



KENOSHARISING

Transcript of Visioning Exercise
November 15, 2015

Arts are essential to a community's vitality and economic development.

A vibrant arts sector generates creativity, fuels innovation, and enriches a community's quality of life — all of which are key to attracting new business and a dynamic workforce.

The Kenosha Rising project brings together the insights of local artists and localized economic data to show that the Kenosha County arts community is growing, organized and driven.

Kenosha is Rising.

Illustration by Bess A. Yontz



On November 15, 2015 , KenoshaRising conducted a **Community Visioning Exercise** at Kenosha Fusion in downtown Kenosha. The following questions were presented to the attendants:

1. Why are you here tonight?
2. What excites you about the work ahead?
3. How do we increase community awareness for the arts?
4. How do we increase financial support for the arts?
6. What is the role of community leaders with the arts?

In the following pages you will find the transcript from that exercise,

About KenoshaRising:

KenoshaRising is a foundational body of work that began in 2014 and continues serving the interest of Kenosha’s artists and creatives today. Its organizers believe that within a global economy, creativity is a competitive edge that adds value in the marketplace but that also, arts and creativity are an engine for economic activity locally.

KenoshaRising organizers catalogue the economic contributions of local working artists, creative entrepreneurs and professionals, establishing baseline assessments of the economic impact of such work. KenoshaRising, in this way, provides language around the economics of arts and creativity in Kenosha.

KenoshaRising also fortifies a multi-sector approach, stimulating meaningful collaborations and impactful community projects among creative professionals and leaders from other sectors and fields.

KenoshaRising serves as a platform for the development of the **Kenosha Creative Economy Strategic Plan** that will occur between Fall 2016-Spring 2017.



is a collaboration among





Why are you here tonight?

- Been here 3 years. Love walking downtown, a lot of new business. Excited about the community comradery and wants Kenosha to be a place where people want to be.
- Live in Chicago, painter, teacher at Columbia – has an NFP and may move to Kenosha for a new artist in residence business and studio business of theirs. Want to make big change in a small community.
- An opportunity for us to reinvent our lives and take it to the next step. We started a non-profit 25 years ago. We like the closeness of Milwaukee and Chicago.
- Tours 16 years. Involved with asking our Francisco getting arts commission off the ground. Has seen an increase in creativity in our community lot of collaboration.
- Would like to see the Elk's club be a school for culinary – Need to be more willingness in the community to pull together. *
- I care. Ove the area. Continually a little deprived – would like to change that.
- Arts council 50 year in 2017. Want to make sure around another 50 years. Excited about seeing next generations involved.
- Our percussion studio, find ways to connect - ways to bring youth want to connect with other artists. Exciting times.
- Want to change the world, learned appreciation for arts, create sense of pride for artists, creating relationships. Great potential. *
- Vision of Kenosha as a destination, Make it a place people stop and stay
- Fine Arts in Kenosha are amazing and they need to stay that way – community must take stock of this.

- “Talk is cheap”. Want to see what happens. Arts scene needs connection and framework to continue to grow into what Kenosha needs. No reason our arts scene cannot grow (be national)
- We have so much – piece that’s missing is that people don’t take part in the things that make it amazing – if “arts” people don’t do it all, how can we expect “regular” people to do it? What is that missing piece? *
- Work CHS, shop owner, music local
- I live in a community of artist based performers to be supportive.
- Art – new to area – from east coast – American Vista
- Support the arts – quality of life – individual – community
- Small business – enjoy / support the arts – what’s up *
- Artist, theatre – directed a show, difficult to get people to come, interested in building arts community, come to figure that out.
- Did theatre all throughout high school, on Kenosha school board, interested in ways to make KUSD arts education by connecting to community.
- To bring the food, on the UCF board , CPA
- Have always been interested in music, sang with Milwaukee symphony, raising children
- Represent UW-Parkside – community engagement arts management background. *
- Help represent artists in the community as director – 8 person collective
- Practical event. Visual artist who wants to earn a living and sustain community. Bunch of us here to be proactive & change.
- Business arts in community will take Kenosha out of turmoil and into new direction
- We need more newcomers. Keep the city attractive to newcomers and make Kenosha help.
- Educate people that art is for everyone. Not just the rich.

What excites you about the work ahead?

- Empty buildings – want to see them preserved and used. Like the Apothecary. To be able to get involved rather than have it already be established.
- So much potential – like collaboration. Looking at building for printing shop, visiting artist apartments for visiting artists and community programs could buy historical building and fix it up.
- To reinvent what I've always done. Our artist – in – residence and interns working together is some of the best things I've done.
- Tourist development – sell the experience, visitor guide & social media, more arts
- The possibilities of more vegan restaurants – get an insurance building – skyscrapers – corporate identity. *
- Collaboration, engaging all generations.
- Growth
- Potential
- World changing new point, see reaction of people, creating venues for interactions, seeing impact.
- Multi-media performing arts *
- Feel Kenosha on an upswing – want to keep it going – have people want to choose here to visit.
- Excited to get opportunities for kids / students to see you can have a good life here.
- Because it's a wonderful town.
- Kenosha at tipping point – young population growing / open land / etc.
- Excited about new ideas. *
- It will bring out the creativity – outside the box
- Seen growth would love to see more growth
- Would like to be a part of the new growth
- Meet people / have fun *
- Simply having the change to do it – downtown is growing; getting to see the art, the food is wonderful – that's and art too – excited to work together & collaborate.
- Excited to see the change. Kenosha is changing every day. Excited to see friends and family be a part of it
- Collaboration possibilities – university/community groups 2 people getting together can make it happen – coming at the same thing from a different angle. *

How do we increase community awareness for the arts?

