

lawrenceartscenter

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February 20, 2013

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Kansas Department of Commerce
Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission
1000 S.W. Jackson Street, Suite 100
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission:

I am writing in support of the Lawrence Arts Center's Cultural District Consulting and Design Project.

Inspired by the national trend towards creative placemaking and the renewed cultural belief in the power of art to transform the social and economic identity of a place, the City of Lawrence approved the designation of a cultural district in downtown Lawrence on February 12th, 2013. By identifying this district as a space where artists, arts-based businesses, and cultural organizations are encouraged to flourish, the City hopes to increase cultural tourism and attract independent businesses to the downtown area. In order to be effective, however, the newly designated cultural district will need a cultural plan—a framework that will guide the City's cultural and economic growth—as well as a marketing campaign that will build local, regional, and national interest in downtown Lawrence.

Through partnerships with the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce, the Douglas County Community Foundation, Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area, the University of Kansas, the Watkins Community History Museum, and Landmark Investment Group, a local real-estate developer, the City of Lawrence will work with the Lawrence Arts Center to assemble a team of consultants to advise the district on the design and implementation of a cultural plan. Once the cultural plan has been approved by city management, the East Lawrence Neighborhood Association, the Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission, and all other pertinent local organizations and community groups, the City will work with Callahan Creek, a Lawrence-based marketing firm, to develop a brand identity for the district that will attract visitors, artists, and businesses from the Midwest and beyond.

The City of Lawrence is ready to put art and culture at the forefront of a plan to make its new, downtown cultural district into a magnet for artists and creative workers, entrepreneurs and small businesses, and cultural tourists from across the nation. With support from the Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission, the Lawrence Arts Center's Cultural District Consulting and Design Project will enable the creation and marketing of a cultural plan that will help the City to achieve its goals.

The Lawrence Arts Center has made creative placemaking a particular focus and will work with the City of Lawrence to actively provide advice, meeting space, and involvement in the design and implementation of our new cultural district. Support from the Kansas Department of Commerce and KCAIC is possible at just the right time.

Sincerely,



Susan Tate
Executive Director
Lawrence Arts Center

