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# Strategic Plan

St. Paul Art Collective

Author	Strategic Planning Facilitator Team
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# Document Control

## Change Record

Author	Version	Date	Notes
Thomas Burke	DRAFT 1.0	Jun 26, 2023	No Previous Document
Thomas Burke	DRAFT 1.1	Jul 18, 2023	Added Samantha's Mission Statement verbiage from the Phase 2 STAR application.
Mike Brown	DRAFT 1.2	Aug 2, 2023	Updated with new content
Thomas Burke	DRAFT 1.3	Aug 7, 2023	Added Appendices D and E (temporary) from verbiage supplied by Mariusz. Fixed formatting for the Table of Contents. Added Goals 4-7 to the Summary section. Added Open Issues.
Thomas Burke	DRAFT 1.4	Aug 9, 2023	Removed the Goal/Objective Summary section as its redundant.
Thomas Burke	DRAFT 1.5	Aug 15, 2023	Thomas/Mike Working session
Mike Brown	DRAFT 1.6	Aug 16, 2023	Add content for Objective 5 and 6
Thomas Burke	DRAFT 1.7	Aug 21, 2023	Added Content for Goal 4 (Membership Model); Harvested content from Appendix B
Thomas Burke	DRAFT 1.7a	Aug 21, 2023	Fixed the TOC pagination issue (see closed issues); removed Financial Planning section (redundant); changed the goal hierarchy from Goal/Objective/Strategy to Goal/Strategy/Tactic; Changed the Tactic tables to remove Responsibility and ass targeted Timeframe.
Thomas Burke	DRAFT 1.8	Aug 29, 2023	Removed former board members from reviewer list. Moved deprecated Mission and Vision statements to Appendix B to facilitate board review. Moved Executive Summary to the Introduction section. Refined most Goal, Objectives, and Tactics. Implemented more consistent formatting.
Thomas Burke	DRAFT 1.9	Aug 30, 2023	Integrated some review feedback from Ellie. Feedback that needs deeper discussion is captured in Appendix C.
Thomas Burke	DRAFT 1.91	Aug 30, 2023	Added Mike's feedback to Appendix C

Thomas Burke	DRAFT 1.92	Aug 31, 2023	Live updates during 8/31 working session
Thomas Burke	DRAFT 2.0	Sep 1, 2023	Started polishing the verbiage from the 8/31 feedback (not done yet); Removed Appendix C. Slimmed Down Appendix A to just include the map of City Council wards.
Thomas Burke	DRAFT 2.01	Sep 4, 2023	Continued polishing the verbiage from the 8/31 feedback; refined Purpose of Document and Executive Summary. Added the Board Review Comments form as Appendix.
Thomas Burke	DRAFT 2.1	Sep 5, 2023	Added vision statement; updated open/closed issues
Thomas Burke	DRAFT 2.2	Sep 6, 2023	Per the 9/6 working session, added the Comprehensive Themes Appendix. Also moved the SWOT analysis to an Appendix.
Thomas Burke	3.0	Sep 20, 2023	Incorporated Board review comments. Removed Appendix C and D.
Thomas Burke	3.1	Sep 29, 2023	Updated document control and version. No updates made as a result of Final Walkthrough on Sep 28. This version will be submitted for final approval at the Oct 16th board meeting.
Thomas Burke	3.2	Dec 5, 2023	Removed DRAFT from the title page (it was inadvertently kept on version 3.1).

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## Document Reviewers

Name	Role
Diane McNew	Board President
Mariusz Kujawski	Board Vice President
Thomas Burke	Board Secretary
Brandon Raghu	Board Treasurer
Emma Fitzsimmons	Board Member at Large
Caleb VanDeman	Board Member at Large

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## Strategic Planning Facilitator team

Name	Role
Brandon Raghu	Facilitator
Ellie Patronas	Facilitator
Esmé Kayim-Yanko	Facilitator
Mike Brown	Facilitator
Thomas Burke	Project Manager

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# Introduction

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## Purpose of this Document

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to provide a cohesive blueprint that aligns the St. Paul Art Collective's (SPAC) operations and aspirations, ensuring that the organization remains focused, efficient, and effective in fulfilling its mission.

