

# CULTURAL ELEMENT

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# CULTURAL ELEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

Underlying the Growth Management Act is the concept that any community plan which requires a public investment should be linked or incorporated as an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. The general purpose of this element is to link community cultural planning to larger community issues and to set directions for integrating the arts, humanities and history with urban design, economic development, education and other community development initiatives that shape the quality of life that nurtures Bainbridge Island.

A brief overview of Bainbridge Island's cultural resources and activities shows that the arts and humanities represent a considerable public investment. As early as 1930, citizens began chartering organizations to address specific cultural needs. Now, more than 20 organizations and businesses provide over a thousand programs, performances and exhibits annually. Well over half of Island citizens report regular visits to movies, musical performances and history and heritage events. In 1997, cultural events on the Island were attended by 26,000 people.

Publications such as *Arts News* and *Call Board* list upcoming events. Others, such as *Exhibition*, feature poetry, art work and stories by local artists. Volunteer contributions to the arts involve at least 1,500 individuals now honored in a central annual event entitled "Wild Hearts". A diverse grants and awards program fosters cultural life with seven funding sources awarding a total of over \$45,000 per year. One-fourth of Island households have at least one person earning an income from the arts.

The Bainbridge Arts and Humanities Council directory lists 800 musicians, teachers, visual artists, designers, and others in arts-related professions. All together, for-profit and non-profit arts businesses on the Island have an aggregate annual budget of \$7,800,000. The operating budget of all non-profit arts organizations totals over \$1,300,000 per year, 75% of which is earned income. City business license records list 102 arts-related businesses. In 1995 their gross receipts totaled \$6,500,000 (as compared to agricultural-related gross receipts of \$4,200,000). A task force is now examining the degree to which cultural tourism may contribute to arts-related revenue. In sum, arts and humanities play a very important role in the life of Bainbridge Island.

There are specific reasons for adding a Cultural Element to the Comprehensive Plan. First, the arts and humanities are tools for accomplishing larger community goals such as economic vitality, quality education, and community planning and design. Investment in the arts and humanities is investment in the growth of the community and in making the community a better place to live.

Second, there are many private and public arts and humanities funds, programs and organizations on Bainbridge Island whose efforts will benefit from an agreed-upon plan and orientation toward the future of the City. They include, among others, the City's Public Art

Works Program and Fund and its Arts and Humanities Fund; the Bainbridge Park and Recreation District; the Bainbridge Branch of the Kitsap County Public Library; the Bainbridge Historical Society and Museum; the Bainbridge Performing Arts Cultural Center; Bainbridge Arts and Crafts; Bainbridge Chorale; Island Theater, and such programs as Musical Evenings, the Garden Tour, the Studio Tour and Arts Walk.

Third, the Bainbridge Island City Council, in recognition of the importance of cultural programs and activities, passed an ordinance in 1992 designating the Bainbridge Island Arts and Humanities Council as the “legally constituted non-profit corporation of the State of Washington whose principal purpose is to provide planning, financial support, services and development for organizations and individuals engaged in the arts and humanities in the City” (Ordinance 92-31). This ordinance charged the Bainbridge Island Arts and Humanities Council to “prepare a plan for the arts and humanities within the city which is consistent with and may be approved for inclusion in the City’s comprehensive plan; ...” (BIMC 2.42.020C).

### **How the Cultural Element Was Developed**

In an effort to address the City Council’s ordinance, the Bainbridge Arts and Humanities Council applied in 1992 for funds from the National Endowment for the Arts with matching dollars from the City to develop a community cultural plan. The application was successful and in March of 1994 the project was under way under the guidance of a steering committee chaired by Cultural Arts Director of the Park and Recreation District, Sue Hylen. The project consisted of six phases.

**Phase 1:** During March, 1994, 21 focus groups met with over 200 residents participating in meetings. The purpose of the focus groups was to determine the cultural needs of the community. Over 2,500 responses were generated and recorded during the focus group process. Each of the focus groups followed the same line of questioning so that the information from the participants could be tabulated and compared.

