

Collaborative Strategies for Statewide Cultural Development

Prepared for

The Oregon Governor's Task Force on Cultural Development

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WESTAF

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Executive Summary

Collaborative projects are plentiful in the cultural community today. Public agencies, along with private foundations, corporations, and foundations have come to view cooperative activities as a means of increasing the leverage and impact of their efforts. This report was prepared to inform the members of the Task Force on Cultural Development of some of the key collaborations that have occurred in the cultural community, and to relate both the positive and negative outcomes of those cooperative efforts.

Although there are endless permutations of cultural collaborations, the following five categories of purpose illustrate some of the key collaborative activities underway today:

- Funding-oriented collaborations among public sector entities
- Formalized collaborative state governmental governance structures
- Ad hoc collaborations among cultural organizations
- Cultural organization collaboration with the education community
- Interstate and international collaborations

Although these examples of collaboration illustrate the great potential for positive results, some elements also should serve as a caveat to those entering into such partnerships without first examining carefully the collaborative process.

The following benefits can result from successful collaborations:

- Increased funding for all partners
- More efficient and effective use of funds
- Enhanced cultural programs and services
- Effective tools for crisis management

While the benefits of collaboration can be substantial, there are many barriers to the development of effective collaborations, including:

- Conflicting organizational goals
- Unequal resources
- Lack of dependable leadership
- Lack of commitment to the collaboration

The exploratory work that occurs prior to the actual collaborative project or activity is the crucial foundation for a successful collaboration. Careful attention to the goals, administration, leadership, and outcome of a partnership can mean the difference between a celebrated success, and a highly-publicized failure.

The Task Force on Cultural Development received a strong mandate from the Governor, a useful first step in establishing an effective coalition. While the primary partners in the

project represent the major sectors of the cultural industry in Oregon, the Task Force is encouraged to seek additional partners, including private sector organizations, corporations, foundations, and key individuals in the cultural community. The recently completed 'cultural mapping' report that is commented upon in the Appendix is an excellent initial source for the identification of additional key community resources that could be tapped for Oregon's important cultural development efforts.

I. Introduction

The work of the Governor's Task Force on Cultural Development, a body charged with the development and realization of a vision for a higher and richer level of cultural development for the state of Oregon, is collaborative by necessity. Although there can be leading individuals and leading agencies in such an effort, the decentralized nature of the cultural infrastructure of the state requires a cooperative approach. The government in Oregon—like many city and state governments across the country and the federal government—has rejected the adoption of comprehensive cultural policies and the establishment of the central instrumentalities needed to implement such policies. The purpose of this paper is not to debate the efficacy of the decentralized cultural policy model and its administration, but to explore collaborative structures and opportunities that can be activated to outline and implement a vision for the state's cultural future.

The key partners in this Task Force are the Oregon Historical Society, the Oregon Council for the Humanities, the Oregon Heritage Commission, and the Oregon Arts Commission. All are organizations of high standing with records of significant accomplishment—key attributes that are essential in providing leadership in a collaborative process. The partnership between these four entities in this endeavor is promising for Oregon because the benefits of collaborative cultural development activities far outweigh the results any one of the primary partners could accomplish alone. Each of these entities, though statewide in reach and programmatic intention, is modest or small in institutional size and limited in influence. Working together, they can assume a strength and enjoy a velocity of accomplishment that will make a real difference in the cultural development of the state.

The Task Force effort is also necessary, in that no one of the lead organizations has been chartered by the public to envision and implement a cultural future for Oregon on its own. While the core partners come to the cultural planning task representing many persons and organizations, Oregon is a state in which expectations of citizen participation and collaboration are high. Only an extensive dialogue with the public about the design of the cultural vision and the nature of its implementation process will invest a cultural development effort with the support it needs to succeed. Oregon is fertile ground for collaboration-based initiatives, and this predisposition of the public will be an advantage to this effort if properly utilized.

Finally, for long-term and truly meaningful cultural development to occur, the key concepts of the cultural development plan must enter and make a permanent impact on the core consciousness of the state. When this phenomenon occurs, important decisions at all levels of the private and public sectors and even individual actions throughout the state will be influenced by and help implement the vision outlined in the cultural plan. The diffusion of the plan throughout Oregon's decentralized decision-making structure will be its ultimate collaborative success.

II. Threads of Commonality

Following is a sampling of collaborative cultural development activity in a number of states. Many of the accounts feature the work of state arts agencies. Please note that this is the case only because WESTAF research files and expertise are weighted in the area of WESTAF's historic mission—arts development. The limited time available for preparing this draft required that the researchers begin their work with existing examples and contacts in the arts field and then branch out to locate data in other fields. The reader is asked to approach the examples listed below with three understandings in mind.

Due to the short time line, this report is necessarily imperfect. Additional examples could be included and elements of the report expanded. In spite of this fact, the authors chose to submit the report now in order to allow the Task Force on Cultural Development access to background information they need for their deliberations.

The reader is asked to consider the theoretical structure of the each collaboration model discussed in the paper rather than focus on the organizational and project specifics of each example. The structure of the collaboration rather than its linkage to a particular field of endeavor is the message that is being communicated through the examples.