This document is intended to facilitate:

1. **Mission Alignment:** Ensures activities and programs match the organization's core objectives.
2. **Goal Setting:** Provides clear, measurable targets for progress.
3. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Strengthens ties with donors, volunteers, and the community.
4. **Adaptability:** Allows for flexibility and adjustments to changing environments.
5. **Fundraising Tool:** Demonstrates clear direction to potential donors and grant institutions.
6. **Operational Efficiency:** Highlights areas of improvement for better functionality.

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## Executive Summary

The St. Paul Art Collective's strategic planning project, funded by the Cultural STAR grant, demonstrates a comprehensive approach by engaging stakeholders through surveys, interviews, and workshops.

Over 200 stakeholders were contacted, resulting in 23 interviews and 22 Workshop participants.

The inclusion of a SWOT analysis, refined Mission and Vision Statements, and a hierarchical structure with clear goals and objectives enhances its effectiveness.

The recommendation to review the plan annually and treat it as a 3-year rolling strategy shows a commitment to adaptability and long-term success.

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## SPAC Background

Since 1977, the Collective has played an instrumental role in transforming the greater Lowertown neighborhood into an arts and cultural destination. Through activities and programs ranging from founding an art gallery, establishing artist/gallery networks, and starting and running the St. Paul Art Crawl, the Collective's work has directly impacted the economic, social, artistic and cultural viability of St. Paul's Lowertown and downtown neighborhoods. When Covid hit in 2020, its impact on the Collective was devastating. Staff was furloughed, and the Collective was sustained by a dedicated team of volunteers.

While we continue to respect and honor the legacy of the Collective and all of its accomplishments over the years, the board is focused on transforming the collective into a sustainable organization that can enhance St. Paul's rich arts culture for years to come.

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## 2022 Round 2 Cultural STAR Program

Cultural STAR provides grants and loans to Saint Paul cultural projects and organizations. Most projects are located in the Saint Paul Cultural District (bordered by I-94 to the north Lafayette Bridge to the east Mississippi River to the south, and Chestnut Road to the west). Cultural STAR grows Saint Paul's economy by strengthening the arts and cultural sector and supporting Downtown as a vital cultural center.

The four major goals of Cultural STAR are:

- Build and diversify audiences;
- Promote a broad range of cultural offerings;
- Produce a long-term impact; and
- Leverage additional financial support.

Cultural STAR is funded by Saint Paul's half-cent sales tax.

In September 2022, the St. Paul Art Collective (SPAC) applied for Round 2 funding from the City of St. Paul's Cultural STAR grant program to embark on a Strategic Planning Project. On January 27, 2023 SPAC was notified that our application was approved.

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## Mission Statement

The St. Paul Art Collective (SPAC) promotes mutually beneficial and meaningful interaction between the arts community and the general public. Our organization aims to:

- Develop audiences and networks for St. Paul artists.
- Provide access to the arts for everyone in St. Paul.
- Create connections between artists and the community throughout St. Paul.

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## Vision Statement

St. Paul has incredible artists, assets, and creative capacity that will enable it to significantly enrich the lives of its residents and vitality of the community. We believe that a vibrant arts community is critical to the social health, economic prosperity, and resilience of St. Paul. The St. Paul Art Collective (SPAC) will nurture this talented community of culture bearers and artists, creative energy, and public engagement to advance St. Paul as a place where artists thrive and residents enjoy an elevated quality of life.



# Goal 1: Support Organizational Health

## Strategy 1.1 Define Mission, Focus, and Value Proposition

*SPAC will review and refine its organizational mission and focus to ensure it is supporting artists as needed and as it is able given workload and financial capacity. It will clearly define what the value of membership is in the collective and communicate to members.*

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
The Collective’s mission, vision and value proposition will meet the needs of the 1) the artist community, and 2) the broader community,	Refine mission, vision, and value proposition within context of learning from Strategic Planning process. Revise and share with members and stakeholders.	2023

## Strategy 1.2 Build Organizational Infrastructure and Systems

*SPAC will have the staff capacity, skills, and knowledge to carry out the goals and strategies of the Strategic Plan.*