**Phase 2:** In April, 1994, a survey instrument was prepared by the Bainbridge Arts and Humanities Council and distributed to a sample of all Island households, selected randomly by computer from names and addresses listed in the reverse telephone directory for Bainbridge Island. The sample, consisting of 300 households, had a 53% response rate, thereby allowing for a 90% level of confidence in the accuracy of the answers within a range  $\pm 5\%$ . Survey results showed that 95% of the respondents considered art and culture an economic asset to the community; 67% of the households attended some form of arts or humanities classes in the past year, 54% had one member of the family involved in the arts as either amateur or professional, and 25% had one member of the family earning an income in the arts.

**Phase 3:** At the same time, members of 17 cultural organizations, representing a total annual budget of \$1.3 million, completed a confidential questionnaire that asked for information pertaining to their operations including organization, financial, facilities and space needs.

**Phase 4:** From May through September, 1994, 10 task forces met to review focus group comments and survey results and transform them into a vision for the Island in the year 2000. They submitted final recommendations to the Steering Committee in November of 1994.

**Phase 5:** To provide an opportunity for residents to comment on the first draft of the plan, the Bainbridge Arts and Humanities Council held a public meeting on September 21, 1994. Community comments were recorded and passed on to the task forces for consideration in the final plan.

**Phase 6:** Several versions of the draft plan were reviewed by the steering committee and Board of Directors of the Arts and Humanities Council, and in January of 1995, a final plan was adopted which, with the exception of the first goal, listed all goals and policies presented below. In April of that year the Arts and Humanities Council presented the plan to the Mayor and City Council for adoption into the City's Comprehensive Plan. What follows is the Cultural Plan in the format called for by the comprehensive plan, with the addition of one goal which covers the existing city ordinances relating to the Bainbridge Arts and Humanities Council.

## **The Cultural Element and the City's Comprehensive Plan and Ordinances**

### ***A. Addition of a goal to City of Bainbridge Island Comprehensive Plan overall goals.***

To reflect the vision and intent of the cultural element, the following goal is submitted for inclusion:

Support, protect and enhance the value of the arts and humanities as essential to education, quality of life, economic vitality, broadening of mind and spirit, and as treasure in trust for our descendants.

### ***B. Inclusion of existing city ordinances.***

Cultural Element Goal 1 covers the City's present designation of the Bainbridge Island Arts and Humanities Council as the official body of the City empowered to act on all matters pertaining to the development, enrichment and support of the arts and humanities within the City. CUL 10.5 "Maintain a City Public Art Fund..." and CUL 11.7 "Maintain a City Arts and Humanities Fund..." cover the City's present support of the arts in the form of the Cultural Resources Subfund consisting of the Arts and Humanities Account (BIMC Chapter 3.82) and the Public Art Account (BIMC Chapter 3.80).

### ***C. Relationships between the Cultural Element and the Comprehensive Plan.***

Appendix A provides a review of the specific relationships between the Cultural Element and the Comprehensive Plan.

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# GOALS AND POLICIES

## GOAL 1

### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CULTURAL ELEMENT

**Designate the Bainbridge Arts and Humanities Council, a non-profit Washington Corporation, as the official body of the City empowered to act on all matters pertaining to the implementation (including coordination and delegation) of the goals and policies of the Cultural Element of the Comprehensive Plan consistent with the provisions of the Bainbridge Island Municipal Code and with the Comprehensive Plan.**

**Discussion:** In 1992, the City Council passed ordinances designating the Bainbridge Island Arts and Humanities Council (BIAHC) as the “legally constituted non-profit corporation of the State of Washington whose principal purpose is to provide planning, financial support, services and development for organizations and individuals engaged in the arts and humanities in the city.” In addition, the City Council created a Public Art Works Program consisting of two funds, a Public Art Account and an Arts and Humanities Account, and designated BIAHC as the organization to carry out the duties relating to the two funds.

#### **CUL 1.1**

The BIAHC shall serve as the primary voice for the arts and humanities within the City and as the principal advisory board to the Mayor and City Council, fostering a high level of quality, creativity and diversity in the arts and humanities and advocating for inclusion of aesthetic considerations in local decision-making that may have cultural implications.