Finally, the following list of examples is not exhaustive and is only intended to provide key instructive samples of collaborative activities. Our research indicates that cultural organizations and agencies are innovative and adept collaborators. A full itemization of the variety of collaborations they have engaged would be too extensive for this exercise.

Of course, there are many other collaborations that could and should be considered outside of those cited in this paper. Of particular and growing import are collaborations the cultural community is engaged in with the private foundation community and the business sector. The corporate and foundation sectors have undergone enormous structural changes in the past ten years and the types of cultural collaborations in which these entities are now engaged rich and diverse. Additional research regarding the nature of these collaborations would be beneficial to the deliberations of the Task Force.

Funding-Related Collaborations in the Cultural Community

One of the most compelling arguments for collaboration is the ability to increase the financial resources of an agency through advocacy partnerships. The following examples demonstrate instances of successful collaborations that resulted in increased funding to the cultural community.

Michigan

The Michigan Humanities Council is engaged in a growing partnership with the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs. The stimulus for the partnership is the fact that the Arts Council has a substantial budget (more than \$20 million) yet a very small staff. This has necessitated the outsourcing of a number of statewide programs. In fiscal year 1998, the Arts Council funded the Humanities Council with a total of \$260,000 to support programs such as an on-line arts and humanities Web site, reports on the arts and humanities that are carried on Michigan Public Radio, the joining of the Humanities' Chautauqua program and the Arts Council's touring program into an arts and humanities touring program, and the development of a future statewide education conference. Discussions are underway regarding a possible statewide publicity campaign to promote the humanities and the arts. The joint activities are advised by an Arts and Humanities Steering Committee, the chair of which is a member of both the Arts and Humanities Councils.

Missouri

A bill signed in July, 1998 by Missouri's governor allocated a consortium of five cultural institutions approximately \$1 million in new funding annually. The legislation evolved out of core legislation designed and advocated by the Missouri Arts Council. The original bill, passed in 1995, allocated 50% of the revenues flowing from the state income taxes levied on non-resident athletes and entertainers to the Council for a cultural trust fund. The trust is expected to contain \$200 million in 10 years, including \$100 million in public funds from the tax levy and \$100 million in private matching funds.

Because the revenue stream for this project initially was only partially dedicated (50%), the Arts Council invited other possible partners to join it in seeking the remainder. Included in the partnership were the Humanities Council, the State Library, the State Office of Historic Preservation, and Missouri public radio and television interests. The bill that was passed by the legislature and signed by the governor in 1998 allocated approximately \$1 million annually in new money to each of the new partners and gave the Arts Council access to 60% rather than 50% of the revenue stream, thus accelerating its ability to build the cultural trust fund. This collaborative effort resulted in the creation of an effective advocacy team—a team that likely will build upon this legislative success.

Nebraska

The Nebraska Arts Council has engaged in many productive collaborations in areas such as tourism, education, highway beautification, and heritage preservation. In recent years, however, it has focused most of its efforts on the development of a cultural trust fund in collaboration with the Nebraska Humanities Council. The multi-year legislative effort was successful in the 1998 session of the Nebraska legislature when that body allocated \$5 million as a first step toward the development of the trust. Together, the Humanities Council and the Arts Council will raise \$5 million in private matching funds and then seek additional legislative and private-sector funds to build a trust fund corpus

of \$50 million. The earnings from the fund will be split 70%-30%, with the Arts Council receiving the larger share.

Jennifer Clark, the Executive Director of the Nebraska Arts Council, noted that the successful collaboration with the Humanities Council was built on: a) A commitment to spending the time necessary to build the partnership; b) The development of a joint sense of timing as to when to take critical steps in the legislative process; c) A joint commitment to flexibility and accommodation; and d) The establishment of a pattern of continuous conversation that allowed for the development of an understanding of the evolving character of each organizational partner and the values and attitudes that buttressed the actions of each. She also noted that the trust was built over time with small successes and that the major success experienced in the passing of the trust legislation was helpful in cementing an inter-organizational bond that will need to last for a very long time.

Formal Collaborative Structures within State Government

A number of states have engaged successfully in inter-agency and inter-organizational collaborative programs and services. Many of these collaborations have been based on informal agreements rooted in the sharing of overt goals rather than formalized processes. Some states, however, have implemented or are planning to implement formal collaborative processes that expedite joint action. The following examples illustrate approaches to this formalization.

Kentucky

Kentucky's state cultural agencies and some private-sector cultural partners are engaged in a state structure that encourages and rewards collaborative work. The Kentucky state government's Education, Arts and Humanities Cabinet is one of several cabinets in the state's government and is one of the most active in terms of its collaborative endeavors. The 15 partners in the Cabinet include state agencies such as the Department of Education; Libraries and Archives; the Heritage Council; the Kentucky Arts Council; public television; the Kentucky Historical Society; and independent, non-profit organizations that are funded by or otherwise substantially related to the state such as the Humanities Council, the Kentucky Center for the Arts, the Governor's School for the Arts, and the Governor's Scholars Program. These agencies and organizations have substantially different levels of state funding, vary significantly in terms of number of employees, and are related to state government in substantially different ways. Nevertheless, they meet monthly as a group and all have a voice in the cultural development of the state. The groups in the Cabinet share some important core attributes: all have statewide mandates; all are focused on direct service to a broad public, and most have volunteer governing boards. The participants in the Education, Arts and Humanities Cabinet have been said to be intensely collaborative in part because the Cabinet's Director has encouraged and rewarded collaborative activity.