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Ensure SPAC has adequate staffing, systems, tools, and technology to manage internal operations and programs in the near term (2024).	Conduct an organizational operating assessment to determine staff and technology needs in the near term (2024), as well as for 2025 and beyond.	2024
Optimize 2024 staffing, systems, tools, and technology to manage internal operations and programs for 2025 and beyond.	Refine 2024 organizational operating assessment.	2025

<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target Timeframe</b>
Ensure that the Board has appropriate members to meet the needs of the organization' mission and the information and tools necessary to provide effective governance	<p>Define the expertise the board needs.</p> <p>Consider how/where to recruit new board members and how to ensure an appropriate level of engagement.</p> <p>Review Board composition to determine the right mix of individuals is in place to provide needed expertise for organization. Consider members from outside the arts community.</p>	2023
Establish a succession plan that ensures SPAC has strong leadership in the future to increase its capacity, effectiveness, and	Utilize available tools to develop a plan that identifies steps to address a change in leadership or key staff positions.	2024
Align Board committees and staffing with Goals and Strategy	<p>Optimize the staff management model to align with committee structure and board priorities.</p> <p>Clarify the responsibilities of board members.</p> <p>Consider recruiting board members from outside the arts community</p>	2024

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## **Strategy 1.3 Create a Sustainable Financial Model**

*SPAC will have a sustainable financial model that will weather the boom and bust cycles while enabling the organization to fulfill its mission well into the future.*

<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target Timeframe</b>
Leverage grant opportunities	Research and apply for appropriate grants to generate a predictable revenue stream.	2023
Build the capacity to pursue private sector funding.	Staff a Development Director role to build investment and sponsorship models	2024
Leverage funding from the private sector.	Secure sponsorships and a consistent donor base.	2024

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Define an annual budgeting process.	The Treasurer will define a budgeting process that will be consistent year over year but will have the capacity to be refined on an annual basis as conditions dictate.	2024
Create annual budgets that aligns with strategic goals.	<p>In collaboration with the full board, the Treasurer will develop budgets on an annual basis. Budgets can and should evolve year over year as conditions dictate.</p> <p>Start this process in 2023 for the 2024 Fiscal Year.</p>	2024
Develop regular fundraising campaigns and events.	<p>Design a calendar of recurring fundraising campaigns and events.</p> <p>Consider a fundraising tree model for all types of income.</p>	2024
Develop self-sustaining revenue streams.	Design activities and service offerings (vs. public events) that SPAC can perform that will bring in revenue.	2024

## Goal 2: Enhance Community Engagement

### Strategy 2.1 Optimize Communication Model

*SPAC will utilize a wider range of communication tools for notifications and announcements to inform and connect artists to events, resources and networks in the community.*

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Reach a broader range of the arts Community so that they are updated on SPAC initiatives and invite feedback.	Utilize public meetings, email notifications and social media to reach a broad range of community members and stakeholders.	2024
Engage SPAC’s community on a regular basis through various communication channels.	Develop an integrated communications plan to connect with community regularly.	2024

### Strategy 2.2 Engage Community to Inform Programming

*SPAC will engage and respond to the arts community when new initiatives are being considered.*

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Ensure that new programs and initiatives for SPAC are developed through input from the community.	<p>Schedule focused group discussions with people who will be directly affected and will utilize new programs.</p> <p>Create opportunities to disclose results from Strategic Plan, feasibility studies, data and other relevant information that inspire new SPAC initiatives.</p>	2025
Encourage ongoing community engagement with SPAC.	Define and publish a schedule for office hours at the SPAC office to foster ongoing and informal community engagement.	2024

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## Strategy 2.3 Leverage Partnerships and Collaborations

*SPAC will leverage existing connections as well as seek new opportunities for partnership and collaborations.*

