Part V

ON ISSUES—OLD MYTHS AND NEW REALITIES

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TLC Is Not Enough

Where strong local arts agencies exist, good things are happening – not by chance, but because long-range goals and objectives have been set, and solid decisions, based on thorough knowledge of local needs and resources, are being made.

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CONSIDERING AN ARTS COUNCIL

Creating a climate in which the arts can thrive takes enthusiasm, gutsy and realistic planning, and the promise of quality – in addition to the people to carry out the plan.

All kinds of factors affect the range of activities that a community would wish to support and the way in which it would do so: Community size; population type and its stability-mobility factor; population age; and other demographic, economic, and topographic considerations would help make that determination. Even topography – mountains and snowstorms – affects the kind of arts community that will exist.

There are internal human-created structures that affect the arts life too – structure of city government (mayor or city manager); number and

types of performing arts facilities (schools, multipurpose auditoriums, public and private arts centers); strength and priorities of the education community (town-gown relationship on all matters, including the arts); the types of indigenous activities; the gaps in arts activities; the age of institutions; and the method of developing the arts support mechanisms.

Most cities of populations greater than 300,000 have a cadre of artists and arts organizations that need a full range of services. Communities of 100,000 to 300,000 often have a similar mix, but fewer of each type of arts group. They may have population mixes that are uneven; a prison or university dominance, a single industry, or a rural presence may make a population "bend" in certain directions. It may be a retirement community, where a high percentage of persons are on fixed incomes and leisure time is maximized. These are high considerations when one looks at the functions of a council.

Although there are commonalities among the functions that have contributed to a thriving community of the arts, each community's council has served best by assessing the climate that is and projecting what could be. No two are exactly alike.

It has been said that the most successful of the councils have, from the beginning, functioned with some clearly defined priorities dependent on their communities. Those priorities may have changed through the years, but, by and large, the united fundraising groups have clear priorities in the fundraising areas, and their other services surround that prime function. The same would be true of councils with facility management, artists' employment, or neighborhood arts as priorities. Many staffs in secondary areas are not big enough to attract major expertise and attention, and often such positions have been held by persons well trained but in their first arts management jobs, growing personally with the jobs. This would be less true of the largest councils, perhaps. Too, there are those examples of all-sized councils with a good balance of service and/or advocacy and programmatic activities.

A community wishing to start a council has often started from the needs of the community and from the background and expertise of the director, and will build from those components.

Smaller and medium-sized cities have usually relied on privately incorporated arts councils that were founded to serve the needs of local arts agencies. Some of the strongest councils are of this type. The local governments are usually apathetic. Once the population rises above 500,000, the issues become too large for local government to ignore, and the need for its involvement in representing the interests of the arts becomes apparent. Both public and private local arts agencies can exist side by side in larger cities, each type of agency with its own complementary agendas. One

needs also to consider the possibility of county-based or regional agencies. Some "community councils" function formally or informally as county-wide or multicounty organizations.

What aids the decision about an appropriate type of council for a community, as the community chooses among the many alternatives? The types can be listed as follows: a privately incorporated nonprofit organization whose board is elected by a membership; a public commission appointed by the local government; or a cultural office or department reporting directly to the mayor or the director of a city or county department. Occasionally, the local government will designate a privately incorporated arts council as the government's official arts agency and empower it to carry out certain functions for the government.

An issue that gets pushed when state councils start to create incentives for planning a partnership program is whether the local arts agency shall be private or public. The fact that several states require planning on the local level for evolving the local arts agency underscores the need for community planning.[1]

The public agencies have been commissions, cultural affairs offices, municipal arts departments, independent public authorities created by legislation, and even a municipal arts department as part of a recreation department. When the designation is by city council ordinance or some such permanent act of local government, it constitutes the greatest commitment to incorporating the arts into the public structure. But successful agencies have functioned in all the structures described.

Private community councils can be recognized significantly by cities; in Tulsa, three of the 11 appointees to the Municipal Arts Commission are representatives from the Arts and Humanities Council. Private councils exist in greater numbers than public agencies, but the trend, in the largest cities especially, has been toward the public agency.

The private council is sometimes the conduit for local funds and, as the publicly designated arts agency for that community, is compensated for that service. The councils in Columbus, Ohio, and Houston, Texas, are just two such examples.

