



Town of Parker  
**Cultural Strategic Plan**  
 2026 – 2036



**PARKER  
 ARTS**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

## SECTION 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Vision.....	2-1
Mission.....	2-2
Approach.....	2-3
Priorities.....	2-4

## SECTION 3. KEY FINDINGS

Introduction.....	3-1
SWOT Analysis.....	3-2
Strength.....	3-3
Weaknesses.....	3-4
Opportunities.....	3-5
Threats.....	3-6
Takeaways.....	3-7

Photo credit left: Fika Coffee House. Courtesy of Keen Independent Research.

Cover and section break page images, clockwise from upper left:

PACE Center exterior. Courtesy of Parker Arts.

PACE Center audience. Courtesy of Parker Arts.

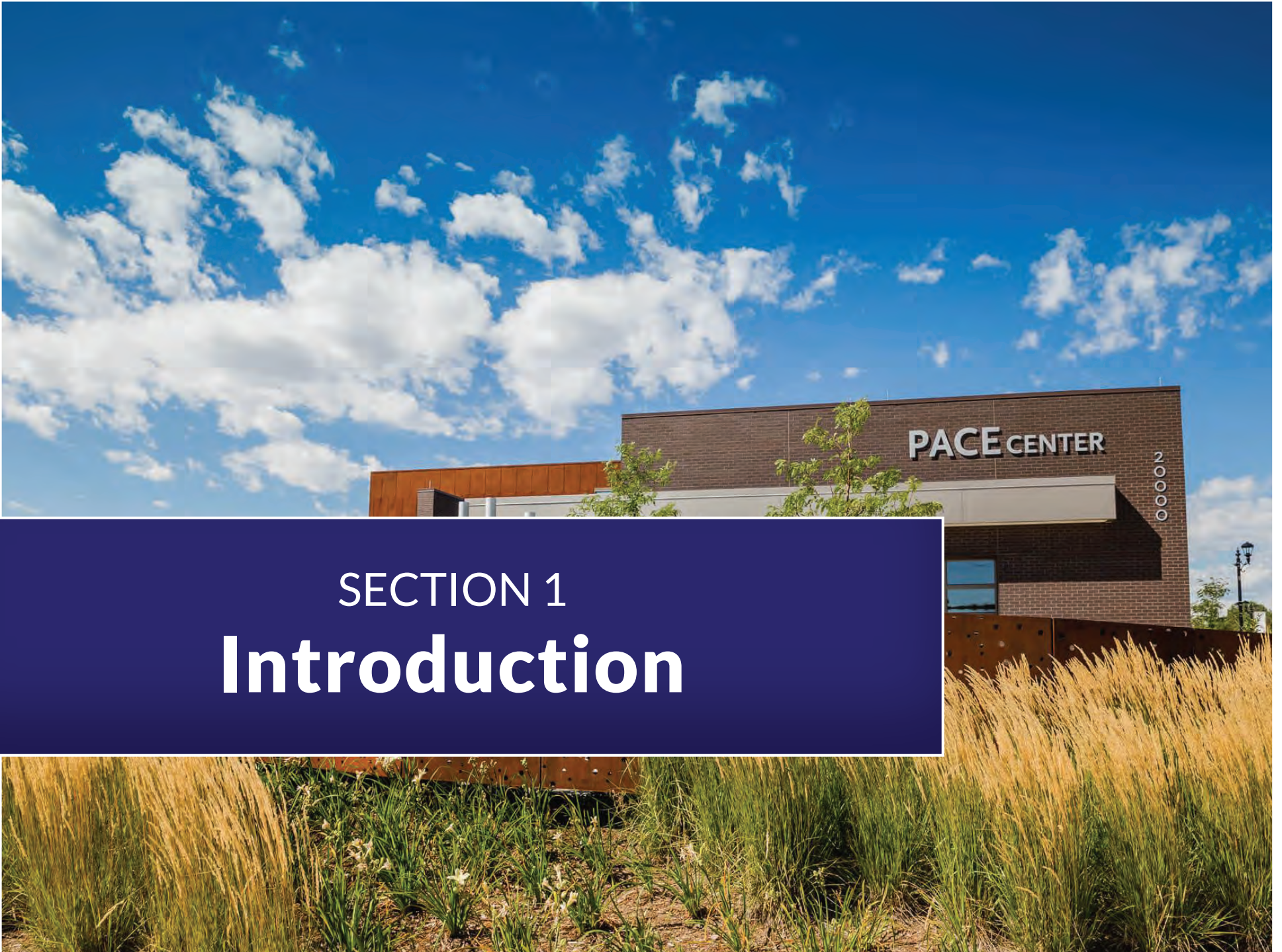
*The Dance* (2014) by Lee Proctor, sculpture in front of The Schoolhouse. Courtesy of Parker Arts.

