

STRATEGIC PLAN FY19 – FY21



GREATER DES MOINES



The plan embraces a vision for Bravo that is bigger than grantmaking and uniquely positions Bravo to amplify the deep connections between arts, culture and heritage and regional social, economic and business priorities.

Des Moines Art Center
Cultural Partner since 2006
Encore Award winner 2017

Cover:
Iowa Asian Alliance
Cultural Partner since 2006

Since 2004, Bravo Greater Des Moines has been a critical regional partner in strengthening the role of arts, culture and heritage in central Iowa. Funded almost entirely by hotel/motel tax revenues generously contributed by seventeen local government partners, Bravo has elevated the region's cultural landscape for almost 15 years.

The last decade in Greater Des Moines has shown that a rich cultural ecosystem directly contributes to a thriving region. The growth in the number of arts, culture and heritage organizations, programs, concerts, exhibits and performances demonstrates that residents and visitors have an appetite for a broad range of experiences in a variety of venues throughout the region. In addition to building community and strengthening connections through shared experiences, arts, culture and heritage organizations are also essential economic engines, contributing

more than \$185 million annually to the regional economy. There can be no question that arts, culture and heritage play a significant role in making Greater Des Moines a thriving, vibrant region.

This strategic plan was built to enhance Bravo's service to the community over the next three years. The plan embraces a vision for Bravo that is bigger than grantmaking and uniquely positions Bravo to amplify the deep connections between arts, culture and heritage and regional social, economic and business priorities.

This plan is a living document, regularly referred to and subject to change so that Bravo can remain nimble, responsive and relevant. As the organization evolves to reflect the community's desire for more, we recognize that our cultural and community partners are essential allies in implementing this work and look forward to strengthening collaboration to increase our collective impact.



Historic Valley Junction Foundation
Cultural Partner since 2012

Vision

Arts, culture and heritage elevate and enrich a vibrant Greater Des Moines.

Mission

Bravo Greater Des Moines leverages community resources to maximize the impact of arts, culture and heritage to advance regional priorities.

Core Values

Collaborative: Bravo collaborates with all community partners to define and achieve long-term success for arts, culture and heritage.

Inclusive: Bravo values diversity, and we promote a culture of equity and inclusion.

Accountable: Bravo acts with integrity and transparency, allocating resources responsibly and as good stewards of public funds.

Regional: Bravo invests where resources have the most impact on regional priorities.

Opportunistic: Bravo consistently delivers on core functions while remaining nimble to respond strategically to regional priorities.

Passionate: Bravo stakeholders are passionate about arts, culture and heritage and the benefits Bravo brings to Greater Des Moines.

INVEST STRATEGICALLY IN ARTS, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE.

Develop sustainable, high-impact community investment programs that align with regional and cultural priorities.

Define success metrics for Bravo's community investment function and develop mechanisms to track and report those metrics.

Experiment with ways to expand impact of community investments, particularly in parts of the region that currently lack meaningful Bravo support for their cultural assets.

Implement program changes thoughtfully and with a spirit of partnership and collaboration.

DESIRED OUTCOMES:

Relevant and reliable data are available to measure and report on the impact of Bravo's community investments.

Community investment strategies and processes are diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

Bravo's community investment work strengthens the region's cultural priorities.

Mainframe Studios
Cultural Partner since 2018



LEAD ADVANCEMENT OF REGIONAL CULTURAL PRIORITIES BEYOND GRANTMAKING.

Work with cultural and community partners to identify and prioritize opportunities where Bravo can play a unique, collaborative and additive role in strengthening the impact of arts, culture and heritage on regional priorities.

Align Bravo's public identity with our vision and leadership role.

Build networks for creative individuals, cultural organizations and the community at large to connect, engage, interact and learn.

Create a shared understanding of cultural equity and its significance to regional priorities for policy makers, arts and community leaders, and key stakeholders.

DESIRED OUTCOMES:

Arts, culture, and heritage are recognized as essential drivers of economic development and quality of life in Greater Des Moines.

Bravo's mission, vision, values and relevance to the region are well-understood by key stakeholders who are ambassadors and advocates for the organization.

Opportunities for the cultural community to thrive are enhanced.



Heartland Youth Choir
Cultural Partner since 2006

ENSURE BRAVO HAS THE PEOPLE, STRUCTURE AND SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT SUCCESS.

Align organizational systems and structure to support community investment and community impact priorities.

Maintain Bravo's reputation as a trusted steward of public resources.

Recruit, educate, train, and engage Board and community leadership to be well-informed and energized about Bravo and their role in advancing its work.

