Decision Package

Creative Pinellas

**Operating Decision Package Request – General Fund**

**1.** Pinellas County Cultural Plan.

**2.** $240,000 non-recurring

**3. Description**

Creative Pinellas is requesting $240,000 in funding from the General Fund to create a Pinellas County Cultural Plan. This investment will allow Creative Pinellas to contract with a qualified consultant to carry out the necessary research with community stakeholders, (survey’s, interviews, focus groups, intercepts, etc.) analyze and evaluate the results, develop recommendations, produce a roadmap, and provide a detailed final report.

The research will include gathering detailed information about the arts in Pinellas County, looking at the state and needs of individual artists, arts businesses, and nonprofit arts organizations. It will also gather information about and from arts audiences, with a focus on how different audiences and communities are or are not being served and determine areas of improvement. Further, it will look at both the economic impact of the arts, and how the arts integrate with other key businesses and institutions in Pinellas County, such as tourism, public schools, neighborhood redevelopment etc. The resulting report will guide Creative Pinellas and stakeholders in creating a Pinellas County strategic vision for the arts and in developing specific strategies for countywide implementation to sustain, support and invigorate Pinellas County as an arts and cultural destination serving residents, businesses and tourists alike.

The request will also fund a contract employee to oversee and manage the project.

**4. Justification**

The Creative industry in Pinellas County represents $2.2B in economic impact. In order to make informed strategic decisions and provide leadership that impacts that sector, and to effectively serve the needs of the residents, the business community and tourists who engage with that sector, Creative Pinellas needs access to accurate and up-to-date information about the artists, arts business, and arts and cultural institutions that contribute to the sector as a whole.

What are the arts and cultural assets in Pinellas County? Who are the artists, arts businesses and arts organizations and what are they doing and how? What challenges do they face? Are their needs and the needs of residents and guests being met? Are high quality arts experiences available to all? If not, what path can we take to cure that? What are the challenges moving forward? What are the strengths? What are the gaps? What does the future look like for arts and culture in Pinellas County? How do we get there?

The challenge for Creative Pinellas and for the county in determining what and where to invest resources, is that good, up-to-date, accurate, countywide information is not available. (We saw this, and the consequence of it clearly during the distribution of CARES Act funds.)

While Creative Pinellas has engaged in community conversations and topic-focused research in recent years, the last Pinellas County Cultural Plan was produced in 2005. The arts and cultural landscape of Pinellas County has changed dramatically since then. *(In 2005 the Dali collection was housed in an old warehouse, the Dunedin Fine Art Center occupied 5,000 sq ft. and the iconic Studio@620 had only been open for a year.)* Additionally, that was two years before the launch of the iPhone, and six years before the launch of the iPad and the subsequent explosion of Internet and social media.

A Cultural Plan will do the important work of bringing our knowledge base into the present. It will provide Creative Pinellas, county leadership and the community as a whole the information we need to understand and respond to the environment we function in today, by collecting and analyzing good and current data and providing a roadmap for strategic decision making. Creative Pinellas and arts and community leaders will have access to the information necessary to know what interventions (financial, educational, etc.) add value and optimize assets and resources.

This in turn, will drive higher level strategic thinking and decision-making countywide, both at an individual community level and for the county as a whole. This data and the subsequent report will also enable Creative Pinellas, county leadership and the arts community to approach the impact of arts and culture in Pinellas County as a KPI, and to more effectively evaluate its role and contribution in terms of economic impact, quality of life and well-being and civic engagement, as well as adjacent issues such as career development.

**5. Effectiveness Measures**

Creative Pinellas will look at the level of active community response to process and feedback on the report. Longitudinal evaluation of health and wellbeing of existing arts and cultural institution and birth of new organizations. Impact on increased accessibility, diversity, collaboration between arts organizations and communities, evolution of greater advocacy and support across cultural institutions, stronger sector economic performance.

**6. Alternatives**

We believe it is crucial that we develop a Cultural Plan for Pinellas County. (In fact, we had initially planned to make this a F/Y 2021 budget request but pulled back due to Covid.) As structured now, our plan is to hire an outside consultant with expertise in cultural planning. We would be interested in determining if the county already has consultant-relationships that we could leverage and that would result in cost-savings.

**Operational Impact**

Impacts to the community and to Creative Pinellas are addressed in the justification section in terms of the value of the information in planning, in decision making, in better understanding and leveraging the use of arts and cultural resources and assets, and thus in better outcomes.

It is part of Creative Pinellas on-going practice to both get community feedback for all our projects (in advance, during and upon completion). In addition, our programs are developed in response to community engagement. In general, we create a program based on members of the community or a partner coming to us with a need/problem to solve.

For example, the idea for our arts summer camp grants was a direct outcome of information from arts organization that they had not been successful in attracting underserved youth to their day camps with their standard camp scholarship programs. (The same kids came to camp on scholarship every year.) That information prompted us to change how Creative Pinellas distributed funds to organizations. Today, campers and their families apply directly to Creative Pinellas for a specific arts camp session. If they qualify (Title 1 school, school lunch program, county-identified poverty-vulnerable area, etc.) we pay the camp provider directly for that individual child’s registration. In 2021, 60% of the campers who participated in the program had never been to day camp before.

In terms of sustainability and resilience, Creative Pinellas believes that access to high quality arts and cultural experiences promotes and fosters sustainability for communities and resilience for communities and individuals.

**Budgetary Impact**

This request is a onetime, non-recurring request and does not involve an FTE.

$195,000 will be allocated for the study

$40,000 will be allocated for the contracted project manager

$5,000 will be allocated for related expenses (consultant travel, hosting public meetings, materials, etc.)

$240,000 total