Other cabinets in Kentucky state government are reported to be much less collaborative.

Through the Cabinet structure, several specific cultural collaborations have taken place. Examples include:

- In a two-day retreat, members of the Education, Arts and Humanities Cabinet explored ways they could contribute to the opening celebration of the Kentucky History Center individually and together. The Center is a new 100,000+ square-foot facility in Frankfort, the state capitol. Programs put into place ranged from activities on site at the opening of the Center to the development of statewide activities designed to call attention to the opening of the facility and to encourage attendance at the facility.
- The state fair has a wing of a pavilion dedicated to education and arts. The Historical Society is partnering with the Arts Council during the 1998 fair to emphasize the connection between everyday life and art throughout the history of Kentucky. The effort will focus special attention on the craft heritage of the state.
- The state Deaf and Hard of Hearing Festival will sponsor a narrative stage that will feature the heritage of the deaf. Collaborating on this project are the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Agency, the state Folk Life program and the Arts Council.
 - The state's poet laureate program is a joint project of the Kentucky State Library and Archives and the Arts Council. In addition, members of the Cabinet work with the state's libraries to include the cultural community in the computer-access program funded by Bill Gates.

Iowa

The Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) was created in 1986 as part of a comprehensive statewide reorganization effort that encouraged collaborative restructuring and decreased the number of cabinet-level positions in the state. The DCA consists of the State Historical Society of Iowa, the Iowa Arts Council, and the Department of Cultural Affairs Administration. The overall mission of the DCA is to promote awareness of and participation in cultural events, activities, and programs designed to enhance Iowa's quality of life.

The implementation of the current cabinet structure in Iowa has reduced the size of the Governor's cabinet from over 60 members, who rarely met, to approximately 20 members who meet regularly and have a much greater opportunity to influence policy. In addition, the revised structure has encouraged collaborations among the organizations participating in the DCA and has positioned DCA entities to work more effectively with other departments and agencies in state government. One example of this is the Iowa Charrette, an initiative of the DCA. One Iowa Charrette involved the DCA with a group of governmental partners, including the Departments of Public Safety

and Transportation and the local governments of Cedar Rapids and the Quad Cities. The group worked collaboratively to identify and implement infrastructure demonstration projects-- projects designed to develop innovative approaches incorporating cultural concerns into community improvement and infrastructure projects.

New Mexico

The New Mexico Office of Cultural Affairs is a state department that is an aggregation of nine divisions. The divisions: the Museum of New Mexico; the State Library; New Mexico Arts, the state arts agency; the Museum of Natural History and Science; the New Mexico Space Center; the Hispanic Cultural Center; the Farm and Ranch Museum; the Historic Preservation Office; and the Cultural Affairs Offices' administrative unit. All units report to the Cultural Affairs Officer, who presents their budgets to the governor and the legislature. The Officer also works with the member entities to develop a legislative message and to coordinate their relationships with other state entities-- particularly the tourism agency. The Cultural Affairs Officer encourages collaboration among the units of the Office of Cultural Affairs and convenes their leadership on a quarterly basis. Although the Officer strongly encourages collaboration, several units of the Office are reported to resist such behavior.

Wyoming

Although it does not yet have a formal structure for collaboration, the organization of state government in Wyoming is currently being transformed in order to match more closely the agencies that operate in each department of state government. The most recent example of this change is occurring in the Department of Commerce, which currently encompasses the Divisions of Parks, Cultural Resources, and Operations and the various licensing boards. The Divisions of Tourism and Economic Development that were previously under the Commerce auspices now make up a new Business Council.

As a result, the governor and his staff plan to recommend one of three scenarios for reorganizing the Department of Commerce:

- 1) Rename the Department to reflect more accurately the work of the current participants. One name that has been suggested is the *Department of Cultural Resources*.
- 2) Re-assign each of the divisions to other existing departments. For example, in this scenario, the Division of Parks might be reassigned to the Department of Game and Fish.
- 3) Augment the current agencies with divisions from other departments to create an enhanced Department of Cultural Resources. The Library Division would be a likely candidate for inclusion in this scenario.

The recommendation from the governor's staff is expected soon and will require legislative approval.

Ad-Hoc Inter-Organizational Collaborations

In this era of increasingly globalized industries, the cultural community is engaging in many collaborations that ignore traditional state or national boundaries in favor of sharing resources in the interest of more effective and exciting cultural activities. Following are just a few of the inter-state and international collaborations that have been explored.

California

California is a large and diverse state, and the very size of its state government makes formal collaboration difficult. In spite of this challenge, the benefits of collaboration in such a large system are enormous, making collaborative work quite inviting.

