

Montana Arts Council Strategic Plan Process

Our discussion of the strategic planning process during the December Council meeting was productive and allowed us to arrive at a refined set of planning pillars for our bridge plan to address as we begin to develop the full strategic plan. These pillars and their key components below will be the focus of our strategic planning process and will guide us toward specific tactics to identify and implement in the plan.

Final Proposed Bridge/Adaptive Plan Text from December Council Meeting Discussion

EQUITY

- Create a focus on smaller organizations providing arts programming.
- Every region, organization, and artist must have equitable opportunity to acquire resources to rebuild.
- Impact of investments should guide funding decisions.

ACCESS

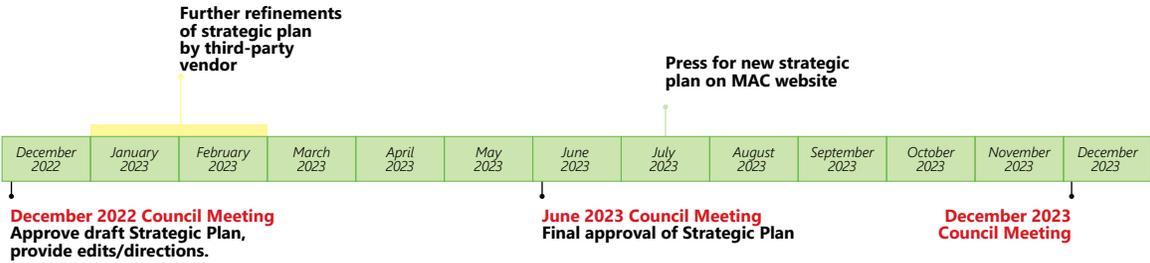
- Resources will be targeted to specifically include those that have been historically underserved, and to preserve what is at risk of being lost.
- Increase focus on Native and rural communities (population, culture).
- Facilitating technology (or lack of technology) needs.

CONNECTION

- Prioritize time to engage statewide and regional networks for the mutual benefit of artists, organizations, and communities.
- Value and seek out input from key stakeholders.
- Further connect with non-arts organizations providing arts programming, and community projects that involve the arts.

Updated Timeline for Strategic Plan

Montana Arts Council Tentative Bridge Plan and Strategic Plan Timeline



Strategic Plan Memo from December Council Meeting Book

Memorandum

To: Montana Arts Council Members
From: Renée Westlake | Committee Chair
RE: Strategic Planning Update

The Strategic Planning Committee includes Jay Pyette and Liz Albers. The Committee met on November 16, 2021, with Tatiana Gant, Kristin Burgoyne, and Eric Heidle. Following this memo is the draft bridge plan that has been developed. There will be time to comment, reflect, and refine this draft plan in our December meeting, which will be shared as an addendum prior to the meeting. My intent is for the Council to vote to adopt the plan after our discussion. Following the adoption of the bridge plan, the committee will work with the staff to formulate credible and measurable goals and objectives, which staff will apply across grants, programs, and services.

In the June 2021 meeting, The committee presented the intent for MAC to develop a short-term plan, often called a bridge plan, to focus our intent as we respond to the pandemic and aftermath. The concept of a bridge plan is new to many of us, and Tatiana Gant has been gathering information on this format, as well as bridge plans being implemented in other state arts agencies.

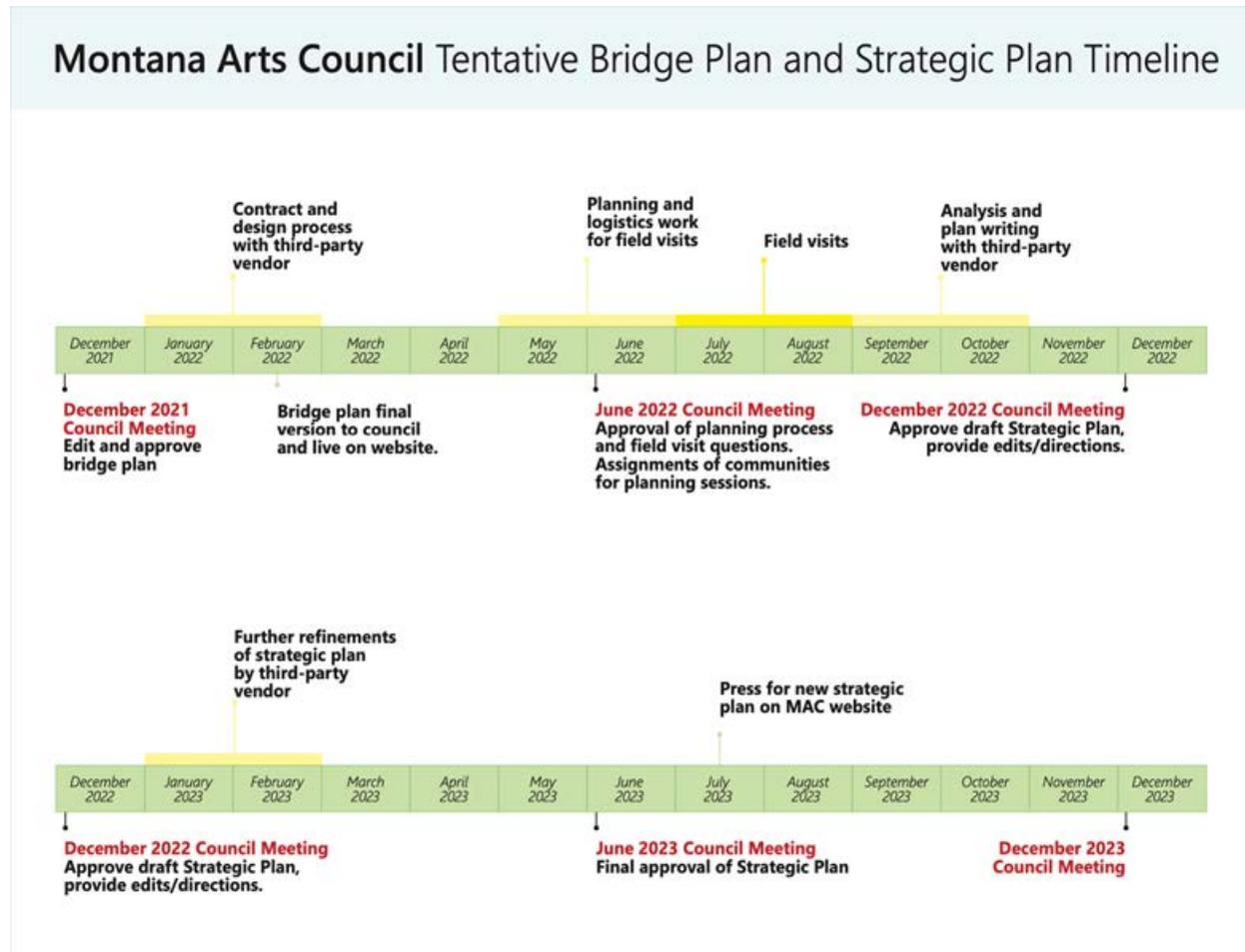
What the heck is the bridge plan?