There are some cities with two organizations—a municipal agency and a private coordinating group, that is, a council alliance or united fund. These cities include Philadelphia, Seattle, St. Louis, Atlanta, and Washington, D.C. Some have more than two organizations. In such instances, it is most important that the areas of responsibility and the functions ascribed to each group are clearly defined. In most cases, the municipal group is rather new, the private council having had a role for a decade or more. Sometimes the municipal commissions have no administrative budgets, and the arts council serves as secretariat.

FIGURE 1
Contract Between the Arts Council of San Antonio and the City of San Antonio

Purpose: To provide services of the official community arts agency for the city of San Antonio. To coordinate and develop funding requests and special programs in cooperation with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Texas Commission on the Arts. To work in cooperation with appropriate city officials and agencies in evaluating city arts projects and public facilities supporting the arts. To conduct research, planning, communications, technical assistance services, and special programs which will expand the cultural and artistic resources for the people of San Antonio. The Arts Council agrees to:

1. Maintain an office and professional staff to provide a central clearinghouse for information, services, and development for cultural activities in the city of San Antonio and surrounding area.
2. Act on behalf of the city in preparing and submitting grant applications to state and federal arts agencies and to receive and administer such funds as may be made available to the community arts agency.
3. Provide the services of the Executive Director to serve as Special Assistant for the Arts to the Mayor, City Council, and City Manager; to advise and assist the city in evaluating city arts programs and to represent the city at state, regional, and national meetings as may be required.
4. Compile and maintain financial and program information on every major nonprofit arts organization in the Greater San Antonio area.
5. Conduct regular public meetings and surveys to determine community, institutional, and individual needs in the arts and to maintain continuing community input into arts planning and programming.
6. To provide continuing information on arts programs in San Antonio to local, regional, and national news media and to regularly publish and distribute a calendar and newsletter of local arts activities.
7. To provide technical assistance services to city departments, organizations, and individuals in preparing grant applications to public arts agencies and private foundations.
8. To initiate, sponsor, and conduct, alone or in cooperation with other public and private agencies, public programs which will further the development and public awareness of, and interest in, the performing and visual arts.
9. To work through the designated city department(s) in all matters involving fiscal control and monitoring of city-funded arts programs, to assist this department in evaluating requests for city funds, and to advise of all requests to the National Endowment for the Arts and Texas Commission on the Arts and Humanities from city departments and outside agencies receiving city funds.
10. To submit progress reports to the Mayor, City Manager, and designated city departments.

Note: Used by permission.

In his 1980 background paper, Robert Mayer asks:

> What changed in New Orleans that brought into focus the need for a city governmental department for the arts when a private arts council had been created as a result of earlier city initiatives and had been designated by the city administration as its official agency? . . . The Arts Council is fully behind this direction, so that there will be a strong voice for the arts in City Hall, as well as a strong private voice in the Arts Council. . . . there can be strengths and balances in this situation, with creative tension helping to do what has to be done for the arts in the city. It will be important to preserve the integrity of each group.
>
> It could be that this situation is more related to a national phenomenon we have witnessed in the last ten years, where support of the arts is becoming a highly visible, politically intelligent platform upon which elected officials can stand.[2]

Since 1980, the two groups have merged, and the present Arts Council of New Orleans has a contract to perform certain services for the city. This two-organization movement will be interesting to watch as the arts become of greater concern to cities themselves, and as cities sort out priorities for the 1980s.

One of the most appealing structures is that of the Arts Council of San Antonio. The Council is a private organization with public designation, and it has a contract with the city of San Antonio for certain services. "The Arts Council of San Antonio has been described as a private agency which clearly functions on behalf of the city."[3] This would seem to offer the best of both worlds, one that "is a condition in which most effective community arts agencies, whether public or private, will ultimately find themselves."[4]

In examining the philosophical background behind that Council's development in that direction, one finds a clear statement of the private-public council dilemma:

> There is an overwhelming need for private arts agencies to understand and accept public responsibility and, at the same time, a need for public arts agencies of city and county government to understand their responsibilities to the private arts constituency.[5]

The contract between the Arts Council and San Antonio (Figure 1) delineates what this agency is actually going to do. It seems that this set-up is entirely possible in a city of almost any size. But all components are important to its whole.