The California Arts Council engaged in a very fruitful collaboration with the Division of Fairs and Expositions during the past year, resulting in the creation of a permanent California Fairs and Arts Working Group (CFAWG) composed of representatives from both agencies. CFAWG was originally conceived to explore the potential collaboration between county fairs, which are constantly searching for ways to increase and diversify

their performances as well as audiences, and the arts, which are always seeking new audiences. An 18-month process resulted in a publicly stated commitment to the collaboration by the Directors of both agencies and a commitment of \$50,000 by both agencies to support a pilot program known as the *California Treasures Pavilion*. The Pavilion will be a modular touring exhibit available to fairs of all sizes across the state and will focus on high-quality staging of professional and emerging artists in California.

Despite the seemingly congruent objectives of the two groups, the process of arriving at a successful collaboration was not without difficulty. The initial stage of the collaboration process focused on the identification of organizational culture and language differences between the two constituent communities. Particular attention was paid to focusing on simple differences in language and jargon. For example, the fairs' community refers to non-agricultural performers at a fair (such as singers and dancers) as *acts* rather than *artists*. The differences grew beyond the semantic when issues such as appropriate staging needs and placement of acts/artists at fairs were explored. One example of the difficulty in integrating the activities occurred when a chain-saw-carving exhibit was placed next to an a cappella singing group. Such issues of compatibility are beyond the expertise of fair directors, who are often overextended both in terms of time and budget. In the same way, directors of local arts councils lack the knowledge of fair audiences necessary to recommend appropriate acts. The primary goal of the permanent CFAWG is to encourage collaboration between fair organizers and the staffs of local arts councils.

Another recent collaborative effort undertaken during the past year in California was the establishment of a working group consisting of the Executive Directors of the California Humanities Council, the California Division of Tourism, the California Office of Historic Preservation, and the California Arts Council. The group met monthly, and the top official of each organization participated in the meetings. The goal of the group was to create a joint \$5 million cultural tourism development and marketing initiative, that was designed to be funded through legislative appropriation or by executive order. Although the group was not successful in creating a permanent fund for a variety of reasons (most prominently, operating in an election year with a term-limited governor and the pending resignations of all of the state agency Directors with the change in administration), an important collaborative precedent was set. Because the California Humanities Council is not a public agency, its director will remain in place despite the change in administration and is optimistic about working with the other agency successors to revive the effort.

Utah

The Utah Humanities Council long has collaborated with Utah's major cultural entities through the Utah Cultural Alliance. The Alliance is a broad-based network that includes libraries, historical societies, the state arts agency, historical societies, preservation organizations, and others. Information exchange, lobbying, and program development are the primary activities in which the Coalition engages. The Humanities Council reports that its lack of state agency status has not negatively affected its work with state

cultural agencies and its participation in discussions regarding the possible development of a state office of cultural affairs. Such an office would provide a formal collaborative structure for the cultural interests of Utah.

Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Humanities Council has been actively engaged in collaborations with state cultural organizations and private cultural organizations with statewide interests. Much of the collaborative activity originated in the state's Cultural Coalition, a group established in 1994 and composed of the Humanities Council; the State Arts Board; the State Historical Society; Wisconsin Public Radio; Wisconsin Public Television; and the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters. One of the key outcomes of participation in the Coalition for the Humanities Council was the first-time approval of a state legislative allocation of \$50,000 in 1998. The support of the members of the Coalition was helpful in the Council's securing of the state funds. The Humanities Council also collaborated with members of the Coalition on the development of the Smithsonian Folk Life Festival in Washington, D.C., that featured Wisconsin and also positioned itself in the network of cultural groups that will help plan and benefit from the state's sesquicentennial celebration. On the local level, participation in the Coalition has been helpful in the development of the cultural community's response to a \$50-million gift to Madison's cultural community that is limited in use to bricks and mortar. The understanding and knowledge base the group has built through the Coalition will help the cultural community's leadership address the benefits and disadvantages of that gift.

Collaborations with Departments of Education

One of the most effective partnerships for state agencies can be a collaboration with the education department to improve and expand cultural education. A number of state agencies have created such collaborations that merit mention.

Tennessee

The Tennessee Arts Commission constantly works with the state Department of Education to increase the quality and quantity of arts education in the state's schools. In addition to cooperative activities in the area of teacher training, the Commission was instrumental in the development of the successful Tennessee Arts Academy. The Commission also collaborates with the Department of Education and the Tennessee Performing Arts Center in an informal consortium effort called *Act III*. The name simply represents the fact that there are three partners and will be changed if additional principle partners are added. The group works together to identify financial resources, program developments, teacher training, and other opportunities that might benefit the development of arts education in the state. The consortium successfully has secured substantial Goals 2000 funding, technology advantages, and teacher in-service improvements for the state.

Kentucky

In addition to its formal structure for inter-agency collaboration, collaborations exist between the Kentucky Arts Council and the Department of Education. These include the areas of arts education, including the development of an effective education master plan; educational television, where the Arts Council regularly has promoted the production of programs and plays a role in making cultural programming available to the students in the state's schools; and the convening of interests to begin work on cultural tourism programs that include a Cabinet partner, the Environmental Education Unit, whose leadership believes that cultural tourism encompasses ecological tourism and thus is deserving of support.