Outreach activity. Courtesy of Parker Arts.

Discovery Park Amphitheater. Courtesy of Parker Arts.

PACE Center Gallery. Courtesy of Parker Arts

Section 3 photo credit: Science Night. Courtesy of Parker Arts.



SECTION 1  
**Introduction**

## SECTION 1. Introduction

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The Town of Parker (“Town”) engaged Keen Independent Research to guide a strategic planning process for its Cultural Department (“Parker Arts”), which operates the PACE Center, the Schoolhouse, the amphitheater at Discovery Park and Ruth Memorial Chapel, as well as oversees the Town’s public art program.

### Goal

This 10-year Cultural Strategic Plan offers a coherent strategy to guide the Town’s budgetary and other decisions, ensure quality and vitality of arts and culture for Parker residents and plan for downtown Parker’s sustainable future as a vibrant cultural destination.

### Approach and Outcome

Parker Arts and representatives from the Strategic Planning Committee (Cultural and Scientific Commission) worked with Keen Independent between November 2024 and December 2025 to develop this cultural strategic plan.

Representatives of Town leadership and Parker Arts staff participated in two days of workshopping concepts to develop a new vision and mission, as well as to define strategic priorities. These representatives continued an iterative revision process. Keen Independent supported Parker Arts leadership and staff to further develop the strategic priorities through clear objectives and actionable tactics, which Parker Arts leadership is finalizing internally as a dynamic action plan.

Town leadership reviewed and provided input on draft deliverables through a presentation to the Cultural and Scientific Commission and the Public Art Commission, as well as a Town Council study session. The resulting cultural strategic plan establishes a new vision, mission and approach for Parker Arts’ role regarding arts and culture in Parker that will guide the work of the department during the 2026–2036 period.

*Dear friends,*

*As we look toward the next decade, I am filled with gratitude and excitement for what lies ahead for Parker Arts and our community. This Cultural Strategic Plan reflects not only the work of our dedicated staff and consultants, but also the voices, ideas and dreams of the many residents, artists and partners who helped shape it.*

*Over the past years, Parker Arts has grown from building awareness and engagement within our walls to inspiring creativity across our entire community. This plan builds on that foundation and charts a path toward a future where Parker’s cultural identity continues to flourish — one where arts and culture are integral to how we live, connect and thrive together.*

*Thank you to everyone who contributed to this vision. I look forward to the next chapter of collaboration, creativity and community as we work together to make Parker a truly vibrant cultural destination.*

*With gratitude,  
Carrie Glassburn, Cultural Director  
Parker Arts/Town of Parker*