- If you love friends bring them. Walking down Main Street, if somethings happening inside people will go in.
- Social media, networking
- Where people have a positive experience, they share it, they tell their friends. Coordinating open studios & galleries, restaurant nights, create a buzz, having events that people want to experience.
- Social media. The artists are responsible for promoting their arts. We need to empower them to be more vocal. Sometimes we hear about things at the last minute.
- Use of YouTube videos, social media, advertise on mass transit.
- Businesses need to talk about the arts and the role of art in not only in the community but in the thought process of successful people. Creative thinking, problem solving.
- Business as well as citizens need to give lip service – include it in education – expand it out past downtown into Pershing Plaza, neat Target out in country.
- Unified more amongst arts – not to the point of removing challenges and competition that makes birth to better things but to make it a more visual part of what Kenosha is. A place to come to – not to drive through. *
- Performances – invite people in, bring people to downtown.
- Social Media
- Winning hearts & minds
- Identify event that attract
- Consistent messaging, forum on arts as centric, need more welders who are philosophers
- Special large scale events, bring people from outside, could evolve into annual event.
- Big showcase – revolvingvenues, reach out to homeless, women’s shelters to show them it’s not an elite. *
- People have no clue what’s going on – need to talk about it
- Blog
- Bring art to where people are instead of waiting for them to come to us.
- Need to get the whole community involved – not just downtown
- Awareness not necessarily the problem, but we just don’t have the same time we did 20 years ago.
- Engagement *
- Be proactive – Don’t slip through without knowing
- Talk with people – work on coming up with new ideas

... (Continued) How do we increase community awareness for the arts?

- Unique experiences that people will talk about good times spread
- Bring people along *
- Social media, print – posters
- word of mouth
- create suspense – anticipation
- Need community leaders / elected official to ATTEND the events. We need mandatory / PR consultants. Community art places where people can come to create
- Get leaders to understand it / support it
- Word of mouth / website be able to look ahead
- Network. Invite different sectors of the community to use space – collaborate *
- Get people involved. Educate
- Increase population flow in art community. Explain.
- Accomplish this endeavor. Will of optimism.
- This is going to happen. Pull in new people. Level the playing field.

How do we increase financial support for the arts?

- I believe buying local. Maybe not enough variety of taste in art. A mixer venue.
- Founder of non-profits, people who find the arts could invest in the community if they are aware of a need.
- We would love to create a diverse income stream. Thinking entrepreneurially, holding workshops, poetry readings in the print shop.
- Make accountable the Kenosha Arts. Commission bringing art & business together and that this is important for area community. Bring business – we want to recruit employees to a place with quality of life.
- Change people's attitudes. Need to make this business friendly – incubators. Art business incubator. *
- This should have been with government officials interacting with creatives. Educate government officials
- Education piece – let them know there is funding for arts. Need to be customer – busy local schools need to do better job, investment into community.
- We're attracting employers who are struggling to fill jobs, convince companies that Kenosha need to be attractive to line – invest in arts.

... (Continued) How do we increase financial support for the arts?

- Create experience / event that generates \$ - reinvest in Arts
- Create 10% support for arts like we do for churches. *
- Sugar daddies!
- Need people to understand people need to buy local art
- Start with children and make art an integral part of their lives. Also, integrate into business – make it imp / not just “fluff”. Make arts a NECESSARY part of lives
- We need an organization that UNIFIES the arts in town (like Grill Games / Taste are done)
Make it easier for consumers (businesses, people, individuals)
- Continue revitalization – give reasons to be here
- Ways to bring new individuals in – like Day of Dead / Israel bringing Hispanics in. Bring in new groups.
- Art community must create something worth finances – comes from within. *
- Grants – marketing
- Fundraising
- Large companies
- Awareness “ROI to the “ROC”
- Kenosha Arts channel *
- Fundraise – use your art online sites – India Go-Go etc.
- Advocate with people with deeper pockets – city – KUSD – spending is an investment
- Collaboration – join things together – people in nursing homes put it in the will – estate planning
- Fundraising is a social thing – events bring people together – include the arts in business outings
- Convince the corporate community that funding the arts is an investment in talent retention, talent attraction quality of life – creative workforce. *
- Family & friends! Educate people to they “get it” – Fundraising – don’t be afraid to ask for funds to attend events
- Free magazines – use them as a source for educating awareness not just advertising to change thought processes.
- City council etc. behind arts = tax \$, Public backing in some way. Return on Community. Include Art in event of Kenosha
- We all need to spend our own \$. Artists buys art
- Corporate Support / investment \$ but also considering local artist for the events

How do we increase coordination among similar art groups?