Maryland

The Maryland Arts Council has been involved in a number of important collaborative activities. Exemplary is its collaboration with the state Department of Education and Frostberg State University. The purpose of the three-way collaboration is to develop teams of educators who will become informed advocates for arts education in a school and who will be available to train their peers in arts-education advocacy and methods of educational development. The Arts Council and the Department of Education each contribute \$40,000 to the effort, and Frostberg State University contributes \$10,000 and numerous in-kind services. The three-week-long program brings teams of five persons from a school together to work with artists and educators to explore ways in which the arts can be integrated into the teaching of subjects such as math, science, and English. Each team must be composed of a school administrator, two or more classroom teachers, and at least one art teacher.

Collaborations with Out-of-State Entities

A number of innovative and effective partnerships have been effected between the cultural agencies of a state and agencies outside the state or even the country. Several examples are presented below.

Tennessee

Cultural organizations in Tennessee are engaged in a number of intra-state collaborations that are designed to address several major issues. Some of the most significant of these are:

- In a partnership with cultural interests in the states of Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana, Tennessee cultural organizations and agencies are engaged in a project focused on the use of literature to improve literacy. The participating states are collaborating on the development of a Web page and are actively sharing information, strategy development, methods of evaluation, and findings. Each state will implement the program according to its own state-specific plan, and each state's plan includes the implementation of the project through a number of partners. In Tennessee, the partners are the Tennessee Literacy Coalition, the Tennessee Writer's Alliance, Nashville Reads, the State Department of Education, the Tennessee Humanities Council, the Tennessee Arts Commission, The Phrase (a non-profit literary organization), a number of county-level literacy organizations, and several story-telling organizations. The project is also linked to the State Archives and the State Library.
- With the states of North Carolina and Virginia, Tennessee is engaged in a program that focuses on the culture of Southeastern Tennessee that is shared in the neighboring states. Each of the states is focusing on different aspects of the region-- North Carolina on the region's crafts culture, Virginia on the area's music traditions,

and Tennessee on the Cherokee culture of the area. The project has a number of special partners, including the area's regional economic development corporations, the Tennessee Department of Tourism, and the Heritage Association of Eastern Tennessee. The entire effort supports the Blue Ridge Heritage Initiative--a regional effort focused on the development of Appalachian music and heritage trails.

Nebraska

The Nebraska arts agency is currently engaged in a model of intra-state collaboration that could serve as the foundation for broader cultural collaboration. The Nebraska Arts Council is a sponsor of the "Art Beyond Boundaries" conference, a meeting of arts interests in Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming. The annual gathering focuses on the art-based cultural development concerns of the region but frequently expands its agenda to include broader cultural issues. The themes that tie the participants are the maintenance and development of cultural activities in a region that has a low and, in some areas, declining population base, the challenges posed by the region's vast distances, and the very limited corporate and foundation financial resources available to support cultural development. The effort underscores the fact that political boundaries need not be a barrier to collaboration and that, in the search for partners in an endeavor, a worthwhile exercise is the consideration of potential partners outside a state's arbitrary political boundaries.

Northwestern Region

A number of complex collaborative activities are being planned around the bicentennial of the 1803-1806 Lewis and Clark expedition. The broad stretch of territory covered in the expedition and the diverse peoples and geographies encountered by the explorers provide rich material for collaborative projects. A diverse coalition of interests is now planning various collaborative activities, and includes the following potential partners; multiple states, tribal governments, the National Park Service, state departments of tourism, state historic preservation offices, state parks departments, universities, voluntary community organizations and many others. Collectively, these events have the potential to become one of the most significant regional collaborative projects in recent times. An examination of the manner in which these complex collaborations are pursued will provide important insight into the nature and mechanisms of the construction of complex collaborative frameworks.

III. The Mixed Blessing of Collaboration

Like any strategy, the act of collaboration has advantages and disadvantages. While there are those who believe that collaboration is always superior to acting alone, occasionally, there are excellent reasons for rejecting collaboration as a means of achieving an objective. Following is a brief summary of the advantages and disadvantages of collaboration as noted by those who were interviewed for this paper.

Advantages of Collaboration

- Increased Funding for All Partners. Although public funding is sometimes viewed as a zero-sum game in which the success of one agency comes only at the expense of another, the pooled advocacy resources of state agencies and others can result in a net increase in financial support. As cultural agencies across the country face continuing threats of reductions in funding or find themselves in a situation where funding has plateaued and there is no seeming hope for future increases, partnerships offer some encouraging results. Engaging in partnerships can be one of the most effective methods of demonstrating the value of a variety of activities and creating a coalition that can improve the collective budgetary standing of a state's cultural sector.
- More Efficient and Effective Use of Funds. The reduction and/or stagnation of available public funds to cultural agencies makes partnering to leverage such funds more important than ever. In addition to creating the means to stretch tight dollars, these collaborations help increase the audience of participants and potential advocates for cultural programs and services. While many state cultural agencies in the West are in stagnant or declining funding contexts, many local public and private-sector cultural entities have seen an increase in financial support from both public and private sources. These types of organizations can make effective partners that connect technically expert but financially strapped organizations with newer but better funded agencies.
- Enhanced Cultural Programs and Services for State Residents. One of the greatest challenges of any state agency is to assure that its good works do not go unnoticed and unutilized by the very residents it seeks to serve. Effective collaborations can help raise the profile of various services in diverse communities. The example of the fairs and arts collaboration in California illustrates how two disparate communities—one traditionally agricultural and one traditionally urban—can find common goals and common benefits in partnership.

