



2021 LODGING AND TOURISM FUND APPLICATION Arts & Humanities Bainbridge Final Report

Summary of 2021 Certified Creative District

The focus of this grant was the establishment of Bainbridge Island as a Certified Creative District (CCD). Creative Districts, as defined by the Washington State Arts Commission (ArtsWa) work to grow the creative sector. They turn cultural activities into economic growth and help communities thrive. They are the heart of a community. Washington State now has eleven established creative districts.

Initially, we planned to establish the CCD as a virtual district that can be experienced online, but instead our focus remained on completing the application for ArtsWa.

This task had the help and support of community partners including, members of City Council, the Multicultural Advisory Council, Visit Bainbridge, the Lodging Association, Bainbridge Downtown Association, Bainbridge Chamber of Commerce, BIMA, BARN, BPA, BAC, to name a few. We contracted the services of an independent contractor to collate all the details for submission. The process from convening the groups to submitting the proposal, took a year to complete. Our proposal was not immediately accepted. More details had to be provided before the final designation was given in October.

This late fall designation moved the focus away from officially virtually launching the district to establishing the steering committee that would drive this designation. On top of press releases and other public relations, we also managed to secure publicity through the film, "Ingress," which was largely filmed within the Bainbridge Creative District.

Project Objectives

In our efforts to increase tourism we have been partnering with Visit, Lodging, Chamber, Downtown Associations to implement our strategy for the district. This partnership has provided shared messaging; established a joint portal, "Hello Bainbridge," for residents and visitors who are most likely to visit our creative district; and shares critical analytics and economic indicators for the district. These partners have also been invited to form part of the Bainbridge Creative District Executive Committee. The latter offers strategic direction to the steering committee (consisting of partners in the arts, culture, business community) and allows us to meet our goals.

Specific Measurable Results

Bainbridge Island was officially designated a creative district on Oct. 8, 2021. The City Manager's Report of that month congratulated us citing the growth and nurturing of the "creative

class” that could potentially be the foundation of the new economy. This designation allows us to enhance advocacy of the creative district, build on and expand strategies for collaborations with diverse groups on the island, and provide a visible connection between arts and culture and economic development in our community. It further allows us to work with COBI to propose the incorporation of the Creative District into the Comprehensive Plan’s Cultural Element.

The inclusion of the Bainbridge Creative District in the film, “Ingress,” allows us to reach a broader audience and enhance our messaging: the district connects arts and culture to business development.

We also continue to utilize *Currents* to drive creative district (and “the glow” - areas outside of the walkable district) activities, artists, organizations, etc. Our metrics show overall engagement on the site, which also houses Bainbridge Creative District information.

Involvement of Partners and Unexpected Cooperative Relationships

Bloedel was leading the charge to establish a “Creativity in Community: A Celebration of Local Arts and Culture” to be held in Sep-Oct of 2023.

After initial discussions, it was clear that the Creative District would take leadership in this event. With the official designation in 2021, and the state-wide launch in 2022, and the latter would be a test run or “teaser” for what’s to come in 2023 and beyond. The 2023 timing coincides with BPA’s season kickoff the unveiling of the new Bux Theater, Bloedel, BAC, BARN anniversaries, and other organizations.

The designation of the Bainbridge Creative District will allow us to showcase our arts and culture during one large event (instead of a series of events) that bring tourism and economic engagement to our island. There is the possibility of this becoming a yearly event.

The application process involved all stakeholders in arts, culture, and business. The steering and executive committees also include partners in the multicultural, diversity sector (part of our executive committee) and has attracted artists and creatives who want to support the creative district’s activities and strategic direction. One such group is the establishment of a Bainbridge Island Poet Laureate. Discussions are underway to determine how this appointment could be incorporated into the creative district.

Analysis of Actual Expenses and Income

The funding we received from the LTAC grant in 2021 was utilized to apply for and obtain designation as a creative district through the services of an independent contractor, publicity, and internal support and operational expenses.

Income	Budget	Actuals
LTAC Grant	5,000	5,000

COBI Cultural Funding Grant	5,000	5,000
Sponsorships	5,000	800
NEA Our Town matching grant	25,000	0
Total	40,000	10,800
Expenses	Budget	Actuals
Independent contractor	5,000	1,000
AHB Staff	15,000	3,000
Marketing	2,000	1,000
Print and postage	6,000	0
Total	28,000	5,000

Good Faith Best-Estimate of Actual Attendance Generated by the scope of work in the three categories below:

Due to our application being approved late fall, it is difficult to measure the tourism impact of the district at this time.

We are, however, able to provide Currents Analytics that show user engagement with arts and culture -- this includes locals and visitors. The biggest source channels are organic - which means people are choosing to visit the site and get the information they need. Our second largest driver is social media. Total users and subscribers have steadily increased.

The analytics are attached.