## SECTION 1. Introduction

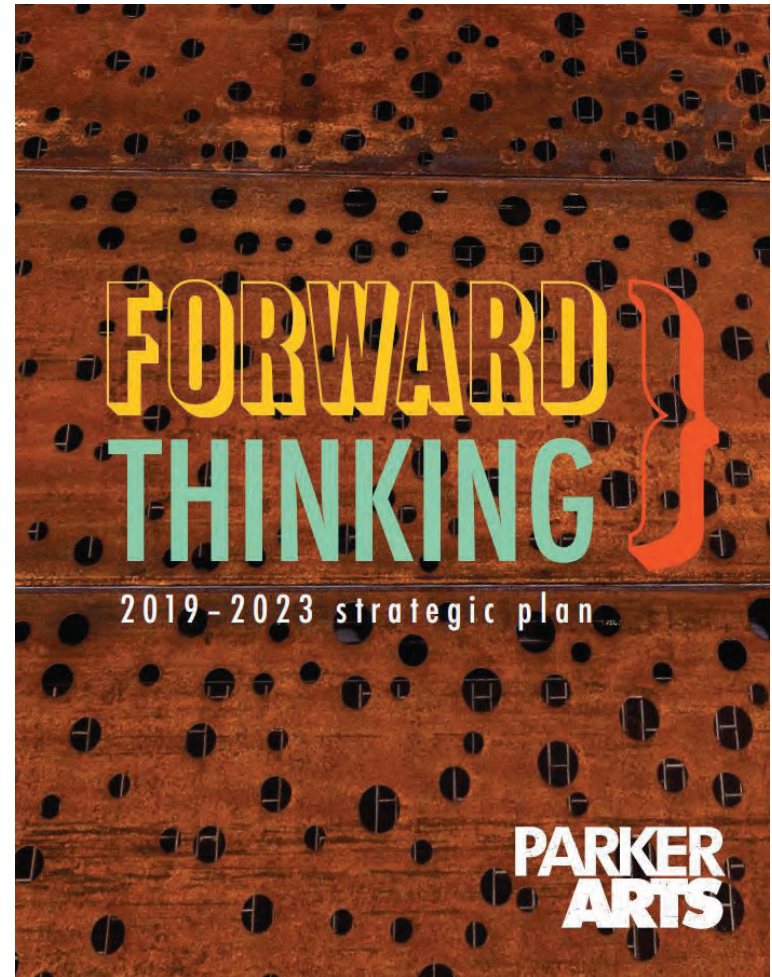
### Background

This Cultural Strategic Plan builds upon prior strategic planning efforts of Parker Arts. In 2019, Parker Arts completed an inaugural five-year strategic plan.<sup>1</sup> Driven by a planning committee comprised of community members, the 2019-2023 strategic plan was internally focused on Parker Arts, or the Town’s Cultural Department.<sup>2</sup> That plan resulted in the development of a “Five-Year Strategy Scorecard” to direct department efforts and 10 Strategic Objectives, which Parker Arts has largely fulfilled through successful implementation.<sup>3</sup>

**From internally focused to Parker-wide planning.** Engaging Keen Independent as external consultants and broadening the scope of strategic planning to a Town-wide cultural strategic plan reflects the following:

- Interest in nationwide research and benchmarking to learn from, and implement, recommended practices;
- Dedication to financial responsibility and sustainability, which means planning for a resilient arts and culture future; and
- Understanding that a resilient future of arts and culture in Parker requires a robust creative ecosystem, where the Town acts as an impact multiplier by playing more of an administrative, or supportive, role rather than one focused on delivery of programming.

These considerations informed the strategic planning process and the priorities introduced in the Executive Summary.



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<sup>1</sup> Forward Thinking: 2019 – 2023 (2019). Retrieved on December 23, 2025 and provided by Town of Parker.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Introduction.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

## SECTION 1. Introduction

### Methodology

Keen Independent used the methods described below to gather input from approximately 750 stakeholder and community participants during the planning process.

**Stakeholder engagement.** Keen Independent conducted extensive virtual and in-person stakeholder engagement through the following channels:

- In-depth interviews and focus groups with 93 stakeholders;
- Virtual two-day visioning workshop;
- In-person and remote working sessions;
- Onsite discovery trip; and
- Virtual presentations of the draft cultural strategic plan.

**Community engagement.** Keen Independent engaged Parker residents and community members through the following methods:

- In-person public meeting;
- In-depth interviews and focus groups;
- Virtual workshop survey with 617 total responses; and
- Study email and hotline, which were open throughout the planning process.



**Additional research.** Keen Independent also:

- Analyzed Parker Arts financials, ticketing, utilization and other data;
- Reviewed Town plans, documents and priorities to provide context for Parker Arts' existing and future efforts; and
- Conducted market research including demographic and population growth analysis and arts demand forecasting.

## SECTION 1. Introduction

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### Message from the Study Team

The cultural strategic plan for Parker Arts was made possible by Town leadership and staff, Parker Arts stakeholders, who include community production partners, members, volunteers, cultural and community leaders, educators, creatives and business owners.

**Town leadership.** We recognize and thank Town leadership for providing support and oversight for this planning process.

#### Town Council

- Mayor Joshua Rivero;
- Anne Barrington;
- John Diak;
- Erik Frandsen;
- Laura Hefta;
- Todd Hendreks; and
- Brandi Wilks.

#### Strategic Planning Committee, Cultural and Scientific Commission

- Christine Kennedy;
- Tom O’Malley;
- Katie Milazzo;
- Michael Montoya;
- Allen Rosen; and
- Robert Sánchez.

#### Town Leadership

- Michelle Kivela, Town Manager; and
- Michael Lawson, Assistant Town Manager – Operations.