Crisis Management. Establishing an effective partnership often can help an agency stave off crises in tumultuous times. The Maryland Historical Society, with the help of the Maryland Arts Council, was able to receive a transfer of the contents of Baltimore's Peale Museum when that historic museum closed. The very fact of the nation's first museum was closing its doors was traumatic enough for the community, but the loss of its numerous works, including paintings by members of the Peale family, a famous colonial-era family of artists, could have been devastating. A quiet but effective collaboration between the Arts Council; Baltimore city government; members of the board of the bankrupt museum; the Maryland Historical Society; and a panoply of historic preservation, tourism, and other interests led to the rescue of important art for the residents of the state. The success of the effort would not have occurred unless the Council had built and sustained effective working relationships with all of these groups prior to the crisis.

Barriers to Attaining Successful Collaboration

A Chinese proverb, roughly translated to "same bed, different dreams," illustrates the potential barriers that can inhibit the development of a successful collaboration. Unless partners are well chosen, goals well established, and processes well conceived, collaborations can break down into a morass of burned bridges and hurt feelings.

The Oregon Governor's Task Force on Cultural Development has a strong foundation in the executive order for its creation, but should be mindful of the following potential hazards of collaboration:

- Conflicting Goals. It is critical to explore fully the specific objectives that each partner seeks in a collaboration at the beginning of the process. In some cases, the stated goals of an organization may mask the politically expedient goals that truly guide its work.
- Unequal Resources. While maximizing resources through partnership can make good use of scarce funds, unequal resources can lead to differing expectations and measures for success. Just as well-defined objectives are key to the success of a collaboration, so are clear expectations for each member, and measurable benchmarks for success in each phase of the project.

Undependable Leadership. Collaborative efforts have leaders and the leaders need to be dependable, communicative and truly represent their organizations. In addition, the leadership – meaning both the governing board leadership and the executive of the organization – must follow a path of decision making that is predictable and dependable—to do otherwise is to undermine the foundation of trust that is necessary for any collaboration to go forward.

- Lack of a Full Commitment. Unless those engaged in collaboration are fully committed to implementation of the strategy, it will fail. One must consider the

various ways entities can support a cause, and full-scale collaboration may not be the most appropriate. This is particularly the case when those seeking to initiate collaborations are not willing to commit the time and resources necessary to fully realize the collaboration. The result will be a trail of unhappy partners. Sometimes those who think they want to engage in collaboration simply desire the endorsement of another group, the advice of another group or the goodwill of another group. Organizations can be bound together by many types and levels of relationship and because collaboration is perhaps the most intense of these, it should not be entered into unless there is a full commitment of the time and resources to fully implement it.

Knowing When to Say No to Collaboration

All projects are not suited to collaborative strategies. Some are too small to warrant the time and attention of a partner, some projects are too technical in nature to share with others, particularly when no one is available with the technical knowledge base to engage in a partnership conversation. Finally some opportunities are simply too good for an organization to share—and out of respect for the organization's history and constituency, if it can realize and maximize the special opportunity without taking on partners, it should consider doing so. The list of when to say no to collaboration is very long. The most important thing to remember is that in this day of the canonization of collaboration—there are sometimes good reasons not to engage in that type of activity.

IV. Oregon's Task Force: Partners in Collaboration

Primary Partners

The Governor's Task Force on Cultural Development was created by Executive Order on June 19, 1998, by Governor John A. Kitzhaber. Recognizing the contribution made to the quality of life in Oregon by cultural organizations, he charged the Task Force with creating a broad-based plan for preserving Oregon's cultural heritage and providing Oregonians with cultural opportunities throughout the state. Mentioned in the Order as leading partners in planning effort are the following:

The Oregon Historical Society

Founded in 1873 and chartered by the state in 1898, the Oregon Historical Society is a private, non-profit organization that serves as the state's official historical arm. To fulfill its mission, the Society gathers and preserves documents, manuscripts, publications, films, recordings and artifacts; produces exhibitions at venues throughout the state; publishes books and information on the history and culture of Oregon; and provides professional services to more than 100 affiliated historical organizations and museums throughout the state. The Society has a staff of 60 full-and 24 part-time employees and an additional 350 volunteers who work in various capacities. The Society's annual budget is approximately \$5.2 million.

The Oregon Arts Commission

The Oregon Arts Commission was established in 1966, and re-established in 1993 as a program of the Oregon Economic Development Department. The mission of the Arts Commission is: to complement, assist, and strengthen existing or planned programs and activities of public and private associations in the arts; to promote the broadest public benefit while maintaining high artistic and scholarly standards; to encourage and give greater opportunities and recognition to individual Oregon artists whose work is or gives promise of being high quality; and to stimulate and encourage private and local initiative and financial support in connection with programs and activities in the arts. The Arts Commission has a full-time staff of five employees and supports a network of nine regional arts councils and more than 70 local arts councils. The Arts Commission's annual budget is approximately \$2.5 million. The Commission has a full-time staff of five.

The Oregon Council for the Humanities

The Oregon Council for the Humanities was established in 1971 as an independent affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Council's mission is to enrich the lives of all Oregonians through community-based, lifelong opportunities for exploring history, literature, and the other fields of the humanities. The Council has an annual budget of approximately \$600,000 with a paid staff of 4.5 FTE.

