonderful opportunity for the Museum because it is well established with many ongoing programs.

## **Goals**

The goal and desired outcome is to increase revenue from all sources to maintain and grow the Museum. The strategies provide various ways to accomplish this.

## **Strategies**

- A. Continue to seek grants for education and programs.
- B. Review the pricing of admission and all Museum programs and events every few years to assure that Museum fees are appropriate. Review mandatory vs. voluntary fee for some situations. Utilize past records as necessary to determine fee impacts.
- C. Make it easy to donate to the Museum. Provide visible donation vases at the front desk on an ongoing basis, and at all events and programs. Maintain accessible donation opportunities through the Museum's web site.
- D. Evaluate membership fees from time to time, and encourage members to come in at higher levels.
- E. Seek opportunities for follow-up with those who have children and grandchildren participating in and benefiting from Museum programs. Communicate with parents and grandparents as appropriate.
- F. Keep informed about federal and state programs affecting the arts so that the Museum can be ready to apply for all appropriate funding that comes available.
- G. Keep abreast of trends within foundations to know when opportunities for funding operations exist, and seek opportunities to apply for all appropriate funding.
- H. Continue to seek grant funding for a volunteer coordinator, and a development coordinator.
- I. Utilize programs that provide student interns, AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers, and others.

- J. Maintain information and examples that can be utilized in grant applications to demonstrate “sustainability,” which is now a requirement for many grants.
- K. Because accountability is important to funding agencies, assure that the Museum continues to carry out all funding expectations, and maintains records to demonstrate accountability.
- L. Develop a full program for pursuing ongoing planned giving, including but not limited to wills that name the Museum as a recipient, annuities, life estates, and endowments. The Museum is developing a planned giving program as a major element of the year one annual work program. Information is provided in the Appendix, of this document.
- Gather expertise from a knowledgeable attorney, and from other organizations.
  - Organize information to be provided to targeted community members, business contacts within and outside the community, patrons, and other friends on an ongoing basis.
  - Carry out a fundraising campaign, utilizing professional assistance for the campaign as feasible.
  - Incorporate requests for planned giving as an ongoing activity.
- M. Work with the Coos County Cultural Coalition, and apply for Oregon Cultural Trust funding as feasible.
- N. Gather information as to how gift shops are organized in other museums, develop policies, priorities and expectations, and organize a gift shop in the Museum.
- O. Pursue all feasible options that could increase revenue for the Museum.

# Attention to Operations

## Challenges and Opportunities

Coos Art Museum operates with the assistance of many volunteers and part-time staff. For example, the Bay Area Artists Association assists with a myriad of projects associated with ongoing exhibits. There are volunteers who work at the front desk to greet the public. Board members who set policy and oversee activities serve in a volunteer capacity. Like many organizations, the Museum depends upon committed volunteers for carrying out many programs and events. While the bylaws make reference to a number of standing and special committees, all do not function as set forth in the bylaws.

For example, the Building Committee is to serve as a liaison with the city of Coos Bay for renovations and maintenance of the facility. The Development Committee is defined as incorporating four subcommittees that include membership, fundraising, public relations, and marketing/advisory. The bylaws make reference to an Education Committee and a Volunteer Committee. It is not unusual that this organization has committees that do not function at all times because some things come to the forefront at one time, but fall behind at others. It is, however, important that the committees function when they are needed. The Museum needs the involvement of a full board and a number of volunteers that are not on the Board. This spreads the work out, and builds a strong organization.

## Goals

Outcomes for all of the following goals can be quantified and measured on an annual basis.

- Organize to increase task force assignments for specific tasks, and committees to oversee ongoing expectations. When appropriate, include both Board members and others from the membership.
- Incorporate new policies and procedures for new directions and activities as necessary to assure smooth functioning of the Museum now and in the future.
- Enhance volunteer support.
- Continue to operate as a well-organized stable nonprofit organization with attention to ongoing recordkeeping, financial aspects and other organizational aspects that are characteristic of the operations today.

## Strategies

- A. Implement this strategic plan.
- B. Provide for institutional continuity by organizing and implementing policies and procedures for various aspects of operations. Many policies and procedures are already being utilized.
  - Develop policies and procedures to assure that donors and sponsors are properly credited.
  - Over time, develop policies and procedures related to collaborations and partnerships, joint marketing and other programs such as the Museum gift shop that are addressed within this document.
- C. Organize a Friends of Coos Art Museum group to provide ongoing support for the Museum. There are a number of excellent models, including, but not limited to Friends of Shore Acres, Friends of the Coos Bay Library, and Friends of the North Bend Library.
- D. Organize committees to involve both Board members and members at large to encourage greater participation, involve more skill sets, and create more widespread understanding of the Museum and its functions. This will contribute to greater community commitment over time. Support and enhance committees such as the Education Committee that are now functioning to carry out their work.
- E. Utilize the task force model for problem solving or carrying out specific functions. Task force groups that include Board members, staff, and at-large members can be organized for specific assignments that are limited in their scope. Such assignments provide opportunities to involve professionals or others with expertise, whether or not they are involved with the Museum on an ongoing basis.
- F. Seek additional Board members to comply with the bylaws. Provide this plan to prospective Board members so that they will be able to understand the commitment that is required. Appoint additional Board members who are eager to contribute to the excitement and involvement required to implement this plan.

# Annual Work Program

## Challenges and Opportunities

Implementation of this strategic plan presents a challenge and an opportunity that can best be accomplished “one bite at a time.” Carrying out the goals and strategies within this section will help keep the Board, other volunteers, and staff on one track so that activities that are undertaken continue to work towards the common goals that are identified within this document.

## Goal

- Implement the strategic plan by keeping the plan current, developing an annual work program, and assuring that all activities are coordinated.

## Strategies

- A. Review accomplishments of the past year, and determine what is successful and where more emphasis is needed. Determine overall progress, and where strategies are not relevant or have been completed.
- B. Organize projects to be undertaken in the coming year, and assign responsibility to develop the annual work program.
- C. Determine how success will be measured for each activity that is to be undertaken, and assure that benchmarks and procedures are in place to measure outcomes.
- D. Adjust ongoing activities as necessary, recognizing that strategies within this document present suggestions for implementing goals that may need to be adjusted over time.
- E. The form on the following page may be utilized for assigning activities, timelines, and determining expected outcomes.



This plan was completed June 30, 2009. At the time of completion of this document, the first year work program is being organized, and implementation is underway. The intent is for each annual work program to become an element of this document so that the plan is an ongoing living document.