### Parker Arts cultural strategic planning leadership.

Keen Independent thanks the following Parker Arts leaders for their dedication to this project.

- Carrie Glassburn, Cultural Director; and
- Denise Zoglmann, Deputy Cultural Director.

**Parker Arts leadership and staff.** Parker Arts leadership and staff participated in several working sessions, including interviews and an in-person Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats workshop, which helped shape this document.

**Community members and stakeholders.** This project would not have been possible without the active participation of Parker Arts’ community production partners, members and volunteers, as well as Parker residents, community leaders and visitors, who took time to lend their voices and ideas in interviews, focus groups and surveys.

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**Study team.** Keen Independent Research, [www.keenindependent.com](http://www.keenindependent.com), conducted the study in partnership with Theatre Projects. Primary Keen Independent Team members included:

- Alex Keen, Managing Principal;
- Heather Calvin, Associate Principal; and
- Rokšana Filipowska, Ph.D., Consultant.





SECTION 2

# Executive Summary



## our **vision**

To promote and celebrate vibrant, creative and connected experiences that make Parker a thriving cultural destination.



*A Classic Parker Holiday featuring the Parker Symphony Orchestra and the Parker Chorale.  
Courtesy of Parker Arts.*

## our mission

Parker Arts enhances the quality of life and economic vitality of our Town by supporting artists, creating spaces and experiences that bring people together, and cultivating a vibrant creative community.





## our approach

Parker Arts is guided by the following core principles:

### **welcoming**

We offer a wide variety of experiences to ensure inclusive, accessible and affordable participation opportunities.

### **culturally vibrant**

Whether it's creative entrepreneurship or arts education, history or scientific innovation, our programming strengthens Parker's identity as a vibrant cultural hub.

### **committed to excellence**

From programming to operations, we hold ourselves to the highest standard of quality.

# our strategic priorities

2026–2036

As we work toward our vision and fulfill our mission, our strategic priorities are:



## Strategic Priority 1:

# **Plan for Parker's sustainable arts and culture future**

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### Objectives:

- Optimize programming to support the financial health of arts and culture in Parker.
- Maximize efficiency.
- Implement a long-term fundraising strategy.
- Explore improving governance.
- Attract and foster staff and volunteer talent.

Strategic Priority 2:

## **Cultivate creative community**

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Objectives:

- Build community relationships.
- Amplify local creatives.
- Support creative entrepreneurship in Parker.

## Strategic Priority 3:

# **Invigorate Downtown Parker as a thriving cultural destination**

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### Objectives:

- Refine roles of the PACE Center and the Schoolhouse within Parker's cultural strategy.
- Activate underutilized spaces.
- Develop signature Town events.
- Collaborate on placemaking.
- Promote Downtown Parker as a cultural destination.



## SECTION 3

# Key Findings



## SECTION 3. Key Findings — Introduction

To identify strategic observations for Parker Arts, Keen Independent analyzed:

- Market research, including population demographics and forecasts (see Appendix A);
- Programming and ticketing (see Appendix B);
- Financials (see Appendix C);
- Literature review of Town plans (see Appendix D); and
- Stakeholder perspectives gathered through interviews and focus groups, a virtual workshop survey and public feedback channels, including a study email and hotline (see Appendix E).

Drawing on the project components above, the study team created a working summary of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) and updated it as new findings emerged. The project team, as well as Town leadership and staff, reviewed the SWOT analysis updates periodically. Throughout the planning process, the SWOT analysis served as a summary of key issues to guide identification of priorities.

Table 3-1 on the following page summarizes primary aspects of the SWOT analysis. Synthesis and description of pertinent information about each key issue follow the SWOT analysis. To review Theatre Projects' SWOT analysis regarding findings from their high-level facilities review, see Appendix H.



Cooking class at the PACE Center.  
Courtesy of Parker Arts.



School of Rock performance at the PACE Center.  
Courtesy of Parker Arts.