#### **CUL 1.2**

The BIAHC shall provide a public forum for discussion of issues and ideas affecting the arts and humanities in the City, serve as a point of contact for information about the arts and humanities in the City, and arrange for or provide technical, managerial and planning assistance to organizations and individuals engaged in the arts and humanities.

#### **CUL 1.3**

The BIAHC shall, alone or in cooperation with the Bainbridge Island School District, the Bainbridge Island Park and Recreation District, and other public/private organizations, initiate, sponsor or conduct public programs to further the development and public awareness of interest in the arts and humanities.

#### **CUL 1.4**

The BIAHC shall serve as the designated agency for carrying out duties associated with the Public Art Works Program consisting of the Public Art Account and the Arts and Humanities Account and shall encourage grants and donations to the Bainbridge Island Arts and Humanities Account.

## **GOAL 2 ARTS EDUCATION**

**Demonstrate commitment to quality arts education and lifelong learning by advocating for comprehensive inclusion of the arts in our schools and in community settings.**

**Discussion:** Eighty-seven percent of Island residents agree that music, visual arts, and performing arts in the school curriculum improve student performance in all subject areas. Sixty-seven percent of the households attended some form of arts or humanities classes in the past year. Residents place a high value on the inclusion of the arts in education. Focus groups observed that the arts serve as an essential element of education by teaching communications, creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, perception, motivation, individualism, and interpersonal skills and that they provide one of the best avenues for learning about and celebrating other cultures. Participants in the focus groups expressed concern that the arts are undervalued in public education and not given priority in funding. They felt the arts are basic to education and have an intrinsic value in and of themselves and for the knowledge, skills, and values they impart. The Cultural Element calls for the development of a comprehensive, quality, sequential arts education curriculum, encourages opportunities for lifelong learning in the arts for all ages, and it intends to foster partnerships between community resources and the education systems.

### **CUL 2.1**

Strengthen partnerships between the schools and local artists, agencies, organizations, and businesses.

### **CUL 2.2**

Support a comprehensive quality arts education program in the schools and the community.

### **CUL 2.3**

Expand community understanding of the arts as a means to teach other subjects in schools.

### **CUL 2.4**

Use the arts as a vehicle for understanding and celebrating other cultures and Bainbridge Island heritage.

## **GOAL 3 ECONOMIC VITALITY AND THE ARTS**

**Preserve and share the community's unique setting, character, history, arts and culture by developing partnerships, resources and attractions that respect the needs and desires of Bainbridge Island residents.**

**Discussion:** Ninety-five percent of Island households agree the arts are an economic asset to the community. Twenty-five percent of Island households reported at least one member of their family earned an income in the arts. One of *Team Winslow's* goals is to "improve and market downtown Winslow as an economic and cultural center to Island residents and

visitors” and to “support, solicit, and create cultural events on the stage of downtown Winslow.” Participants in the focus groups observed that cultural amenities, facilities, and design-related livability factors such as public art and quality architecture are essential ingredients to the Island’s quality of life index. Through the placement and enhancement of facilities, landscaping, public art projects, linkages to the ferry and waterfront, and marketing strategies, the City of Bainbridge Island can enhance the economic vitality of downtown Winslow.

### **CUL 3.1**

Identify and record Bainbridge Island’s “Sense of Place” through a continuous public dialogue about preservation, sustainability, hospitality, and the influence of the arts, history, and culture.

### **CUL 3.2**

Use artistic, historic and cultural events as vehicles for sharing the Island’s uniqueness with residents and visitors.

### **CUL 3.3**

Cultivate partnerships among the organizations and those interested in the arts, economic development, tourism, historic and rural preservation.