> A measure of the success of the relationship between the Arts Council and the city of San Antonio has been in the city's financial support of the arts. In fis-

> cal year 1975 the city provided $533,000 in support for three organizations. [In fiscal year 1982, the total city support for the arts exceeded $2 million.] . . . The city does not regard this support as a giveaway program to charitable institutions, but rather as a sound investment in the overall cultural, economic, and social development of our city and region.
>
> We believe this pluralistic approach is a good one because it does not vest all authority for funding in one agency. The final responsibility for funding rests with the City Council, where it properly belongs.[6]

An effective government agency depends on how well the governmental organization really works and how integrated the arts agency is within it—the potential political and temporal nature of being one of the public family.

Basically, a government agency provides easier access to other government monies and in-kind services (covering such items as office space, equipment, supplies, publication, and production). The private agency probably has greater independence and flexibility, as well as better access to private funding sources. Philosophically, the best of both worlds is bridged by the San Antonio model—a services contract with annual evaluation. It leaves intact the sense of innovation inherent in the arts, and minimizes political aspects of the agency.

Some municipal agencies have had swift and bewildering changes of function and focus. Ground is lost; confidence is destroyed; programs and services are aborted. If the agency's work has really become one with the city services, new personnel can replace the old and carry on. The development of some such agencies, however, has been so tenuous and young that the solidarity has not been built in. In one city, a confident plan was reported in an interview two weeks before the cultural affairs department was wiped out by budget cuts.

How does solidarity develop? It takes a concentrated period of time and certain favorable circumstances for a government agency to develop and become institutionalized. One way is for there to be a proprietorial interest in arts institutions by virtue of municipal ownership of an art museum and other cultural facilities, which many times has preceded the formation of the arts council. In Atlanta, the Commissioner of the Department of Cultural Affairs has served in the mayoral cabinet. In many cities, such as Seattle and Chicago, the council administers a percent for art in public places law. These roles help to give importance to the arts council function and to tie it to government process. Even then, shifts of political power can affect priorities and stability. Some are convinced, however, that sympathetic mayors are the key to solidarity; others see this only as short-term support.

The private council needs the commitment of the private community;

there is no substitute for this. The Winston-Salem Arts Council has been held out as the stellar example, and it is rightly deserving of its model role. The Council is strong because the community leadership has been involved from the beginning and has given it priority.

Other strong private councils lay down certain mandates for leadership roles. Their board must give priority to the council's work, and the members may not at the same time have primary roles with arts organizations. One particularly successful example is in Huntington, New York, where emerging community leaders are sought *before* they have made major commitments to other organizations. In Lorain County, Ohio, the council has delineated carefully designated board roles on paper, so that there is a mutual understanding before a person takes on the responsibilities.

The success of a private council is related to the caliber of involvement from the private sector – well defined and designed to keep leadership renewed. Involvement does not always mean giving money. It may mean donating significant amounts of time for committee and board work. In small communities, with arts councils run entirely on a volunteer basis or at the most with one or two part-time employees, the strength of the group depends on committed, dedicated workers. The organizational leaders in communities of all sizes worry about fresh blood and the generation of new and ongoing commitment.

The activities of the municipal groups differ in focus, but generally have to do with enacting laws, allocating funds, employing artists or purchasing art services, and commissioning works of public art. Details differ in the work of private groups – the Atlanta Arts Alliance, the Arts and Education Council of St. Louis, and the Corporate Council in Seattle are all united arts fund types, for instance. Some of those differences are important, but basically the private groups all work to raise funds from the private sector for the arts organizations.

The Seattle Corporate Council's work is specifically related to the business community. It processes corporate contributions to the arts; offers its members a comprehensive and equitable means of distributing dollars to the arts; prevents duplication of solicitation by recipient groups; and, uniquely, offers sustaining support – unrestricted dollars to be used to offset general operating costs. It does not fund special projects, capital drives, endowment funds, or individual artists.

The other organizations solicit funds more widely – from individuals, foundations, and corporations. In Atlanta, in one year, for instance, more than 2,000 people and businesses contributed. In addition, as a separate endowment campaign, there was a Challenge Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and a $250,000 challenge grant for symphony endowment from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Including these two gifts, over $5 million has been received for endowment. The Atlanta funds

have been solely for those organizations housed in the Atlanta Memorial Arts Center: the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the High Museum of Art, the Alliance Theater, the Atlanta Children's Theater, and the Atlanta College of Art.