### 3. Key Findings Summary — SWOT analysis

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3-1. SWOT analysis summary for arts and culture in Parker

<h2>STRENGTHS</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Impressive arts and culture venues</li><li>■ Optimal downtown location</li><li>■ Support from Town Council and leadership</li><li>■ Skilled and collaborative staff</li><li>■ Strong relationship between Town and community performing groups</li></ul>	<h2>Weaknesses</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Aging infrastructure</li><li>■ Role of Town staff in musical productions</li><li>■ Unfocused education programming</li><li>■ Membership-driven development</li><li>■ Limited Town event offerings</li></ul>
<h2>OPPORTUNITIES</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Refining scope of the PACE Center and The Schoolhouse</li><li>■ Collecting visitor information</li><li>■ Growing public art initiatives</li><li>■ Developing financial sustainability</li><li>■ Redefining school engagement</li></ul>	<h2>THREATS</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Market competition</li><li>■ Dependence on sales tax revenue</li><li>■ PACE Center’s competing organizational roles and focus</li><li>■ Lack of patron development</li><li>■ Cost of touring acts</li></ul>

Source: Keen Independent Research.

### 3. Key Findings Summary — Strengths

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This section describes factors that the research and planning process identified as the primary strengths of arts and culture in Parker.

## STRENGTHS

- Impressive arts and culture venues
- Optimal downtown location
- Support from Town Council and leadership
- Skilled and collaborative staff
- Strong relationship between Town and community performing groups

**Town manages a portfolio of impressive arts and culture venues and spaces.** The Town has a notable suite of arts and cultural venues and spaces that exceed what might be expected for a municipality of its size. The PACE Center serves as the cornerstone, offering a 534-seat theater that accommodates professional performing arts, community events and rentals. Across the street, The Schoolhouse is a renovated historic venue with a 200-seat Blackbox theater, multiple classrooms, a plaza area and several exhibition spaces. Discovery Park, which features an amphitheater and can host up to 3,000 people, is especially activated during the winter through a seasonal “ice ribbon” skating rink. Finally, Ruth Memorial Chapel, a historic landmark with seating up to 70, is renowned for its charm and acoustics. These four facilities reflect the Town’s commitment to providing residents and visitors with spaces for arts, culture and community life.

Throughout the study, residents identified the PACE Center as “one of the main reasons [they] moved to Parker.” When asked about strengths of arts and culture in Parker, many virtual workshop participants responded with “venues.” For more information on stakeholder and community perceptions of Parker Arts’ cultural assets, see Appendix E “Analysis of Stakeholder and Community input.”

Discussion of Parker’s arts and culture strengths continues on the following pages.

### 3. Key Findings Summary — Strengths

**Prime location and walkability of arts and culture assets.** A core strength of Parker’s arts and culture ecosystem is that the PACE Center, The Schoolhouse, Discovery Park and Ruth Memorial Chapel are all located downtown along Mainstreet. Additionally, these assets are within a short walk of one another, creating a contiguous “park-once” experience for many residents and visitors to explore. This co-location directly supports Town priorities that designate Mainstreet as the economic, cultural and social heart of the community.<sup>1</sup>

Clustering venues and spaces downtown supports economic development. National studies show arts audiences spend an additional \$38.46 per person per event beyond the price of admission, such as in nearby restaurants, shops and services, that multiply local impact.<sup>2</sup> Research on walkable urbanism demonstrates that downtown walkability enhances economic activity, driving higher retail sales and strengthening surrounding businesses.<sup>3</sup> Parker’s compact downtown cluster of arts and culture assets positions the Town to maximize shared programming, marketing and infrastructure while generating foot traffic and spending along Mainstreet. The prime location of Parker’s arts and culture facilities bolsters the Town’s priority to develop a “vibrant and walkable downtown.”<sup>4</sup> For more information on Town planning of downtown development, see Appendix D “Literature Review of Town Plans.”



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<sup>1</sup> See, for instance: Parker Mainstreet Master Plan (September 2015). Town of Parker. Retrieved on August 19, 2025 from <https://www.parkeronline.org/MainstreetPlan> and My Mainstreet Parker Town Council Study Session (February 24, 2025). Provided by Town of Parker.

