

# Biddeford Cultural Plan

Community Conversation, Business Community

February 22, 2021

## What is wonderful about this community?

- Adult Ed, UNE, Knowledge preservation, travel and learning opportunity through library, adult ed,
- Having cultural works of art, it is universal,
- Circus school in the Mill is a great resource outdoor performance (they did public performances for Riverfest, and a few other, they have movable rigs, they might reopen this summer).
- Elements live music every weekend before covid
- Biddeford pool has phenomenal art shows, local library hosts the events, 4th of July parade, art shows, craft

## What needs to improve?

- Strengthen relationship with UNE
- Used to be a connection between UNE and community theater, would love to see that revitalized
- More poetry reading and art exhibits
- We don't have tourist attractions.

## What role, if any, do you think arts and culture could play in addressing the needs identified above?

- Using murals at gateways and major walls to help orient people, one that says BIDDEFORD or a story, or have people vote on design to bring awareness of the town to visitors
- Create opportunities to bring street performance in, benefit youth and quality of life – through ordinance?
- Public art helping identify neighborhoods, parks trails
- Is there a way art can help support the recovery restoration and healing, a restoration of the community! Involving arts, culture, and recreation

## What do you hope to see 5 years down the road?

- Would love to see a town green! Even if it is multiple little greens, more gathering spaces for poetry readings, arts events, picnics. Having some kind of outdoor gathering place
- A common outdoor area. With art a destination gathering
- In Seattle the Shakespeare in the park program was awesome. More theater in the parks!
- Community dance opportunities, contra dances
- Burlington VT has such a cool downtown, performing arts is strong, jazz festivals, artists series, Burlington city arts, theater, bringing more music to Biddeford. Getting people to all parts of Biddeford, a walking experience, museum exhibits added, how to expand this to the marina, shipyard, huge history down there, museum on streets or more mini museums,
- Get a small ship operator to do river tours and get a tall ship to park at the mouth of the river - would tie the river and ocean to mills and downtown. Connect Biddeford pool with downtown
- See the city facilitate river tours
- Highlighting the agriculture in Biddeford, Saturday farmers market at mill was huge for business owners, bring it to downtown Biddeford as a main stay! Like Burlington, perfect use for a town green, highlight local farmers and food! Highlighting it is one eco system with businesses carrying local products
- Biddeford getting a cool food scene, using food as a discourse to connect people, community, culture, more events on farm to table, local eco system



- More music spaces, galleries, museums
- Make it welcoming, we don't want empty abandoned storefronts, how do we fix this, find those main streets we want to highlight, little things like power washing storefronts, do more cool paintings like the wine place, freshen up facades
- Interactive art experiences that help us see next generations, like American visionary art museum in Baltimore MD, ship museum?
- Communities have a long recovery process from covid, build that into the plan
- Generational addressing things, involving youth in the county, we need to include senior citizens as well
- Restructuring the end of water street, increasing outdoor spaces, creating a super walkable city
- Biddeford zoning is too restrictive for things like farm stands, and public art in rural areas