The Arts and Education Council of Greater St. Louis, one of the older community councils (formed in 1963), was, in the early 1980s, a federation of 130 cultural and educational organizations in the metropolitan area. Eleven of these organizations benefit directly from the Arts and Education Fund Drive (in 1980, over $2 million). The other regular and associate members make use of central services provided by the Council, such as common mailing lists, printing services, computer services, workshops, and interagency program cooperation. All regular members are eligible to apply for special project grants, the money for which is raised through a two-phased "Camelot" auction, a Gala and Collage, a summer festival, and other activities conducted by the Council. Over $2 million was raised from this source in its first ten years. There are still other agency and community needs supported by Council fundraising efforts, and the Council's funds for these programs have been generated from the whole range of public and private funding.

The establishment of the Arts and Humanities Commission by the city of St. Louis in 1979 was to help attract federal money designated for cultural enrichment into the city, and to encourage neighborhood planning for cultural events. The Arts and Education Council had already attracted to the St. Louis area not only Endowment Challenge Grant and Expansion Arts monies, but Mid-East Area Agency on Aging money and Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title V monies. The Arts and Education Council report of 1978–79 expresses the hope that there will be collaboration, not competition, with the new group, and that the new group will reciprocate.[7]

Seattle is one city where the activities of the private and public groups seem to be as defined and diversified as they are anywhere, even to the point of indicating which group will get money from which source within a corporation – from the marketing budgets interested in high-visibility programs (e.g., the Downtown Development Corporation – concerts and murals), or from the corporate contributions for sustaining funds.

Still another private group in Seattle, PONCHO, runs an auction and selects the recipients of the monies according to the will of the selection committees, mostly on a project basis. They have been known, however, to knock on doors of small groups seeking interesting recipients. Allied Arts of Seattle has, through its foundation, funded some of the smaller and experimental groups.

Robert Gustavson, Director of the Corporate Council for the Arts, summarized the increased pressures on Seattle's private sector in 1981:

> Hard and sometimes unpopular support choices are going to have to be made to ensure the proper maintenance of a well-managed and well-balanced cultural life for our future. Trying to spread limited corporate support dollars over too many ambitious and well-intentioned recipients will only mean that *none* will be funded properly, and none will be able to achieve the programming and quality our city will require in the future.[8]

The Cultural Alliance of Greater Washington (D.C.) represents a private agency that services the needs of the arts themselves, basically through partnerships with the business sector. These have included in the past such things as insurance plans and recently the development of a proposal for a real estate coventure, in which the Cultural Alliance would assist in developing and then in managing cultural facilities.[9]

Thus it is clear in the cities with both public and private arts agencies that the private groups usually focus on the private sector, which most city agencies are careful to avoid. On the other hand, the public agencies have seen themselves as potentially more successful in soliciting public agencies, such as HUD and HEW (now HHS). They point to the advantages of being a unit of city government in relating to other units of government; such relationships are more difficult when a group is working from the outside. Most envision working with neighborhood groups and incorporating the arts in all city planning. Many envision the enactment of a percent for art in public places law, which will need them for administration.

These plans all work, until the public agencies are bypassed by the mayor when it comes time to study neighborhood groups, left out of critical revitalization planning, and omitted in ways similar.

Both public and private dollars will be harder to raise in the future. There obviously is a lot of ground to cover, and expertise should be used wisely and appropriately; expectations should be realistic (on the part of agency executives as well as the public). There is neither room for duplication nor need to leave gaping holes. It will be incumbent upon all such organizations to clarify the role for themselves and for their clientele.

ROLE AND VALUE OF COMMUNITY PLANNING

The solidarity of community arts agencies depends on various factors that emerge through comparisons, study, and discussion.

The private agency must have the support, both in the planning stages and in the implementation and functioning of the organization, of leadership from the private sector. In older cities of any size (over 500,000 — or even 350,000), this sometimes seems difficult from several standpoints. The age of arts institutions is directly correlated with the solidarity of the

city's traditional power base, and these institutions have engaged the major arts leadership. Although this moves slowly on to new generations (and the descendants of the old-line supporters are not necessarily the new supporters), it is difficult to engage the priority interest of the private sector's leadership for the new arts agency. The exceptions seem to be those cities in which the private sector has been strongly supportive of united arts funds or performing arts centers. New corporate leadership may emerge because here is a fresh opportunity – free from all the traditional forces. Buffalo is a good example of an older city of substantial size with a strong private service council. It made sure of strong community and corporate leadership in its early development. Most of the public arts council groups have not depended on the traditional private support makeup.