## **GOAL 4 FACILITY DEVELOPMENT**

**Respond to the growing desire for cultural facilities by identifying short and long term facility needs and priorities, and developing methods to meet those needs.**

**Discussion:** Almost every focus group expressed the need for space as well as for a facility that could serve as a community cultural center. The presence of the Bainbridge Performing Arts Center is a source of pride throughout the community. While the efforts of hundreds of donors and volunteers to bring about such a facility is to be applauded, there is also the realization that the facility does not meet the total needs of the cultural community and that, at times, it is out of the price range of some groups as a rental facility. The need for a larger, climate-controlled, secure space for the Historical Museum was articulated by participants in the History focus group as well as other groups. Lack of gallery space and participatory spaces for classes of all kinds was also a need stated by focus group participants. The Filipino-American Community and the Mabuhay Dancers both indicated a need for support of cultural facilities.

While there are preliminary indications that Bainbridge Island lacks certain types of facilities for cultural activities and programs, it will take a comprehensive facility development study to know how to proceed. A careful and thorough study is particularly important for a small city which must consider not only the capital expense but also the ongoing operating expense of any facility or facilities. The Cultural Element recognizes the cultural facility initiatives that are currently in the initial stages of planning and development, including the Library, Historical Society, Filipino American Community, Mabuhay Dancers, and possible BPA future expansion. The Cultural Element strongly recommends that the cultural organizations

work together and encourages funding alliances to achieve the goals of the cultural organizations in developing spaces.

**CUL 4.1**

Identify current spaces and facilities available for cultural activities.

**CUL 4.2**

Match the short-term facility needs of cultural organizations with the existing spaces.

**CUL 4.3**

Assess the long-term space needs through a feasibility study.

**GOAL 5  
FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

**Encourage the fiscal soundness of Bainbridge Island’s cultural and artistic organizations by developing their capacity to maintain effective public, private and earned income funding.**

**Discussion:** As part of the organizational survey, 17 organizations submitted financial information. For the 1993-1994 year, the combined cultural budgets equaled \$1,301,460. The following charts represent how those dollars were generated and spent.

<b>Cultural Organizations Income</b>	
Membership	7%
Individual contributions	8%
Grants from private sources	3%
Grants from public sources *	7%
Earned income	75%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

*\* The support the Arts and Humanities council received from the City of Bainbridge Island (for regranting), Washington State Arts Commission, and the National Endowment for the Arts totals 99% of the public sector funds.*

<b>Cultural Organizations Expenditures</b>	
Administration	7%
Personnel *	25%
Facility (maintenance/rental) **	14%
Programs	35%
Misc. (mixture of program and facility cost)	19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

*\* Two organizations account for 60% of this figure (BPA and Parks and Recreation, but not the Library).*

*\*\* Three organizations represent 79% of this cost (Dance Center, BPA and the Library).*

Crucial to accomplishing many of the Cultural Element goals is strengthening the financial infrastructure of the cultural organizations. The organization survey indicated that the cultural organizations are doing very well in earning income but the Cultural Element stresses the need for further efforts in the area of fundraising.

#### **CUL 5.1**

Develop public/private partnerships to facilitate the financial stability and broaden the funding base for cultural organizations.

#### **CUL 5.2**

Identify new funding sources for cultural organizations and artists.

#### **CUL 5.3**

Fund the implementation of the Cultural Element based on annual prioritized needs through public, private, and earned income sources.

### **GOAL 6 HISTORY AND HERITAGE**

**Develop a greater understanding of our heritage and our living and growing relationship to our past and future and provide places and facilities in which that history will be preserved, interpreted, and shared.**

**Discussion:** Sixty-four percent of Island households responded that members attended ethnic and historical events in the past year. Forty-one percent of Island households ranked historical activities as one of their most valuable social or cultural activities. Thirty-seven percent of Island households ranked ethnic and heritage activities as their most valuable social or cultural activities. Focus groups recognized that while the Island is predominantly white and becoming more homogeneous, the rich traditions of the Japanese-American, Filipino-American and Native American Island residents are important to the present identity and sense of pride in Bainbridge Island. Also the farming tradition of the Island should be mentioned in this context. More should be done to promote and celebrate these diverse Island cultures and traditions, particularly among young people.

#### **CUL 6.1**

Create a sense of respect and importance for history and heritage among Island residents through community education programs, school curriculum and oral history programs.

#### **CUL 6.2**

Strengthen a sense of community within neighborhoods.