The Oregon Heritage Commission/ The Oregon State Historic Preservation Office

The Oregon Heritage Commission was created by the 1995 Legislative Assembly to be the primary agency for the coordination of the state's heritage activities. The Commission's mission is to secure, sustain, enhance and promote Oregon's heritage by ensuring: coordination of heritage initiatives by public and private organizations; advocacy for all levels of support on its behalf; education of the public about its extent and value; and promotion and celebration of its diversity. The Commission has produced and Oregon Heritage Plan and conducted a statewide Needs Assessment, the results of which will be published in the fall. The Commission has two half-time employees and a \$150,000 annual budget, which includes a \$25,000 grant program for museums.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) was established in 1967 to coordinate, manage and administer federal and state programs for historic and archaeological resource planning and preservation. Federal programs include grants, comprehensive planning, survey and inventory, construction, local government coordination, review & compliance, investment tax credit, and the National Register of Historic Places. State programs include the special tax assessment, archeological permit, assets of the former Historic Properties Commission, and historic trails. The SHPO staffs the State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation, Historic Review Committee, and is scheduled to staff the Oregon Pioneer Cemeteries Commission. The SHPO has eight full time staff and an annual budget of about \$720,000.

The Oregon Heritage Commission and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office are separate divisions of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

Identification of Additional Partners

As mentioned in the Governor's Order, this planning project can benefit from the development of collaborations with a number of entities beyond the primary partners. Because the Task Force project is being led by organizations with statewide scope and interest, a survey of similar organizations with the identification of possible access points to their support for cultural development would be a useful exercise. As a starting point, a list of state departments and agencies could be developed that identifies each entity's current and past work in the area of cultural development, its potential future cultural development activities, and access persons and/or points of access within these organizations. Some of the key state entities that should be considered as potential partners are the Department of Education, the Department of Economic Development, the Division of Tourism, the Department of Agriculture, the State Library, the Department of Transportation and the Department of Social Services. In addition to state governmental organizations, Oregon is influenced by a number of federal and regional governmental or quasi-governmental agencies that need to be considered as potential partners in this planing effort as well as a number of non-profit entities with statewide mandates. The construction of a matrix of these non-state players that contains

information similar to that which is gathered for state governmental organizations should also prove useful to the planning effort.

Other sources of possible partners are regional and sub-regional governmental bodies, such as port authorities, regional arts agencies, special districts, cities and counties. These potential partners are numerous, highly varied in goals in function and yet many are critical to a successful statewide cultural development effort. Some of these organizations offer the advantage of a ready access point in the form of a statewide association through which one might educate, request assistance and seek advice from them in an efficient manner.

In addition to organizational partners, in any state there are individual organizations as well as individuals who are information carriers, key networkers, keepers of history, major arts activists, philanthropists, and visionaries of various kinds who need to be consulted. Simple fieldwork can lead to the identification of the organizations and individuals that collectively form another web of the complex network that will envision a future state of cultural development for Oregon and assist in its implementation.

Finally, potential partners outside of the state, including national and international partners, should be identified. Although Oregon is a state of significant size and wealth, there are occasions when, if the state combined its efforts in cultural development with the efforts of other states in the Northwest, the results could be greater than when one state works alone. Regional, national, and even international partners can help the state reach cultural development goals that may not be available within the state's boundaries and using only the resources available in the state.

The potential partners in a cultural development effort are many. Without adequate care, however, the effort to develop partnerships may become an end in itself, producing limited outcomes. The Task Force will need to decide what the focus and range for the cultural development effort will be in terms of partnerships and prioritize the list of partners and projects in which it chooses to engage. Failing to do so will keep the effort from reaping the full benefits of the synergies that can emerge from these partnerships.

V. Conclusion

The Task Force has many opportunities to benefit from the collaborative process, in fact, such activity offers some of the greatest opportunities for cultural advancement for Oregonians. In addition, the strong mandate from the Governor and the information already gathered are an excellent foundation for success. This group has the opportunity to engage in collaborative efforts that are identified through a rational, methodical processes even as the planning effort engages in highly creative brainstorming and visioning activities that are less linear in their approach. By utilizing both methodical and “out-of-the-box” thinking, while taking care to avoid the pitfalls of cooperative activities, the group can maximize the impact of the cultural plan they will develop for Oregon.

Appendix

Applications of Oregon's Cultural Mapping Report

In 1996, the Oregon Arts Commission secured the services of ArtsMarket Consulting Inc. to conduct an assessment report as the basis for a future statewide cultural planning effort. The report reviewed the commonality of key issues, initiatives, and topics that are noted in 20 of the state's most significant planning documents; identified the purpose for, conditions required for the successful completion of, and the desired outcome of a statewide cultural plan; itemized the additional data needed to engage effectively in a statewide planning effort; outlined a statewide cultural planning process; and described a statewide data-base system that could be built to conduct benchmark analyses of cultural development in Oregon. A number of findings in the report can inform the work of the Cultural Development Task Force:

- The review of 20 significant planning documents suggests that there are already a number of partners who share an interest in the initiatives and projects that the Oregon Arts Commission had identified in its 1993 long range plan. The ArtsMarket study clearly demonstrates a broad commitment across Oregon's state agencies and statewide and regional interests to initiatives and topic areas such as "access to arts in education", "expansion of community involvement in the arts, history and culture", "secure the cultural environment", "utilize partnerships as a strategy", "focus on the development of facilities and physical resources" and "ensure strong infrastructures".

