

July 20 Mini Arts Summit Summary

Over fifty people attended the Mini Arts Summit on July 20 in the Plaza Room. For the past year the Edmonds Arts Commission has convened work groups focusing on specific areas of interest that emerged in the [34 strategies](#) called out in the 2014 Community Cultural Plan. Work groups are: **Arts Education, Space for Art, Programs & Events, Communication and City of Edmonds/Strong Arts Sector**. The Mini Summit was an opportunity for each of those groups to share progress to date. ([See Agenda.](#))

Mayor Earling welcomed the group with comments about the importance of arts in the lives of Edmonds residents and the vital role that arts play in our local economy through attracting visitors to our community. He urged the group to continue their efforts to partner and build on the strong arts assets in Edmonds.

A short video (prepared by Dawn and Darlene McLellan) highlighted the many Edmonds arts and culture organizations, providing a lively sense of the depth and breadth of arts in Edmonds. There are more than 50 cultural nonprofits and arts businesses in the community.

Work group reports emphasized the positive energy generated by bringing people together to discuss both current and future efforts in the arts. Partnerships and collaborations have flourished in the past two years and there are some exciting new programs on the horizon. All of the work group reports indicated a high level of creative energy and accomplishments in their groups and a desire to keep things moving.

- In Space for Art new developments such as the [Cascadia Art Museum](#) were highlighted, as well as the addition of exterior space in public plazas and the use of public right of way for the **4th Avenue Interim Art Project**. Needs for visual artist work space and alternative performance spaces are important in future facility planning in the community.
- A main focus of the Communications work group has been development of an inclusive **Calendar for Arts, Culture and Events** which is now available through the City of Edmonds [Visit Edmonds](#) website. A handout on [how to post an event](#) and using the site was distributed.
- In Arts Education there are growing needs for access to arts but also expanding programs to make arts more accessible to youth, for example the ECA's new Arts for Everyone program. An **ongoing roundtable forum for the Arts Education** group will be a regular fall and spring opportunity for sharing and connecting.
- The Programs & Events group reported on the importance of making **partnership connections** and building on existing programs, with both examples of new programs developing such as the Creative Age Festival of Edmonds, and expanding programs such as Jazz Connection. A [program planner template](#) was developed to assist with thinking through new or expanded programs.
- The City of Edmonds/Strong Arts Sector report included reference to the recent legislation at the state level for [Cultural Access](#), advocacy for arts locally and future cultural planning.

Attendees then participated in breakout groups and discussed a set of key questions related to next steps. Highlights are provided here, and full notes are available on request, 425-771-0228.

Calendar –

Questions: How can each of us ensure that all relevant players populate the calendar with timely information? How can we make the calendar more visible?

Process to populate:

- Make it easy– create a habit of posting – use direct downloads when possible – provide option to subscribe to reminder email
- Provide additional training sessions and explore possibility of translation
- Review posting policy – wide variety of events
- Use more volunteers to gather information, identify events like live music at pubs, and encourage participation

Promote:

- Different uses for calendar – as a Planning Calendar vs. Promotional Calendar
- Encourage links to other calendars and reciprocal linking, links on social media
- Send calendar link to all organizations with link to tell them how to post, contact directly
- Print business cards with information about finding events on the calendar on one side and information about how to post on the other side
- Promote broadly: e.g. Chamber, CRAZE, Sno Cty website, media, PTAs, reader boards/video at key locations

Youth Access –

Question: How can we best create a citywide focus on improving access to arts for youth (K-12) in 2016?

- Create new or consolidated event that engages all of arts sector and youth and families
- Encourage events like geocaching, mystery weekend, Where's Waldo, with arts focus – get nonprofits, City, and businesses involved, participation of youth in Art Walk
- Spontaneity – taking arts to where youth are – and serendipity
- Lower the barrier to participation – cost, language, location, schedule
- Partnerships are key
- Engage parents – engage and connect with School District
- Student participation in arts organizations, student representatives, interns etc.
- Encourage assignments in arts that tie to the curriculum

Work Group Leveraging –

Question: How might each Work Group play a role in leveraging or supporting what you heard from other work groups today? Where are key places to work together?

- Collaborative community wide events, help nurture a strong arts community, e.g. plein air painting; cultural heritage, food
- and resources, e.g. salmon and berries theme
- Connecting arts businesses, other businesses, arts organizations, City Chamber etc. to contribute to citywide event increases ownership across the spectrum, Art Walk model
- Communication is key, knowing what other organizations are doing, much more than the calendar, need regular updates to publicize resources and needs, share experiences
- Grow the work groups, increase broad participation
- Partnerships to utilize existing spaces and create new spaces for art impact all work group areas – City, business, church, nonprofits work together to create solutions – be aware of alternative venues e.g. author readings at businesses

- Support Edmonds as a destination

Next Summit –

Question: What have we heard and learned today that drives us towards a timeframe for the next full Arts Summit?

- Continue work group structure and identify next actions – implement specific strategies
- Hold annual mini arts summit, convened by City, to report on / celebrate accomplishments and focus efforts for next steps leading to action
- Include presentations with updated visuals
- Full summit as kick off to larger Cultural Planning process every 6 years
- Important to acknowledge that community is growing the arts, looking forward, working together

All work groups invite interested community members to join them. If you are interested in getting involved with one of the work groups please contact Frances Chapin, Arts & Culture Manager frances.chapin@edmondswa.gov Next work group meetings will be in October.