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Fortify relationships with other non-profits, community development corporations, City and Ramsey County, and coalitions for the benefit of the arts Community.	<p>Serve as an information hub to guide people to other resources and social services.</p> <p>Demonstrate leadership through alliances and coalitions to affect policy decisions that advance the arts scene toward a more equitable community.</p> <p>Inform partners of how they can help artists and what the artists need.</p>	2024
Design a Partnership Model that meets the needs of SPAC, our partners, and stakeholders	Proactively Collaborate with other Organizations such as NEMAA, Springboard, Public Art St. Paul, and St. Paul Pride.	2024
Design a Collaboration framework for SPAC events.	Design a Collaboration framework that encourages and facilitates collaboration among artists.	2025
Develop a Fiscal Sponsorship service offering.	<p>Build relationships with funding sources for artists to help guide them to available resources.</p> <p>Provide transparency and clarity about the value proposition of the Fiscal Sponsorship service offering.</p>	2024

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## Strategy 2.4 Leverage Technology Tools and Platforms

*SPAC will leverage technology tools and platforms in a cost effective way that will maximize community engagement*

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Optimize Website	<p>Optimize website content to make it current and relevant.</p> <p>Remove redundant, obsolete, and unnecessary features. This includes functionality that is available on existing platforms.</p>	2024
Leverage the functionality of existing social media platforms.	<p>Fully utilize the functionality available on established social media platforms versus building custom functionality in the SPAC technology stack.</p> <p>Encourage SPAC members to leverage SPAC's social media platforms.</p>	2024
Leverage existing local art event and news aggregators	Establish process for providing content to established aggregators such as MplsART.com, Visit St. Paul, and MSP Excite.	2024

## Goal 3: Raise Arts Awareness in the City

### Strategy 3.1 Nurture Ambassadors for the Arts

*SPAC will build relationships with key civic leaders and funders to help them understand the role, importance and needs of a vibrant arts community.*

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Reach out to key civic leaders and funders to re-introduce them to SPAC, its mission and its members.	Identify key targets and develop outreach plan to engage them	2025
Reinforce role of arts in the community through regular communication with ambassadors	Develop communication strategy to provide regular engagement with ambassadors	2025

### Strategy 3.2 Help Public See the Value of Art

*SPAC will engage in efforts to help the public appreciate arts and its value in daily life*

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Develop an arts appreciation communication campaign	Define the best avenues to help the public understand the value of art.  Assemble and distribute information to help the public understand art and its intrinsic value and accessibility in St. Paul.	2024
Encourage and Reinforce communication and programming by other neighborhood arts and public arts organizations	Meet with targeted organizations regularly to understand their priorities and how SPAC can help advance them	2025

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## Strategy 3.3 Amplify Art’s Role in the Community

*SPAC will help civic leaders and the public to see art as a critical part, and economic driver, in our community.*

<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target Timeframe</b>
Continue creating, hosting, and publicizing SPAC events (e.g. Art Crawl)	Create new opportunities to engage the public. Use events as a vehicle to evangelize the positive impact of the arts in the community.	2024
Promote and publicize city-wide arts activities and events.	Establish a cost effective and efficient process for promotion that leverages existing promotional vehicles.	



# Goal 4: Reimagine Membership Model

## Strategy 4.1 Research Existing Membership Models

*Research and evaluate existing membership models of other membership-based arts organizations*

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Research and Evaluate Creators Space Membership Model	Meet with Melissa Dessart and other key staff to evaluate the pros and cons of their membership model and approach.  Include an analysis of lessons learned.	2024
Research and Evaluate NEMAA Membership Model	Meet with the Executive Directors and other key staff and evaluate the pros and cons of their membership model and approach.	2024
Research and Evaluate Public Art St. Paul Membership Model	Meet with the Executive Directors and other key staff and evaluate the pros and cons of their membership model and approach.	2024

## Strategy 4.2 Transition to New Membership Model

*SPAC will take a thoughtful and methodical approach to transitioning to a new membership model.*

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Explore equity grants for subsidized memberships	If applicable, explore grants or sponsorship opportunities to provide fully subsidized memberships.	2024

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Design new membership model	Design a model (may or may not include paid membership) that enhances our influence and ability to meet our mission.	2024
Evaluate the steps required to discontinue current membership model.	<p>Develop an approach to Cutover to new Membership model</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive communication plan that transparently outlines the what, when, and how of the new membership model rollout.</p> <p>Methodically roll out new model while honoring the commitments implied with the old model.</p> <p>In addition to communications to members, sunset, retire, or refine current systems (ie Membershipworks) and processes.</p>	2024