The private council, like private support for the arts, has dominated the arts council scene since the beginning. The majority of arts council organizations still remain private councils. This would be an expected American development, since arts support has strong private roots. If one remembers also the arts councils' roots in the Junior League's missionary work and the American Symphony Orchestra League's early interests in this development, it is natural. In the context of human services patterned after community development services, the philosophy has gradually changed. The activities of arts councils have become a mixed bag. It is the public sector's mandate to be accessible, to contract for services that affect large numbers, and to integrate planning into city planning. The trend in the larger cities is to serve the arts in this context. This has not been natural to the arts, but public monies lead councils to face this dilemma, which is both philosophical and problematic. In very few communities have the private and public sector worked together in the harmonious way that one would hope for in the future.

The private council development is only as strong as the town leadership, the city patrons, and the corporate leaders have seen to it that it will be. In many of the smaller communities, the advent of the coordinating force in the arts has meant that the arts (other than the few indigenous groups) have been available for the first time; in other areas, it has meant that the schools will have some arts programming, whereas before there was none; and in some areas, it has meant that fine touring programs have become available for the audiences of small communities and towns. It has raised the quality of the indigenous work and has brought it out of the woodwork for others to evaluate; it has raised the awareness of artists who want to better their opportunities as to just how and where that might be accomplished.

One characteristic of the successful councils is that they have continued planning procedures far beyond the initial process. In Winston-Salem, in the 1970s alone, there were plans committed to paper three

times. The internal long-range planning committee has been made up of persons from both within and outside the history of the council. In Durham and Charlotte, City Spirit grants spurred planning for the future, but the grants only continued a process that had been going on since the councils were started. All organizations need continuous evaluation by their own leadership to be sure that their direction and functions are in line with community needs and expectations. This process is often shortchanged or overlooked; sometimes the organization never quite gets around to doing it at all. But it is one of the secrets of the success of these councils. For they have involved their community leaders in the process, and when the results are in, the community leadership is committed to the actions recommended.

It may surprise those who want to diminish the value of such time spent that the oldest and one of the most venerated councils – that of Winston-Salem – was still talking about the uncertainty surrounding its scope and purpose in 1976 after 25 years in operation. Some of its needs and recommendations concerned criteria for judging worthiness of different programs, concerns about how the Arts Council would identify and explore opportunities for new cultural development, and ways in which the Arts Council would improve its overall operation. This report was written in relationship to the Council's 1971 report. It did not sit in isolation from the work done before or the work to be done to succeed it. (It would be all too common in the public sector to start anew with every new political regime.) The private council has a greater possibility of continuity if care is taken to see that these relationships with past work is maintained.

Acknowledged tensions between professional arts organizations and community participatory arts advocates stimulated the Winston-Salem Arts Council to initiate a major study in 1977 that developed a cultural action plan for the city and county. This planning process included 120 representatives from the community. An outside consultant was contracted to chair the staff work. The results of this work focus on much greater involvement by the Council in the future of the city. Facility renovation and expanded operation for arts groups were a big part of the plans. But the plans were designed to assist the major professional arts institutions as well as community groups.[10] The Arts Council has been raising funds in excess of $9 million, including federal sources new to them, to get the job done. The Arts Council would and could never have taken on this task if it had not had the backing of major private leadership in the city, and if it had not acknowledged the problems it was having and been responsive to a need to examine them.

In a growing city like San Antonio, the private leadership is continuously redefining itself and will continue to do so. This includes the leadership roles for the arts and all other community service areas, such as health and welfare. Therefore a new type of agency, especially one that seems

similar to a social service agency, can be accepted more easily. Their support systems are understood in a total context, not only in the narrower context of the arts.

Where there has been a decision to develop a public council, the success is uneven and may depend on the given year for evaluation. For commissions, councils, or cultural affairs departments are as strong as their place in the structure of the city government family will allow. Dallas' arts office, as a division under the Park and Recreation Department, which is traditionally a part of the government structure, is not likely to blow away. Hartford's Office of Cultural Affairs, with a desk in the City Manager's office, disappeared before it got off the ground because it was not properly placed and budgeted. The planning of its functions and duties seemed similar to other plans; the planning for its administration was lacking. Titles mean nothing; administrative roles and budgets do.