In spite of the strong clustering of interest in the above-mentioned areas, the planning documents did not demonstrate a commitment to functions such as the "support for freedom of expression", which received direct indications of support in only 5 of the plans reviewed; "the role of advocacy as a key strategy", which was also noted in only 5 plans; and the "expansion of cultural and heritage tourism" which was directly supported by only 9 of the plans. These limited congruencies indicate that there are areas where substantial consensus needs to be built in order to make a topic central to the work of more of the influential entities whose plans were reviewed. However, caution is advised in the interpretation of both the limited and widely found congruencies. Users of the report are encouraged to keep the following in mind:

- a) The mere mention of a topic does not mean that organizations share the same understanding of the definition of the topic, its scope and dimensions, and the issues that are related to it. Finding partners in a collaborative project who have superficial commitments to a similar interest (as evidenced in their planning documents) is an excellent invitation to meet and clarify whether potential partners truly do share common goals. Assuming more than that prior to clarification can be a serious error.

- b) Even if groups do not appear to share common goals, it is important to investigate whether a lack of shared goals is, indeed, the fact or whether a goal was left out of a planning document for a reason that has nothing to do with the level of commitment the organization may have to it. The omission may be the result of priorities, political posturing, or the desires of vocal participants in the planning process. By the time a partnership is being formed, these barriers to agreement may no longer exist or may have become less important since the planning document was prepared. The simple fact remains, however, that if an item is not included as a prominent feature in an organization's planning document, that organization is not likely to be strongly committed to that project. If such a commitment had existed, it likely could have overcome the factors that may have eliminated the issue from the plan in the first place.
- c) Even when organizations do not mention an item in a plan or give it limited mention (such as the "support freedom of expression") the possibility exists that they may be open to being educated as to why such an item has a place in their plan. Similarly, potential partners who do not want to enter certain debates could be convinced to be silent partners in an effort with the understanding that they do not embrace the concept as a crucial principle of action for themselves and may expend little political capital advocating the position for others.

The identification of commonalities among the planning documents of organizations is an important starting point for structuring an effort to develop a coalition that will advance a common agenda. This identification of the congruency is, however, only the beginning of the collaborative effort. Other cultural planning information contained in the report may provide the Task Force with items for discussion and reflection and can serve as a starting point for an expanded and refined planning approach. The planning recommendations on pages 6-9 of the ArtsMarket report are critical to review, keeping in mind the following:

- a) The planning approach was meant to address more than the interests of the arts community. Does the approach appropriately reflect the breadth and depth of the partnership envisioned for the cultural development effort?
- b) Oregon is home to many creative and visionary thinkers, many of whom are members of the Task Force. The Task Force may benefit from convening these creative thinkers in an open-ended forum that provides them with an opportunity to comment on some of the key findings and recommendations of the ArtsMarket report.
- c) "Desired Outcomes" (item C) deserves considerable contemplation by the Task Force. In an era of public expectations of specific outcomes, the Task Force must develop potential outcomes that are detailed, realistic, and

understandable. In addition, the exercises should result in the identification of clear deliverables.

The ArtsMarket report strongly recommends the development of a strong data-collection system. The report implies that the approach should be a ‘census’ rather than a ‘sampling’ approach. Although the need to benchmark the cultural development of a state is indisputable, we recommend that the approach be substantially different from that recommended by ArtsMarket. We suggest that sampling methodology, longitudinal measuring of changes in representative communities, and the development of easily measured indicators be applied to this project. The census method of data collection recommended by ArtsMarket is onerous, invites limited compliance, and well may result in less accurate results than a simpler, more circumscribed system of measurement.

The cultural mapping and density descriptors of the ArtsMarket study provide a useful initial overview of the challenges facing the Task Force. One element that must be considered in such an effort is the need to encompass a broader spectrum of the cultural resources in the mapping exercise. In addition, the fact that there may be limited cultural activity in an area may be underreported in the broader sense. For example, in some areas, there may be little arts activity and no history museum, but there may be an excellent amateur historian who writes about the region in a newspaper and has an enormous effect on an area that, in cultural mapping terms appears barren. Similarly, the role that amateur artists, writers, and undocumented arts practitioners play in some areas needs to be investigated. The act of ‘cultural mapping’ is implemented with a set of values in mind that may not accurately reflect the cultural richness of an area. Just as the significant common interests of state agencies and other entities as evidenced in their plans provides only an indication of opportunities for collaboration, so too should the cultural mapping exercise be viewed as an indication of location of resources and the need for services, not the final word.

The ArtsMarket report, then, is a useful place to begin a number of exercises that the Task Force needs to complete. We recommend that the Task Force view the report as a starting point and not a recipe for success. The Task Force would be well advised to react to its contents and recommendations and develop broader and richer processes and goals that will allow it to accomplish its objectives.