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## Goal 5: Break Down Barriers

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### Strategy 5.1 Increase Artists Visibility in the Community

*SPAC will work to identify and remove barriers to artists being able to fully engage in the community.*

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Strengthen the network of artists in the community to help artists make connections and learn of resources.	Develop communication tool to help build connections.  Consider events or collaboration activities to strengthen network of artists or helping form artist enclaves to connect artists with other artists	2025
Host events allowing artists to connect and share work and ideas.	Seek ways to minimize logistical barriers through deliberate scheduling, location choices and timing.  Consider highlighting additional presentations of art by district (architecture, cultural variances, food, fashion, street art, etc...).  Communicate the unique cultural personalities of each district.	2025
Youth Outreach	Partner with schools or other youth-centric organizations to engage and educate youth on the benefits of art.	2024

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### Strategy 5.2 Increase Community Participation at Art Events

*SPAC will work to remove barriers to help the public attend art-centric events.*

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Address Transportation and Parking barriers.	<p>Work with city, counties and MTC to facilitate more cost efficient transportation/parking options during art events.</p> <p>Consider shuttle services.</p>	2025
Increase familiarity of art venues in the neighborhoods.	Work with the District Councils to highlight art venues in their districts via established District Council communication vehicles.	2024
Help neighborhood arts districts to promote themselves and help the public to navigate them	Provide guidelines/templates to help art districts promote themselves. Amplify their social media efforts.	2025
Reduce perceptions of arts events as elitist or intimidating.	Contemporize the brand for the Art Crawls/ Collective activities. Teach consumers and participants that appreciation of art doesn't take special knowledge or skill. A perceived lack of knowledge should not be a barrier to appreciating art.	2024
Reduce the impact of cost being a barrier.	<p>Continue offering free events. Address non-direct costs of attending arts events (child care etc...)</p> <p>Improve accessibility.</p> <p>Bring events to underdeveloped or low-income neighborhoods where aspects such as time of day and transportation limitations can prohibit participation.</p>	2025
Create a disability advocacy plan.	Collaborate with accessible facilities, establishing inclusive policies, and proactive outreach to people with disabilities.	2024

# Goal 6: Diversify

## Strategy 6.1 Welcome All People

*SPAC will build a diverse community of artists that allow all to participate, contribute and celebrate their talents. Ensure people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, gender identities, sexual orientation, ability, and ages feel welcomed and included at Art Collective events and as members*

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Break down Western/White artistic frame through which art is frequently viewed in St Paul	Celebrate, feature, highlight art/artist from differing backgrounds and perspectives.  Elevate awareness of culture bearers as artists through partnerships	2024
Build partnerships with arts organizations supporting diverse artists	Include these organizations in events and communications	2024
Diversify Board, Staff, and membership to reflect the diversity of St. Paul.	Actively recruit for Diversity across multiple lenses of diversity including racial and ethnic backgrounds, gender identities, sexual orientation, ability, and ages.	2024
Increase knowledge of DEI principles.	Secure a facilitator for a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion workshop for the Board.  Once the board is better educated on DEI principles, develop a DEI policy.	2024

## Strategy 6.2 Expand Art Genres

*SPAC will work to identify and promote all genres of art, artists and culture bearers in St. Paul. Ensure that the Art Collective includes a wide variety of art genres in its memberships*

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Strengthen network and visibility of non-traditional media in Art Collective.	Develop networking and communication activities that connect a variety of art genres to events.	2025
Actively work to identify new genres and introduce them to the community	Include and feature new genres in communication and events	2025
Lead in communication/ education of public about new art forms and genres	Include newness and a brand value for Art Collective	2025

## Strategy 6.3 Create a Citywide Integrated Arts Community

*St Paul, and the arts community of St Paul, have strong neighborhood orientations. The neighborhood arts communities reflect and capitalize on that. SPAC will work to encourage each to flourish in its own way, while contributing to the larger St. Paul arts community. Create a citywide integrated arts community, while ensuring neighborhood districts maintain their identities and foci.*