- Social media – post events together so members get to know each other. We are on the same team & not competition.
- Coffee and chat of possibilities, join forces – open event nights
- Formalizing what we're doing at night. An artist coalition that meets quarterly and becomes a locus for activity
- Having events like this and empowering the arts organizations. Tourism guides – they bring people together to coordinate & work together. Just introducing people to each other.
- Live / work spaces. Not investing just for profit but use the buildings for creatives. Ask the mayor – how you will get these groups together.
- Through special events
- Incorporate mutual interest, artist are very individualistic.
- Create a hub – to communicate facilitate
- Art mixer – all creative invited to share – pass the mic.
- If similar we're not competitive, we're helping each other.
- Advertise together.
- Can the commission help?
- Go over groups of artist to identify common concerns. i.e. funding. Work as one voice to solve it. *
- More coordination in 2nd sat – make it all open at same time
- Competition is elevating work in Kenosha – Challenges are good – allow that too
- Need to have all organizations promoted more by Chamber – right now nothing really – need more write ups / etc.
- Better utilize our arts commission – not many communities have that (need funding / needs organization) *
- More meetings – Social interactions at similar venues
- Looking at how other communities are working *
- Have a party!
- Events like this!
- Call people together for strategic planning
- Bring food!
- Bring Booze!
- Profile personality types – certain personalities work better together.
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... (Continued) How do we increase coordination among similar art groups?

- Ensure that everyone has a piece of the pie
- Offer funding for collaborative project only – grants
- Pool money for a billboard.
- Talk more within social circles. Social Media
- Increase media – utilize the county fair
- We have already a great resource in the commission – encourage those who are already working! Word of mouth. *
- Change of attitudes / ego = stagger events – 2nd Saturday doesn't work for all groups = no time
- Less isolation of individual events = a liaison artist = gallery aid = chamber need to coordinate
- Francisco = can be financial
- Learn from Racine
- Work together = educate that we all succeed when one does. Have fun events. One for all all for one. Business community – inside arts groups

What is the role of community leaders with the arts?

- They should see a need & a strength – introduce the people & encourage them – promotion be vocal within the community.
- Meetings, encourage ideas of how to promote, talk about how it can be good for Kenosha – artists should seek leaders and get to know them
- Developing partnership. City wants to share their resources but they don't know who to ask. We need to develop relationships with community leaders & talk with them about how they can be supportive.
- Sponsor art events & brag about it! Community leaders can lead by example. When they support the arts, they should talk about it. Lead by example
- Sing a song about doing your part, can we create something like this? PR – a jingle people can grab onto – an advertising firm.
- Partnership with businesses – creativity, growth, and ... If you offer a unique experience people will talk about it. Create those experiences, will create buzz. Tell people what we've done & not what we want to do.
- React to the Hispanic population. Letting businesses know about the importance of the arts in developing creative thinking. Increasing coordination between different art groups. Do more things like this. Support collaboration. Offer funding for collaborative activities – find a partner. Encourage leaders to participate & support – inspire a vision. Bring together the business community and the arts. *
- Need to integrated top to bottom, requirement to run for office, merge creatives with elected officials, force ourselves into conversations

... (Continued) What is the role of community leaders with the arts?

- Community leaders need to have vision, recognize all the elements.
- Political leaders need to see statistics & be more aware of it.
- Make personal connection with artists
- Take responsibility to break down barriers, funding show results why kids need to be surrounded by arts, be involved.
- Communicate the value
- They have an expectation! *
- Be leaders / examples
- Educate people more about value of arts. Our school don't value art careers so how can we expect people to go?
- Point out industry needs, creative thinkers. Business need to put some pressure on the incorporate the arts
- Leadership of going into schools and community leaders to help them see how vital arts are to talent, thinking, work, etc.
- You learn critical thinking arts, problem solving, all subjects could integrate arts
- Businesses give public lip service to the arts, a cultural shift to our community thought. *
- Have to enable – with a two way street = “Gate Keeper”
- Must be open minded – All's good – no shut down!
- Representation outside the Art community
- Focus on positive – Attitude is everything. *
- Attend, support, fund, encourage collaboration
- Set an example – listen to the community – then talk about the ideas.
- Talk about the vision
- They need to participate
- Coordinate, ignite the planning process
- Articulate the vision of where a community will be in 5 years, 10 years, as a result of event engagement
- Make connection to funding and other resources. *
- Educate – somehow invite school leaders, encourage
- Designated people. People know who
- Leaders empower artists
- Leader make resources available. Community leaders need to be educated! They need to use their notability etc. to support. They (community leadership) need to patronize the arts in Kenosha before the other. Make sure leaders are invited (asked) to events such as this one – especially other arts groups. All.