Align Bravo staff and resources to execute on this plan and its strategic objectives.

DESIRED OUTCOMES:

Bravo's Board and professional staff team work together to enhance Bravo's service to cultural and community partners.

Bravo's policies, procedures, systems, and structures are efficient and sustainable, allowing focus on advancing on mission and goals.

Key Bravo stakeholders have opportunities for ongoing education and training to ensure engagement and effectiveness.



STRATEGIC PLAN FOUNDATION AND PROCESS

Bravo's strategic plan will guide the work of the organization for the next three years, but Bravo's success is directly linked to achievement of much larger, regional objectives. This plan builds on extensive community planning work already completed, particularly Greater Des Moines' Capital Crossroads effort, launched in 2012 and refreshed in 2017, and the Regional Cultural Assessment, funded by Bravo and completed in 2017.

REGIONAL PRIORITIES

Capital Crossroads identified eight catalyst priorities that will generate the highest implementation value for regional stakeholders:

- Downtown and neighborhood vitality
- Good business and entrepreneur climate
- Creative and engaged workforce
- Model of leadership in diversity, inclusion, equity and access
- User-friendly, well connected regional transport system
- Different housing types, costs, styles and locations
- Collaboration among local and regional governing bodies
- Global leader in water quality and soil health

Arts, culture and heritage are not separate from these catalyst areas, but rather integral to their success and the Regional Cultural Assessment focused on identifying ways the sector can help advance, support and grow these efforts.

FOUR DEEPLY INTERCONNECTED CULTURAL PRIORITIES EMERGED

- **EVERY DAY, EVERYWHERE ART**
Generate more spontaneous artistic and cultural connections in new and different places.
- **STRENGTHEN THE CREATIVE ECONOMY** Develop the talent and skillsets of creative entrepreneurs and artists.
- **CULTURAL TAPESTRY** Support arts, culture, and heritage as diverse, accessible, inclusive, and equitable throughout Central Iowa.
- **YOUTH CONNECTIONS** Ensure that all young people in the region have access to a rich array of creative and cultural experiences, both formal and informal, educational and recreational.

Many existing arts organizations and artists are already positively impacting these priorities with hundreds of programs. With this strategic plan, Bravo seeks to highlight the unique role our organization can play in further advancing these regional objectives.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The strategic planning process included input from key stakeholders to ensure that Bravo's understanding of our role evolved to meet community needs. The discussion actually began in 2016 with the Regional Cultural Assessment (RCA). More than 800 people provided input through surveys, community conversations, stakeholder group interviews and meetings. Individual artists, educators, municipal and community leaders, activists and representatives of organizations working in the arts, culture and heritage sector weighed in to draw a picture of where the region sits currently and build a vision for a path forward.

In September 2017, Bravo contracted with Arts Consulting Group to help build a plan for Bravo that capitalized on the momentum of the RCA with specific, measurable implementation actions Bravo specifically could take to respond to regional priorities outlined. Rebekah Lambert, lead consultant on Bravo's 2015-2018 strategic plan and collaborator on the RCA, led the effort. The input process included a full-day retreat for Bravo's entire Board of Directors where Bravo's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were deeply discussed and prioritized. In addition, an Advisory Group of key community leaders with connections to Bravo's work was convened to ensure that broad perspectives were included in the discussion. Bravo's cultural and community partners were represented in each group and engaged at several additional points along the way. A Strategic Planning Committee of the Board was also convened to ensure that input was

reviewed, prioritized and thoughtfully incorporated throughout the process.

All stakeholder engagement provided good clarity of perception about Bravo at this point in time, and strong clusters of interest and intent and clear confirmation of where to focus for the next three years. Core themes include:

- Over the past 3 years, Bravo has accomplished a lot; the organization is poised for the next big step forward.
- There is strong momentum for activating on the cultural priorities identified through the Regional Cultural Assessment.
- Bravo is in a strong, stable position but can be doing more to support the region.
- People know of Bravo but don't know what we do or what essential value we provide.
- There's a vision for Bravo that is bigger than grantmaking. The organization can invest community resources with excellence and play a unique role for the region without overlapping with roles others are better positioned to play.

This input and engagement has led to a plan that is relevant and exciting, capitalizing on momentum and interest to drive Bravo forward. Internally, it will drive organizational decision-making and resource allocation. Externally, it will be a tool to help key stakeholders understand and appreciate the unique role Bravo Greater Des Moines plays for the region.

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* Strategic Planning Committee

+ Bravo Board of Directors Executive Committee



Greater Des Moines Public Art Foundation
Cultural Partner since 2006



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