Tactic	Action	Target Timeframe
Act as an umbrella organization for the neighborhood communities.	Provide guidance and opportunities to exchange best practices, while encouraging each neighborhood to develop its own identity.	2025
Continue promoting City-Wide events	In addition to the Art Crawl, organize citywide events that maximize engagement and participation.	2024

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## Open and Closed Issues

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### Open Issues

Issue	Resp.	Status	Comments
In addition to this Strategic plan, the project also has two other deliverables - a Project Summary and a High level timeline for implementation of	Thomas	WIP	The other two deliverables may be PPT documents.
Leverage the 2015 Feasibility Study done by Artspace	Thomas	WIP	
Ensure the Board takes a hard look at the Mission and Vision Statements.	Thomas	WIP	Have them address mission statement early in their review process. Alternative verbiage is in Appendix B.  Will provide both statements prior to the commencement of the review period date of Sep 8 <sup>th</sup> .
Integrate the qualitative data analysis outputs produced by Esmé.	Thomas	WIP	Pulling from the action items on Esmé's interview analysis forms could really accentuate the action items in the Strategic Plan.

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### Closed Issues

Issue	Resp.	Status	Comments
Harvested useful verbiage from Appendix B and C (Draft Verbiage from Diane (pre-Outreach) and Art Crawl Destination 2021.	Thomas	Complete	Removed Appendices B and C– they are still in the archived versions of previous documents.
Harvested useful verbiage from Appendix D and E (Draft Verbiage from Mariusz on staff and committee structure)	Thomas	Complete	Removed Appendices D and E – they are still in the archived versions of previous documents.
Fix the TOC problem	Thomas	Complete	Couldn't figure out how to do it Word, so reverted back to Mac Pages to make the fix.
Determine if we really need a financial planning	Thomas	Complete	It is kind of redundant with the organizational health goal – I moved content to org health and deleted it.
Goals 2 and 3 may have some redundancies	Thomas , Mike	Complete	May need to refine or consolidate them.
Determine if Appendix A should stay	Thomas , Mike	Complete	Does the Federated Arts Districts document add value?  We decided to delete it.
Consider listing the names of the facilitator team as Authors on the title page.	Thomas	Complete	Brandon's comment from 8/31. We could alternatively put them in the body of the doc.  Perhaps just acknowledging that the team was formed and executed the project would be sufficient. This was done in the executive summary.
Evaluate and Integrate Ellie's review comments	Thomas	Complete	



Issue	Resp.	Status	Comments
Develop a Review Feedback form for the board review	Thomas	Complete	Need to have a crisp process for capturing and integrating review comments.
Draft a Vision Statement	Mike	Complete	<p>Mission is what we are doing today. Vision is where we want to be. (Use the word Grow instead of build)</p> <p>Vision statement should address the Vibrant Art community.</p>

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## Appendix A – Comprehensive Themes

This Appendix outlines many of the themes and recommendations discussed by Strategic Planning interviewees:

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### Regarding SPAC as an Organization

#### Role of Organization and Leadership:

- The role of organizations like the St. Paul Art Collective (SPAC) in advocating for the arts and fostering a supportive environment is acknowledged.
- Leadership within these organizations is seen as essential for guiding the growth and direction of the arts community.
- Create a centralized online platform to list all arts activities and venues, making it easier for the public to access information.
- Individuals are open to collaborating with SPAC, indicating a willingness to work together to achieve common goals. They see opportunities for partnerships, financial support, and sharing resources.
- Desire for Support and Resources: individuals express a need for support, whether it's financial assistance for galleries, volunteers, or networking opportunities. They value organizations like SPAC that can provide resources to artists and art-related initiatives.

#### Strategic Branding and Promotion:

- Interviewees discuss the potential of branding St. Paul as an arts destination, a "Mecca" for creatives.
- They emphasize the need for strategic planning, beyond events like art crawls, to promote the city's arts scene to a broader audience.
- Utilize various marketing channels, including social media, billboards, and pamphlets, to promote arts events and activities. Focus on increasing social media exposure and engagement to reach a wider audience.
- Collaborate with hotels and tourism organizations to attract visitors to arts events in St. Paul.
- KNOWLEDGE of what is out there is cited as an issue quite often. Need to make events, activities, and arts communities known.
  - Other barriers to art access - transportation, costs, geography

#### Long-Term Planning:

- The interviewees encourage a focus on long-term planning and strategy to sustain and grow the arts community over time.

