



Arts & Culture

Seattle's public spaces and cultural spaces define who feels welcome, who belongs, whose stories are worth listening to. In our cultural life, we need artists from all backgrounds sharing their stories and world with us. If we want to be a multicultural city that celebrates Black and Indigenous histories and cultures, and the stories and contributions of all the uniquely diverse immigrant communities, we need artists making art. We need public spaces that tell our different experiences of shared history and stories from communities.

I'm proud to have supported [\\$3 million in funding](#) in assistance for arts organizations as part of the Seattle Rescue Plan. Arts and culture are essential infrastructure, and we need to invest in ensuring artists can stay in our communities and continue to create cultural spaces and art. As Congress considers an infrastructure package, I will be working with our federal partners, like Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal, to identify new opportunities to secure additional funding for arts and culture in our city.

We also need to recognize that we cannot have a thriving arts sector without tackling income inequality in our city, which impacts workers in the arts sector. We need to invest in affordable housing, affordable transit, and affordable childcare to ensure these workers can continue to call Seattle home. I have proposed [a comprehensive plan for economic recovery](#) that is focused on helping workers and small businesses throughout all of our city's neighborhoods.

My plan also proposes reinvigorating the Office of Economic Development so that it serves local businesses with tools they need to find capital and technical assistance, with attention to removing barriers for new entrepreneurs from low-income communities, BIPOC communities and the LGBTQ+ community. Artists are often small business-owners themselves who need to keep their books, pay their employees, and file their taxes. Providing technical and small business assistance for artists and culture workers is one way to ensure they are part of shared prosperity possible in Seattle.

Artists also need spaces to call home where they can create, collaborate, and plan. Art spaces have been some of the first casualties of our affordability challenges and we have lost too many. We need to preserve our existing spaces and identify currently underutilized spaces that could be used for our arts community. Theater Off Jackson is an example of a space that needs to be preserved; it's in a historic neighborhood for people of color and currently serves as a space where BIPOC theater, queer theater, body positive theater, and burlesque can run.

Recognizing the rich contributions that arts and culture makes to our community should also be recognized by designating neighborhoods that are arts and culture hubs as arts districts, which will help with placemaking and economic revitalization. As we continue to build affordable housing, we can, and should, incentivize development of co-located housing and arts and culture spaces for permanent places where ideas and art can grow, incubate, and flourish.