#### **CUL 6.3**

Adopt guidelines that will identify and preserve historic and cultural resources, farmland, forests and open spaces.

#### **CUL 6.4**

Provide places to promote sharing the Island's cultural history with the community.

#### **CUL 6.5**

Provide adequate space to collect, preserve and interpret the Island's history.

### **GOAL 7 HUMANITIES**

**Foster the spirit of community in which the richness of human experience is explored and nurtured through ongoing analysis and exchange of ideas about the relation to self, others and the natural world.**

**Discussion:** Forty-two percent of Island households ranked humanities activities among their most valued cultural activities. Fifty-two percent of Island residents ranked literary activities among their most valued cultural activities. Focus groups recommended that *Exhibition* magazine should be expanded and that the library needed expanding to better serve the needs of the growing population. Writers' workshops, retreats, conferences, poets in the schools, writers and humanists in residence were mentioned as future activities. Several focus groups mentioned the need for more discussion groups that focused on ideas underlying such terms as "community" and "economic vitality."

#### **CUL 7.1**

Heighten community awareness and understanding of the humanities through expanded programming.

#### **CUL 7.2**

Nurture creative thought and expression and an exchange of ideas between Island residents by facilitating community discussions.

#### **CUL 7.3**

Engage the community in public dialogue to acknowledge and appreciate different ways of living, thinking, believing and behaving in society.

#### **CUL 7.4**

Celebrate the richness and variety of human gifts through a festival of humanities.

### **GOAL 8 INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS**

**Encourage local support for a creative and economic environment that allows artists to continue to live and work in and for the community, and for themselves.**

**Discussion:** Fifty-four percent of Island households reported at least one member of their family was an amateur or professional artist. Twenty-five percent of Island households reported at least one member of their family earned an income in the arts. Island artists

expressed a desire to see more opportunities to show their work or perform on the Island and opportunities for professional and artistic growth through workshops. They envisioned that Bainbridge Island could become nationally recognized as a center for the arts with a variety of seminars and workshops conducted by well-known artists in all disciplines. Cross-fertilization and collaborations between the different disciplines were also mentioned as opportunities for cultural organizations and artists alike. The Cultural Element calls for the creation of a climate where individual artists cannot only survive but thrive. Recommendations for providing fellowship grants and advocating for affordable venues and facilities to produce their work will build support for artists to stay on Bainbridge Island. Including artists in community dialogues and in policy and planning decisions will enhance the Island's character.

#### **CUL 8.1**

Identify artists and their value to the community through opportunities for public dialogue, an online database and directory of artists, and residency programs.

#### **CUL 8.2**

Support artists through funding and professional development opportunities.

#### **CUL 8.3**

Increase technical assistance, network opportunities, and tax-deductible patronage for artists.

#### **CUL 8.4**

Advocate for affordable work and living space for artists.

### **GOAL 9**

#### **MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

**Plan and implement marketing and communication systems to promote the arts through public dialogue, media and education.**

**Discussion:** Eighty-six percent of Island households reported that they relied on the *Bainbridge Review* as a primary source for cultural information. Eighty percent of Island households reported they relied on word of mouth as a primary source for cultural information. Seventy-eight percent of Island households reported they relied on *Bainbridge Island Parks and Recreation Catalog* as a primary source for cultural information. Forty-two percent of Island households reported they rely on *Arts News* as a primary source for cultural information. Participants in the focus groups felt that there could be a better, more unified approach to marketing the cultural activities on the Island. The Arts and Humanities council can be used even more in the future as a focal point for communication. They felt that while the *Bainbridge Review* was a major source of communication, public access TV was under-utilized and that new computer technology will open up new avenues of communication, particularly when the new equipment at the library is installed.

Much of the success of the implementation phase of the Cultural Element will depend on an effective public relations and marketing plan for the arts. Many of the small non-profit and emerging arts groups work with volunteers and nominal budgets, which hampers their ability

to create sustained marketing strategies for their programs and events. The Element calls for the Arts and Humanities Council to expand its coordinating role to build greater visibility for and interest in these activities. Blending new technologies, such as online networks and public access TV with existing publications such as *Arts News*, *Exhibition* magazine will expand the arts audience on Bainbridge Island.