- They emphasize the need to think beyond individual events and consider how to continuously engage and support artists and audiences.

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## **Regarding People and Artists in the Community**

### **Art Access and Inclusivity:**

- All interviewees express the importance of making art accessible to everyone, regardless of their background or socioeconomic status.
  - They highlight the need to break down barriers that prevent people from engaging with art, such as financial constraints, lack of resources, and physical accessibility.
  - Awareness of arts is a huge barrier - people need to be made aware of how much art is present in the city of St. Paul (already mentioned in the strategic branding and promotion section).
- Organize events that are inclusive and family-friendly to engage diverse age groups and communities.
- Work on creating a welcoming environment for artists, ensuring they have access to affordable creative spaces and resources.
- Prioritize racial and gender equity in the arts community to create an inclusive and diverse atmosphere.
- Facilitate arts programs in schools to help young people interact with the arts and become artists themselves

### **Supporting Artists:**

- Provide resources for artists, to support their artistic endeavors.
  - grants, legal assistance, supplies,
- Consider establishing a centralized hub on the website to showcase artists' work and connect them with the community.
- Collaborate with established organizations like Artspace, Springboard for the Arts, and local businesses to offer more support and opportunities to artists.
- Focus on offering more youth inclusion in arts events and activities to foster creativity and engagement.

### **Community Engagement and Collaboration:**

- Community-Centered Approach: many artists have community-focused visions. They aim to create spaces or events that serve as hubs for their neighborhoods, offering opportunities for connection, creativity, and participation.
  - The interviewees stress the significance of creating spaces and events that foster a sense of community among artists and art enthusiasts.
  - They believe that art has the power to bring people together, combat loneliness, and create connections.
- Collaborate with local businesses, realtors, and restaurants to display and promote art, creating more opportunities for artists.
- Partner with other arts organizations in St. Paul, like NEMAA, to foster cross-community collaboration and shared resources.
- Lobby for changes in funding allocation (e.g., STAR funds) to ensure more support for arts initiatives in neighborhoods.
- Public art is seen as a way to engage the community, beautify spaces, and make art more accessible.
- Engage with neighborhood groups and community centers to promote and host arts events.
  - Many individuals prefer smaller, more intimate art events over larger ones. They believe these settings allow for better connections with artists and a more personal experience
  - Many people call for community/neighborhood based art activities (as opposed to city wide)
  - Interviewees discuss the impact of public art on creating a sense of place and identity within neighborhoods.

### **Art's Healing and Transformative Power:**

- Healing through art is a recurring theme. Interviewees discuss how art can help individuals heal from trauma, address mental health challenges, and promote personal growth.
- Art is seen as a tool for self-expression, empowerment, and transformation. This is important as a tool for people of all demographics.
  - The importance of representing and supporting diverse artists and communities is highlighted.
  - Interviewees mention the need for art to reflect the experiences and identities of various groups, including LGBTQ+ individuals and marginalized communities.
- Foster collaborations between different art forms and artists to create interconnected and educational experiences.
- Emphasize the value of supporting local artists and encourage people to buy art.
- Art is viewed as a powerful tool for addressing societal issues and promoting positive change.

- Interviewees believe that artists can contribute to solving problems, fostering innovation, and advocating for social justice.

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## Appendix B - Organizational Assessment (SWOT)

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### Strengths

- Long-term engagement through organization of Art Crawl
- Strong heritage in Lowertown
- Desire for collective among artists

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### Weaknesses

- Lack of depth in programming; Art Crawls are the only programs
- Unclear benefit for members
- No staff limits capacity
- Communication challenges (internal and external)
- Uncertain revenue stream
- Not well diversified organization

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### Opportunities

- Artist concentration and growth of arts community
- Engaged and motivated community of artists
- Multiple arts districts locations
- The general population has not been fully exposed to the appreciation of art

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### Threats

- Shrinking funding for arts
- Art districts attract gentrification which prices artists out
- Lack of appreciation of art by general population
- Art vs. revenue dynamic
- Independent arts districts vs. collective