The Dallas Park and Recreation Department is also landlord to the major arts facilities of the city. This certainly lends a feeling of solidarity to the situation. However, because the Park and Recreation Board can make policy, the activities of the Department are rather well insulated from the political machinations of the City Council itself. In Dallas, the planning documents state clearly that, although there is this landlord-tenant relationship, starting back in 1928 with the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, the city role is one of assistance to and not responsibility for any individual cultural institution. That is important, for in other cities where the facilities are city-owned, the policy making is not always insulated, and there have been problems. Public agency development must look at the following factors:

1. The agency's relationship to the city family.
2. Its relationship to the arts institutions and artists.
3. Its relationship to neighborhood development.
4. Its relationship to policy making and budget processing.

Each city situation will be individual, but the relationships to be examined are similar.

Another consideration must be the source of local funds to support the administration of culture. Amounts mean little if they are not integral to the city budget. In San Francisco, much of the funding of the arts program was based on Community Development and CETA funds; the city of San Francisco has given little local tax money to support the Commission's administration. Therefore, with reductions in these federal-program-related funds, good work done is dissipated, and the dedicated staff is demoralized and depleted. It is hard to build solid staff work or strong and

sound programming if funding is shaky. There are real challenges for smaller staff and less funding, and some councils will meet this in new and interesting ways, but the basic problem still exists.

So, while the director of a big city program will point to the amounts of money another city commission's budget projects, the *sources* and *stability* of those funds are the important considerations. Some city directors have felt that multiple sources of income are important to survival. That may have some truth, but some entity, be it the city (hopefully with citizen advocacy behind it) or the private sector's board, must map out the functions and responsibilities carefully. This must include who is to be responsible for seeing that the agency will remain alive through changes in governments, temporal budgets, and priorities of the city council. If there is no planning and little support beyond that of the current mayor, the long-range prognosis may be poor.

If arts councils can have such a wide range of priorities and structures, what are the considerations a community has to make when creating its support systems for the arts? What are the community needs that they are attempting to meet? Who is trying to reach whom and for what reasons?

There is no ideal situation, because each community is different, for any number of reasons enumerated previously. Thus, in laying out the community needs that might be envisioned and the support systems and community links that have been effective elsewhere, one comes up with the possible but not the probable range of support activities. They should make sense within the particular community. Services offered have to be used; they are of no use in a vacuum.

In establishing an arts agency, there seems to be real substantiation for the success of a completely open process in the beginning—one that will ultimately cause the creation of an organization that will properly serve a given community, with an understanding of the vested powers. One National Endowment for the Arts City Spirit facilitator spelled it out when he enumerated the objectives of his forthcoming three-day visit:

> (a) to create, through community participation, an organized and coordinated program for the arts services and support;
> (b) to develop community "ownership" in the arts programming and its support;
> (c) to discuss community concerns about its creation;
> (d) to communicate existing community efforts and problems related to the furthering of these efforts.[11]

At such a time of setting forth, meetings with big business, small business, small arts organizations, major arts organizations, institutions of higher education, community organizations, government, youth groups,

primary and secondary schools, and individual artists need to be established, with a summary session to which all are invited. If this is done at the beginning, it gets a lot of concerns out on the table that would otherwise only grow with time if they were not resolved. Small representative groups are more helpful than large unwieldy ones; the facilitator is critical, as he or she guides open discussion to the issues at hand. The facilitator's role is to draw out concerns, receive advice, and hear complaints so that the framework for the future task is well established and future work can proceed in an orderly way. The process should end with a coordinating group established to provide leadership to that future work; if such a group does not evolve, the fear of even greater frustration turns to reality, and the result is disappointment and distrust.

While the concerns of various clients of a community arts agency appear so often as to be predictable, the process of planning is important in order to reach a common understanding and consensus about the task that that particular community has set for itself—defining the arts needs and setting some mutual future directions. The community itself must, however, define its leadership for the planning process. The base developed by this process is far more firm a foundation than that developed through a survey or by a mayor's order. It depends on the people who have led the way and who can envision the steps needed beyond those initial ones.