#### **CUL 9.1**

Use coordinated marketing strategies to promote cultural events.

#### **CUL 9.2**

Employ new media technologies to market cultural events.

#### **CUL 9.3**

Expand venues for artists' work and arts and humanities events through *Arts News* and *Exhibition* publications.

#### **CUL 9.4**

Cultivate patronage and awareness of the arts and humanities through personal contact with Bainbridge artists and scholars.

### **GOAL 10**

#### **PUBLIC ART AND COMMUNITY DESIGN**

**Create a stimulating visual environment through the public and private artworks programs, and create a greater understanding and appreciation of art and artists through community dialogue, education and involvement.**

**Discussion:** Ninety percent of Island households agree that public art adds to the visual appearance of Bainbridge Island. Eighty percent of Island households ranked “maintaining the natural beauty of Bainbridge Island” as the most important cultural goal for the year 2000. Participants in the focus groups felt that on the Island there is a more enlightened sense of community design than in most communities of 17,000. They observed that the community and the environment are interdependent and that attention must be paid to both the natural and built environment. Opportunities for enhancing the built environment include new City capital improvement projects such as sidewalks and curbing projects, the development of amenities such as planters, public seating and small public space, and the use of building walls for public art projects. Many of the participants in the focus groups mentioned the need for the improvement of the ferry terminal as the gateway to the Island and felt that the arts and, in particular, public art, could be used to enhance the gateway.

The residents of Bainbridge Island are justifiably proud of the built and natural visual environments of the Island and the quality of life produced by these landscape assets. As the Island continues to grow, it will be important that deliberate strategies be in place to preserve these assets. As part of community design, the Cultural Element recommends the development of a long-range plan for the current public art program and advocates public and private agencies adopting public art programs for capital improvement projects.

**CUL 10.1**

Develop a long-range comprehensive plan for the City's One Percent for Public Art Program.

**CUL 10.2**

Advocate for the inclusion of quality public art in projects built by both private developers and public agencies.

**CUL 10.3**

Promote quality design in both the natural and built environments and use artists on design teams.

**CUL 10.4**

Enhance the visual appearance of the ferry terminal and City gateways.

**CUL 10.5**

Maintain a City Public Art Fund to further the inclusion of art in public places in the City.

**CUL 10.6**

Maintain the natural beauty of Bainbridge Island.

The City recognizes its role in furthering the inclusion of art in public places in the City and for that reason has established a public art account which is funded through one percent of all city capital municipal construction or improvement project cost.

**GOAL 11****SERVICES TO CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS**

**Identify and support opportunities that enhance the excellence, diversity, vitality, collaboration and capability of cultural organizations.**

**Discussion:** In 1994, 17 artistic and cultural organizations produced 1,249 programs, performances, exhibits, and other activities. An average of 3-4 arts or humanities events per day were available to Bainbridge Island residents in 1994. The final recommendation in the Cultural Element is to strengthen the Bainbridge Island Arts and Humanities Council's (BIAHC) ability to provide services to cultural organizations, individual artists, and the community.

**CUL 11.1**

Educate the community about the services and programs of the diverse Bainbridge Island cultural organizations.

**CUL 11.2**

Cultivate cultural organizations' administrative and financial stability through educational and technical assistance.

**CUL 11.3**

Increase network and collaborative opportunities among the cultural organizations.

**CUL 11.4**

Build greater leadership for the cultural community through the cultural representative forums.

**CUL 11.5**

Develop and maintain an information system that provides information about cultural arts programs, activities and cultural arts issues of interest.

**CUL 11.6**

Strengthen the Arts and Humanities Council's ability to provide services to the cultural constituency and the community.

**CUL 11.7**

Maintain a City Arts and Humanities Fund (consisting of the Arts and Humanities Account and the Public Art Account) to promote and support local activities, programs and projects in the arts and humanities.

The City recognizes its role in the promotion and support of local activities, programs and projects in the arts and humanities and for that reason has established an Arts and Humanities Account, which is funded from each year's annual appropriated budget.