



Retain & grow businesses in the creative economy

What's working

Artists are willing to make Minneapolis their home.

- With all the theater and art happening here, artists see themselves as part of the community and are willing to stay.

The City and the community are supportive of arts development in neighborhoods.

- The City was instrumental in making the Fire Arts Center happen.
- The Museum of Russian Art is another example of a great art resource.
- The Northeast Minneapolis Arts District is an example of the neighborhood's expectation for external art as part of a development project.
- There's been lots of risk-taking, and it's worked.
- Two new arts organizations — Northside Arts Collective and SMART — are grassroots organizations that received small grants from the City.

New ad agencies and architecture firms are opening.

- Talent has begun to spin off from larger advertising shops to launch smaller three- to seven-person boutique agencies.

- National architecture firms are opening branch offices here. On the positive side, it raises the bar; on the other hand, it makes it harder for homegrown talent to establish firms and compete.

The relationship between area architecture professionals and the School of Architecture is one of the strongest in the nation.

- There's a strong connection between the University of Minnesota's School of Architecture and the business community. Many practicing architects are adjunct professors at the U of M. There's cross-pollination of ideas for both groups.

Light rail has made a positive impact on the community.

- Light rail has changed the city and living patterns in positive ways.
- The community was brought into the process when architects teamed up with neighborhoods to design unique stations.
- Architecture and public station art represent a success.

What isn't working

Our advertising agencies are no longer in the national limelight.

- Minneapolis advertising agencies used to have a greater presence on the national stage.

The business community doesn't see its connection to the creative community.

- There's a disconnect between the creative and business communities. The widget-makers think there's no real world connection to the creative community. We haven't leveraged our arts community to help mainstream businesses understand the creative community's value in solving problems and dealing with competitive challenges.

The studio crawl has lost its novelty.

Minneapolis doesn't have the equivalent of Chicago's Grant Park.

The downtown core isn't vibrant.

- The areas on the edges of downtown are vibrant, but that energy dissipates when you get to the downtown core. Nothing is happening in the donut hole.

- There's no street level vitality in downtown.
- Attracting talent is a huge challenge, and young professionals want to live in a vibrant downtown.
- Downtown police patrols and cleanup are Band-Aids. Downtown won't change until there are more people who live downtown and *own* downtown. Downtown residents are needed to lobby for a better downtown.

Most bus stops are boring and ugly.

We don't ask enough from planners and developers.

- The City accepts projects out of desperation and then we have to live with it. The City Center is good instead of great. The Itasca building is not architecturally interesting, and there's no park or green space there. Something went wrong.
- Our planning is not aspirational enough; we're too heavy on the land use and economic development side, and too light on the human and aesthetic side.

We don't brag enough about our arts scene.

- Out-of-towners are constantly surprised by our arts scene.

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What should be done next

Make the most of public transit.

- Put TV monitors on trains to showcase amenities near each rail stop.
- Put information about the neighborhood at each rail stop.
- Do more with bus shelters. Put historic photos at each bus stop to bring history to neighborhoods block by block.

Be thoughtful about development.

- Set a higher bar for development — demand great architecture.
- Encourage organic, natural growth so the result is authentic. A cultural center should be a natural district, not a corporate one.
- Envision development near future train stops and start thinking about the themes for these areas.

Make the city interesting for creative individuals.

- Preserve cool places; they'll become destinations just like the Mill City Museum courtyard has. If it's cool, creative people will come.
- Do an art market on Nicollet Mall in the same way we have a weekly farmers market.
- Make the arts and creativity values in our culture.
- Keep encouraging ethnic diversity; it will give us greater cachet on a global stage and allow for creative cross-pollination of ideas.
- Our jobs message to creative professionals should highlight our increasing diversity.

Nurture the creative economy.

- Acknowledge and nurture the music business. We could be a regional center. There's huge growth potential here, and the music industry is a key to retaining youths.
- Nurture small arts organizations and grassroots efforts. Small theaters and venues are where the future lies.
- Emulate Philadelphia's effort to leverage the arts. (Philadelphia got involved with a charter school that focuses on design and architecture.)

Brag about our arts scene.

- Brag locally so our own residents hear the buzz.
- Talk about the incredible stuff going on in neighborhoods.

Deal with disparity.

- Deal with economic and educational disparities. We can't be successful until we pay more attention to north Minneapolis.

Draw in the business community.

- Break down the barriers between the business community and the creative community. Help members of the business community see that the creative community can help them think differently to solve business problems and deal with competitive challenges.
- Envision Minneapolis as a place to go for thought leadership.

"The City won't be seen as a leader in creative thought with average architecture. We have to get off our knees and set a higher bar for development. We should be demanding great architecture."

- Community developer