- It is a *Strategy* roadmap
- It is a *Link* between strategy and execution
- It allows us to *Visualize* key outcomes
- It is *Delivered* over a particular time horizon
- It enables us to *Achieve* MAC's Strategic Vision

Prior to the November committee meeting, staff shared notes from staff planning sessions led by Kristin Burgoyne, and refined by Eric Heidle. The committee is mindful that the bridge plan needs to identify and respond to the current opportunities and challenges to make the best use of the resources available.

The bridge plan will serve as a guide during this period of pandemic recovery. Believing that travel and face-to-face engagement will be possible, MAC will hopefully be able to engage in traditional planning processes, the timeline below illustrates key markers in how the committee will move into developing a long-term plan.

Timeline



As we move into the next stages, the committee carries the lessons we've learned in trying to plan for the future in a period of uncertainty. We'll do this informed by the insight gained through the previous RFP process, and will prioritize utilizing staff and Council as much as practical in the field work. We will also be sensitive to the fact that technology is not a viable option for many Montanans, and will prioritize in-person meetings in locations where internet access is most limited. The committee believes that a neutral voice is needed to translate the information gathered and intends to engage with a consultant for the development and refinement of the next long-term plan.

This committee benefits from the breadth of planning experiences of its members. We are energized by the opportunity to re-examine MAC's purpose, values, and goals as we envision its future.

Montana Arts Council 2022 Adaptive Plan

Current Mission: *The Montana Arts Council is the agency of state government established to develop the creative potential of all Montanans, advance education, spur economic vibrancy, and revitalize communities through involvement in the arts*

Current Vision: *Montana will be known far and wide as “The Land of Creativity”, where the arts are essential to the creativity, imagination and entrepreneurship that make Big Sky Country the very best place on earth to live, learn, work, and play.*

Purpose:

MAC’s 2022 Adaptive Plan will set the priorities for grants, programs, and services in the transition from relief to recovery, while staying focused on its mission.

Process:

The information referenced in the development of the MAC 2022 Adaptive Plan was gleaned from CARES Act applications and final reports, informal conversations with the field, and observations by Council and staff. Consistent themes were evident, and this plan authorizes MAC to pursue strategic footing as we support the cultural sector towards recovery.

Montana is unique in its cultural and philanthropic landscapes and while national examples were considered, this plan is reflective of what is appropriate for Montana.

Priorities:

- EQUITY
 - *Create a focus on smaller organizations. Consider solutions to funding gaps for grantees due to organizational size; issues of scale and equity, dollar amounts (Does a dollar invested in Missoula have the same impact as a dollar invested in Miles City or Philipsburg?)*
 - *Every region, organization, and artist must have the ability to acquire resources to rebuild.*
 - *Pre-pandemic financial information cannot inform future support. The impact of the investment will be the key factor in funding decisions.*
- ACCESS
 - *Every region and community needs culture to recover and rebuild. Resources will be targeted to specifically include those that have been historically underserved, and to preserve what is at risk of being lost.*
 - *Create a focus on Native and rural populations, facilitating technology (or lack of technology) needs.*
- CONNECT
 - *Understand that financial resources are limited. Prioritize time to engage statewide and regional networks for the mutual benefit of artists, organizations, and communities.*
 - *Evaluate input from key stakeholder interviews: staff, Council, grantee comments, and MAC response to COVID.*
 - *Further connect with non-arts organizations providing arts programming, and community projects that involve the arts. Connect with Montanans as audiences and participants in the arts.*