

7 ARTS AND CULTURE

This Element identifies issues and delineates programs supporting and developing arts and culture in Mariposa County. Arts and culture play important roles in the life of the County for the enjoyment of residents. They enrich community life, support personal growth and development, and are an important part in the County's economy. Arts and culture are essential parts of Mariposa County.

The Arts and Culture Element differs from the Historic and Cultural Resources Element in that the Arts and Culture Element integrates the arts into the County's daily culture and economy. The Historic and Cultural Resources Element recognizes the critical importance of preserving the County's past as integral to Mariposa's cultural and economic future.

7.1 ARTS AND CULTURE ISSUES AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Mariposa County recognizes the essential value arts and culture provide to the County's economy, character, and quality of life. It is further recognized that for Mariposa County the arts are broadly defined. The arts generate revenue for the local economy and benefit every aspect of the community. Therefore, the Arts and Culture Element addresses the following issues.

- Arts and Community Fabric
- The Role of Arts and Culture
- Arts, Culture, and Economic Integration
- Places for Arts and Cultural Activities
- Art in Public Areas
- The Role of County Government

7.1.01 ARTS AND COMMUNITY FABRIC

Art brings the County together, creating situations not merely for enjoyment, but also for dialogue, thought, and growth. Embracing the arts adds creativity to the community's character. When the arts become a part of the social fabric of the County, it raises the esteem countywide.

Across the country, it has been proven that recognition of arts and culture is a source of civic pride. An arts and culture identity results in improved recognition of the County as seen by target markets. Commitment to the arts builds bridges between cultures. The arts industry

provides Mariposa County with a clean and quiet industry creating an aesthetically pleasing place to visit and live.

7.1.02 THE ROLE OF ARTS AND CULTURE

Arts and culture play an important part in County life. The educational, social, and economic benefits the County receives from the expansion and integration of art and cultural activities in both private and public spheres are not always clearly defined or appreciated. Whether the recognition of art in Mariposa County starts with petroglyphs of the indigenous residents or the brush stroke of the first Spanish visitor, the County is the home of artists, artisans, and other cultural professionals who have a consistent impact on the economy and character of the region. The County attracts internationally acclaimed artists. Mariposa County's historic character and landscape provide the fount of inspiration for such scenery as rolling oak foothills, Yosemite National Park and the High Sierra.

Art has the power to change policy. If it were not for the historic works of writers, painters, and photographers in the late 19th Century and early 20th Century, Yosemite National Park would not exist today. Had these cultural advocates not created their works, Mariposa County would have a far different legacy today.

Cultural tourism—attracting visitors to arts and cultural events as a destination or part of an overall tourism experience—is a major contributor to economic development of the County. Cultural tourism can attract visitors who might otherwise not come to Mariposa County. Additionally, it provides opportunities for visitors enjoying other County attractions to lengthen the time spent and the dollars left in the County. Promotion of themed itineraries or promotions among arts and cultural organizations, as well as special events are a means to encourage extended stays among visitors. Music and arts festivals have proven to be successful in similar locations in California.

Becoming a central place for arts in California requires a concerted effort to create an arts environment. This is accomplished through the presentation of works by artists, artisans, and performers. It is achieved by creating local support for the arts. Art is a significant attractor to the casual visitor. It provides street-side opportunities for visitors to walk through the community—thus exposing tourists to the various retail stores and services offered in the community. The Historic District walking tour is one example of providing an active visitors' experience.

It is common in cities and counties throughout the world, including Mari-posa County, for art to be acquired for public display and viewing. Local businesses have a tremendous opportunity to tie the arts and culture into the economic engine by continuing to display historical depictions, murals, sculpture, furniture, or other works of arts. Architecture and landscaping reflect various aspects of the County's artistic history and culture.

7.1.03 ARTS, CULTURE, AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

The County needs to create the environment necessary for the arts industry to develop as a successful contributor to an expanding countywide economy.

Developing programs to promote and enhance the arts as an economic force in Mariposa County requires innovative public-private partnerships and vigorous community leadership. A role of the Board of Supervisors is, in collaboration with community-based organizations, to support strategic objectives for action.

7.1.04 PLACES FOR ARTS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Arts and cultural activities are a viable part of life in the County. Appropriate spaces in which artists can create, display, and perform, and in which the audience can participate, are essential. The availability of appropriate venues for art and cultural activities and events is a key element in the creation of an image of Mariposa County as a place where the arts thrive and are important for both residents and visitors. Creating space for art and year-round performance venues add to the County's ability to incorporate art and culture into its economy and character. Additional facilities are needed to support a full spectrum of performances, exhibit space, meetings, and related activities.

7.1.05 ART IN PUBLIC AREAS

The County acknowledges a community desire to display art countywide.

Mariposa has limited examples of artwork in public areas. As areas grow and the arts become a greater influence, many communities have increased interest in displays of art in public areas.

There is significant variety in how art appeals to individuals. When art is publicly displayed or prominently displayed in public spaces, there is a need for a review and approval process. The purpose is not to censor, but to balance artistic merit with community expectations and standards of appropriateness. This review is an appropriate service of the County Arts Council.

7.1.06 THE ROLE OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT

The role of the County government is to create an economic climate in which the arts are a part of the County's growth and economy.

7.2 GENERAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Goal 7-1: Position the County to act as a catalyst for the arts in the community.

Policy 7-1a: Diverse community members represent the Board on issues associated with the arts in the County.

Implementation Measure 7-1a(1): Support the Mariposa County Arts Council in advising the Board on the arts.

Timing: Ongoing
Responsibility: Board of Supervisors.
Fiscal Impact: Staff costs.
Consequences: Promotes the arts as part of the economy.

Goal 7-2: Broaden support for and recognition of the arts as an important aspect of County character and economy through the development of programs and partnerships.

Policy 7-2a: Increase public awareness of and support for the arts as an integral part of life in the County.

Implementation Measure 7-2a(1): The County should support community-based programs that increase awareness of the arts.

Timing: Ongoing
Responsibility: Mariposa County Arts Council.
Fiscal Impact: Administration and operational costs.
Consequences: This policy requires the County to support the arts.

Policy 7-2b: To enhance economic return to the community, the County participates in arts and culture programs.

Implementation Measure 7-2b(1): The County should include the arts in its ongoing marketing and promotion programs.

Timing: Ongoing
Responsibility: Mariposa County Arts Council, Economic Development.
Fiscal Impact: Staff and marketing costs.
Consequences: Promotes the arts as part of the economy.

Policy 7-2c: The arts are part of the County's economic development strategic planning.

Implementation Measure 7-2c(1): Integrate the arts as part of the County's Economic Development Strategic Plan.

Timing: Intermediate-term
Responsibility: Board of Supervisors, County Administrative Officer, Mariposa County Arts Council.
Fiscal Impact: Implementation may have costs.
Consequences: Promotes the arts.

Policy 7-2d: Non-commercial public displays of art are used to enhance community character.

Implementation Measure 7-2d(1): The Planning Commission and the Mariposa County Arts Council may collaborate to prepare an ordinance addressing the review process, standards, and guidelines for public displays of art in County facilities.

Timing: Intermediate-term

Responsibility: Mariposa County Planning Department, Mariposa County Arts Council.

Fiscal Impact: None.

Consequences: Ensures the County Code does not prohibit displays of non-commercial art and incorporates the Mariposa County Arts Council in that regulatory planning process.