People can see exhibits and hear concerts, but they have trouble conceptualizing arts planning for a community. Skills for involving citizens in a planning process and leadership for doing such are lacking. The City Spirit program of the National Endowment for the Arts was committed to increasing public awareness of the benefits of involving many sectors in arts planning and of enhancing the capability of organizations to do that. But, as noted earlier, this program was somewhat misunderstood as it attempted to accomplish its goals.

In spite of a lack of many models for planning in the arts, some councils, in getting started, have done much more than gather information in a survey; none today should exist or start anew without an ongoing planning process. In the surge of realization of the importance of planning, the state of California made $12,000 available to each county for cultural planning.

The quality of the planning process is more important perhaps than who is doing it. Some commissions or councils have relied on elaborate facility studies and economic surveys to feed into their planning; some rely mostly on staff; some obtain very little community feedback, some a great deal. The important thing is that they are taking steps toward defining agency goals in relationship to community policy. When the agency is one related to the government family, there can be a comprehensive plan for the arts for inclusion in the city's comprehensive plan for human and economic development in the 1980s. These plans should be backed by "citizen

and institutional input, budget realities, professional guidance from within and outside city government, and a policy which has been defined through an evolutionary process, and which uniquely addresses the needs of the citizens."[12] How elaborate the planning process is depends on community size, need, and sophistication. And plans on paper may not be plans in action.

While the planning function is fully accepted by city and county governments, it has rarely been applied to their arts commissions. For instance, no local government has undertaken a comprehensive cultural plan showing how the arts can affect local government. There have been a few cultural facilities plans, some cultural district plans, and some have had some interesting program planning generalizations. The track records for implementing these plans, however, has not been good, for the political and other reasons mentioned elsewhere in this book. While one could hope for a local government's sponsorship of a comprehensive cultural plan showing how imaginative uses of cultural resources can help all agencies of local government better achieve their goals, the arts have had too low a priority in local government. This means that planning initiative has, by and large, come from the private sector.

The public agencies, if properly functioning within the government family, have the edge on planning initiative, for it is a natural and required part of government process. Government departments are used to reporting to mayors and councils with yearly presentations as part of their process. One must remember, however, that a cultural policy for a city, drawn up for the city legislative review system, "relates to the municipal role with respect to the total arts and cultural environment. It does not address the private sector and its various components and their relationship, such as business and corporate community, the arts community and the general public."[13]

The private agency, evolving from early structures that made it a "child of its member groups," has in most instances taken on a public service agenda that can be overwhelming if not well thought through, with activities such as festivals, neighborhood opportunities, and the sponsorship of artists in community institutions, including schools and senior centers. There were few councils that have not expressed a need to reach more people. The range of services to arts and nonarts organizations characterize the focus of both public and private councils. But how well they serve arts institutions, the arts, and community and neighborhood organizations, as well as all age groups and constituencies, is the question each answers for itself. How they do it, whom they involve, and where their priorities lie remain unique to each community. The relationship is ideally one of assistance to the cultural sectors, not of responsibility for them, and certainly not of competition with them.

With the private agencies, the planning initiative might be harder to organize for the first time, or even on an ongoing basis. In the best instances, outside facilitators, usually individuals with experience in the field, have assisted. When the process is internalized, and the long-range planning committee becomes a standing trustee committee responsible for periodic review and systematic extension of the plan that they devised in the first place, the process has taken hold. As one chairperson of such a committee has expressed it,

> What the Long-Range Planning Committee has provided is not a fixed road map for the next three years of the council's history, but a sense of direction of where the agency is going and what it is to achieve. Hopefully we have provided a solid foundation for the future of the Council with service to the arts community . . . as a major thrust.[14]

Ralph Burgard, consultant to more than 17 communities on cultural planning, outlines some of the elements of a comprehensive cultural policy for a city or county. He says that such a policy should do the following:

- recognize the essential role played by the community's major cultural institutions to conserve and transmit to succeeding generations the best of our Western cultural heritage as well as acquaint citizens with other heritages;
- stress the need for these institutions for continuing funds to maintain high standards of performance and exhibition;
- include flexible funding mechanisms to support smaller cultural institutions aspiring to professional standards in the more experimental areas of creative expression;
- acknowledge the critical role played by individual creative artists through technical assistance, public art commissions, and direct grants where appropriate;
- support the use of the arts to explore and celebrate the shared traditions of the community – ethnic, racial, social, or historic;
- assist the schools to improve the quality of education through strong arts-in-education programs for students;
- use cultural resources – artists and cultural organizations – to integrate aesthetic considerations into the plans of local governmental agencies and private sector institutions in order to create a community that is both synergistic (greater than the sum of its parts) and a celebration;
- reflect the pluralistic traditions of our country by recognizing that a partnership between the private and public sectors is essential for the successful implementation of these objectives.[15]

