

COLUMBIA COUNTY CULTURAL COALITION

CULTURAL PLAN

CCCC BOARD

Kannikar Petersen, Chair—Saint Helens
Dee Vadnais, Vice Chair—Rainier
Margaret Trenchard-Smith, Secretary—Scappoose
Catherine Ridenour, Treasurer—St. Helens
Ernest Carman—Clatskanie
Jasmine Lillich—Clatskanie

CONTACT

Info@columbiacultural.org

PO Box 824, St. Helens, OR 97051

INTRODUCTION

Culture is essential to the quality of life in Columbia County and significantly contributes to why residents choose to live here. It is the scores of cultural organizations and events, local history and heritage, and assets such as museums, parks and open spaces, that create the cultural fabric of Columbia County. To support and enhance this fabric, residents will sustain a cultural coalition that is dedicated to supporting and fostering human expression in performing, display and theater arts, heritage and humanities.

The Columbia County Cultural Coalition was formed in 2006 in support of these resources. While originally a committee of the county commission, the CCCC is now an independent, public non-profit 501(c)3 organization affiliated with and supported by the Oregon Cultural Trust.

VISION STATEMENT

The CCCC envisions a rich cultural environment accessible to all ages and abilities of the citizens and visitors of Columbia County.

MISSION STATEMENT

The CCCC works to promote and increase cultural, historical and artistic opportunities for all citizens of Columbia County through education, promotion and funding. Efforts are made to provide this support to all areas of the county.

DEFINITIONS

Heritage is what we receive from our ancestors and the past. It includes, but is not limited to, narrative histories, historic objects, traditions, buildings, documents, photographs, museums, cemeteries, natural features, conservation, preservation, and organizations preserving history.

Art is the creative expression of individuals, groups and organizations. It includes dance, music, creative movement, prose and poetry, architecture, book making, facilities where art is produced, suppliers of arts and materials, education, and performances.

Humanities are our cultural and intellectual heritage, the sum of human experience, thought and expression. They teach us about each other and ourselves, and foster the understanding and connectivity that makes for a vital community. The humanities are the stories, the ideas, and the words that help us make sense of our lives and our world.

ASSETS

- The county is home to a large number of artists and writers who have chosen to live in the area due to its natural beauty and low population density.
- Each town has a small cadre of dedicated volunteers, primarily retired persons and women who do not work outside the home, who run the various cultural organizations on very small budgets.
- Clatskanie and Vernonia, being more isolated, tend to have a larger number of local cultural events per capita.
- Because of its proximity to the Portland metropolitan area, the county can attract “day trippers” to enjoy our natural, historic and cultural attractions.
- The various cultural organizations work with their local Chambers of Commerce to promote local sites and events both to increase tourism and to benefit local small businesses.

CHALLENGES

- Many newer residents of the South County towns of Scappoose and St. Helens identify themselves more with the Portland metropolitan area than their town of residence.
- Rainier, being just across the river from Longview, Washington, is sometimes considered part of that larger urban area.
- A large percentage of Columbia County residents commute to jobs outside the county and are not available as volunteers except on a limited basis.
- Other than librarians and teachers, there are no paid arts-, humanities- or heritage-related positions in the county.
- Local public and private funding for art, drama and music is very limited.

COALITION GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 1 Educate the public and local non-profits about the grant application process and how to present their program ideas for funding success.

Strategy 1 Sponsor or present educational events that teach the grant writing and budgeting process as well as point applicants to funding resources, both from CCCC and other sources.

Strategy 2 Announce funding cycles in social media, print media and other public forums.

Strategy 3 Maintain an up-to-date Internet presence to provide information and access to our programs.

Goal 2 Encourage collaboration among non-profits, governments and individuals to expand the scope and inclusivity of projects.

Strategy 1 Continue to support existing groups (including libraries and museums) that have cultural programs and events for youth, elders and citizens with limited access to cultural programs.

Actions needed to complete this strategy:

Continue to assess the needs of existing groups that have cultural

programs and events.

Inform county residents of the Columbia County Cultural Coalition, the Cultural Plan, and the grant program.

Benchmark: Ensure that at least three grants during the next two funding cycles are made for programs that serve these populations.

Strategy 2 Encourage cultural activities and events in parks, community centers and museums.

Action needed to complete this strategy:

Encourage event coordinators to promote such programs and identify ways to increase the number of programs.

Benchmark: Invite representatives from cultural, heritage and natural resource groups to meet with the CCCC Board to help us learn about their needs, highlighting different aspects at each meeting over the next two years.

Strategy 3 Encourage local theater productions.

Action needed to complete this strategy:

Continue the encouragement of theatrical performances in at least three communities in the coming cycle aided as needed by grant funding.

Benchmark: Support at least one public presentation of stage production or play reading per cycle.

Goal 3 Encourage the collection, preservation and cataloging of cultural knowledge and artifacts.

Strategy 1 Continue to improve the status of historical collections in Columbia County.

Action needed to complete this strategy:

Facilitate funding through grants to museums to update, archive,

restore, and/or preserve their collections.

Benchmark: Ensure that at least two completed projects focus on artifact preservation and oral histories in the next cycle.

Strategy 2 Support programs and projects that link natural resources with the arts, culture & humanities.

Benchmark: Continue to fund projects that present at least one such program in the next funding cycle.

GOAL 4 Promote and encourage cultural tourism in Columbia County.

[Definition: “A type of tourism activity in which the visitor’s essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination.”]

Strategy Request proposals for projects designed to attract visitors from outside the county to partake in the art, culture and heritage of county. Projects may include murals, art shows, musical and cultural events, art installations, and study tours.

Benchmark: Fund at least one project, per cycle, that will attract visitors from outside Columbia County.

HOW TO APPLY FOR GRANTS

Annual grant cycles are announced at our website:

<http://www.columbiacultural.org>

All forms necessary can be downloaded in pdf format and submitted electronically.