Communities undertaking to develop such policy need active leader-

ship to determine the organization and implementation of any planning. The cultural issues that should be addressed need to be determined and people need to be mobilized as members of energetic steering and resource committees, in order to focus the implementation of recommended programs. That leadership body, often as many as 100 in number, should come from the fields of arts, business, local government, education, and public service, with members acting in their civic or professional roles. The results of such planning have been impressive in several instances, among which are the arts councils of San Antonio, Texas; Charlotte, North Carolina; Keene, New Hampshire (Grand Monadnock Arts Council); Westchester County, New York; and Santa Cruz County, California. These councils have stimulated multiple sources of new support for the arts.

Expressed still another way, it is important to look at cultural planning as a way of creating a larger perspective with which to view the cultural impact on a community.

> "Cultural Planning" involves a meticulous assessment of how the arts can contribute to community development and conversely, how standard planning tools can help strengthen the arts as a productive and even profitable industry. . . . [In this sense,] as a movement for civic progress cultural planning can be broadly defined as an umbrella under which other community improvement programs, such as historic preservation, urban environmental design, urban archeology, and neighborhood conservation are included. . . .
>
> [Some of the ways to go about achieving planning goals might include:]
>
> - Initiatives that channel hotel and entertainment tax revenues to local cultural programs and institutions;
> - Historic districting and environmental review procedures that help maintain an area's unique cultural environment;
> - Local zoning ordinances and code administration procedures that encourage artist housing, public art and outdoor concerts and exhibitions;
> - Cooperative management or loaned executive programs to assist cultural organizations in marketing, operating and supporting their activities;
>
> and there are others.
>
> Cultural planning makes the arts an equal partner with other revitalization tools and encourages arts organizations to assess their needs in terms that can only strengthen the arts as a competitive and profitable industry. As such, it brings the arts into the existing systems of community development procedures that can be understood by local business, city officials and investors. The challenge within this new partnership will be for arts administrators to broaden their goals beyond artistic achievement and for the community planners not to compromise the arts by accepting less than the highest quality. It will require openmindedness on both sides to make this partnership work, but the benefits will accrue to society as a whole.[16]

If the arts council of the future is to fulfill a role in seeking new support possibilities for the arts, planning will be an inherent part of that role.

NOTES

1. NASAA Meeting, discussion on decentralization, Cleveland, Ohio, October 1981.
2. Robert Mayer, "The Local Arts Council Movement;" (background paper for the National Endowment for the Arts National Partnership Meeting, June 1980), pp. 31–32.
3. Robert M. Canon, "The Rise of the Private (Independent) Community Arts Agency in City Government," in *Local Government and the Arts*, Luisa Kreisberg (New York: American Council for the Arts, 1979), pp. 147–149. Updated here.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Arts and Education Council of Greater St. Louis, *Annual Report 1978–79*.
8. Robert Gustavson, "Corporate Council for the Arts" *Northwest Arts*, October 30, 1981, p. 7.
9. Peter Jablow, "Business and the Arts: A Creative Model" *Connections*, Spring 1982, pp. 14–15.
10. Mayer, "The Local Arts Council Movement," pp. 99–100.
11. Thomas A. Albert, City Spirit facilitation material for visit to Rochester, New York, 1978.
12. Dallas Park and Recreation Department, City Arts Program Division, "Cultural Policy and Program for the City of Dallas, Preamble" (first draft, January 1980).
13. Letter from Richard E. Huff, Coordinator, City Arts program, to Nina Gibans (May 8, 1980).
14. Elizabeth M. Ross, "Greater Columbus Arts Council Long-Range Plan: June 1979–June 1982" (report, April 11, 1979), p. 1.
15. Ralph Burgard, "Towards an American Cultural Policy" (paper written during the Northeast Assembly for the Future of the Performing Arts, New Haven, September 1981).
16. Dorothy Jacobson and Michael J. Pittas, "Cultural Planning: A Common Ground for Development" *American Arts*, January 1982, pp. 22–24.