<sup>2</sup> What is Arts & Economic Prosperity 6? (2023) Americans for the Arts. Retrieved on August 19, 2025 from <https://aep6.americansforthearts.org/>

<sup>3</sup> Foot Traffic Ahead 2023 (January 2023). Smart Growth America Places Platform, LLC. Retrieved on August 19, 2025 from <https://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/knowledge-center/foot-traffic-ahead-2023/#>

<sup>4</sup> My Mainstreet Development Concepts Presentation (April 13, 2022). Town of Parker. Retrieved on August 19, 2025 from [https://www.letstalkparker.org/mymainstreet-implementation/news\\_feed/development-concepts-april-11-2022](https://www.letstalkparker.org/mymainstreet-implementation/news_feed/development-concepts-april-11-2022)

### 3. Key Findings Summary — Strengths

**Town Councilmembers and leadership are supportive of arts and culture.** Another strength of Parker’s arts and cultural ecosystem lies in having supportive Town Councilmembers and leadership. The Town’s strategic priorities emphasize providing innovative, engaging and relevant arts, culture, science, and entertainment experiences, while also promoting community events, enriching gathering spaces, and fostering lifelong learning for all ages.<sup>5</sup> National studies consistently show that when municipalities champion the arts, they help build civic pride and strengthen a shared sense of belonging, as cultural events become catalysts for social connection and cohesion.<sup>6</sup> For more information regarding Town support for arts and culture, see Appendix D “Literature Review of Town Plans.” For leadership’s perspectives on arts and culture, see Appendix E “Analysis of Stakeholder and Community input.”

**Parker Arts staff are regarded as skilled and collaborative.** Throughout the study, stakeholders and residents identified the high-level of skills and the collaborative attitude of Parker Arts’ staff as strengths. National studies consistently show that skilled and collaborative arts staff are pivotal to the success of cultural departments, as teamwork fosters innovation, adaptability, and stronger outcomes.<sup>7</sup> Stakeholders praised Parker Arts staff as having “great vision,” making a “great team” and performing “miracles.” For more information, see Appendix E “Analysis of Stakeholder and Community input.”

**Strong relationships with community performing arts groups.** Parker Arts has strong and cooperative relationships with local performing arts groups, including the Parker Symphony Orchestra, the Parker Chorale and the Colorado Jazz Repertory Orchestra. These relationships are mutually beneficial: the groups use the Town’s exceptional arts venues while Parker Arts audiences enjoy a continuity of engagement and access to established community talent, which reinforces Parker’s cultural identity.



Children’s performance for Día de los Muertos.  
Photo by Town of Parker.

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<sup>5</sup> Town of Parker Strategic Planning & Performance Management (July 23, 2021) Town of Parker. Retrieved on August 20, 2025 from [https://coloradocma.org/wp-content/uploads/Strategic-Plan-and-Performance-Management-Document\\_Parker.pdf](https://coloradocma.org/wp-content/uploads/Strategic-Plan-and-Performance-Management-Document_Parker.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Lora Aol (2024). Role of Arts and Cultural Events in Community Development and Social Adhesion. *International Journal of Arts, Recreation and Sports*. Vol. 3, Issue No. 3., 39 to 51. Retrieved on August 20, 2025 from

[file:///C:/Users/RoksanaFilipowska/Downloads/\\_1943-Article%20Text-4976-5905-10-20240603.pdf](file:///C:/Users/RoksanaFilipowska/Downloads/_1943-Article%20Text-4976-5905-10-20240603.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Stolaki, et. al. (December 2023). Examining the effects of creativity, collaboration, creative diversity and autonomy on team creative performance. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*. Volume 50. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2023.101415>

### 3. Key Findings Summary — Weaknesses

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Next, the study team identified key weaknesses of arts and culture in Parker.

## WEAKNESSES

- Aging infrastructure
- Role of Town staff in musical productions
- Unfocused education programming
- Membership-driven development
- Limited Town event offerings

**Aging infrastructure.** A critical weakness within Parker’s cultural landscape is the aging physical infrastructure of the PACE Center and The Schoolhouse. Performing arts facilities typically require major reinvestment as they age, including structural updates and compliance improvements to sustain functionality and meet evolving accessibility standards.

A facility review of the PACE Center and The Schoolhouse identified several critical areas where operational and design improvements can significantly enhance safety, accessibility and patron experience. Security is a top concern across both venues, with multiple unsecured points of entry at the PACE Center. Patron flow at PACE is also limited, with a lobby that restricts movement during peak times, slow concession queuing and service, and lobby egress on house right that passes through back-of-house sound and light locks. In addition, lighting, sound and acoustics across facilities will require periodic upgrades to remain relevant and competitive. Addressing these issues through strategic upgrades will not only improve daily operations but also strengthen Parker Arts’ ability to provide a safe, welcoming and fully accessible environment that aligns with industry standards and community expectations. See Appendix H for the architectural and technical review of Parker Arts’ facilities.

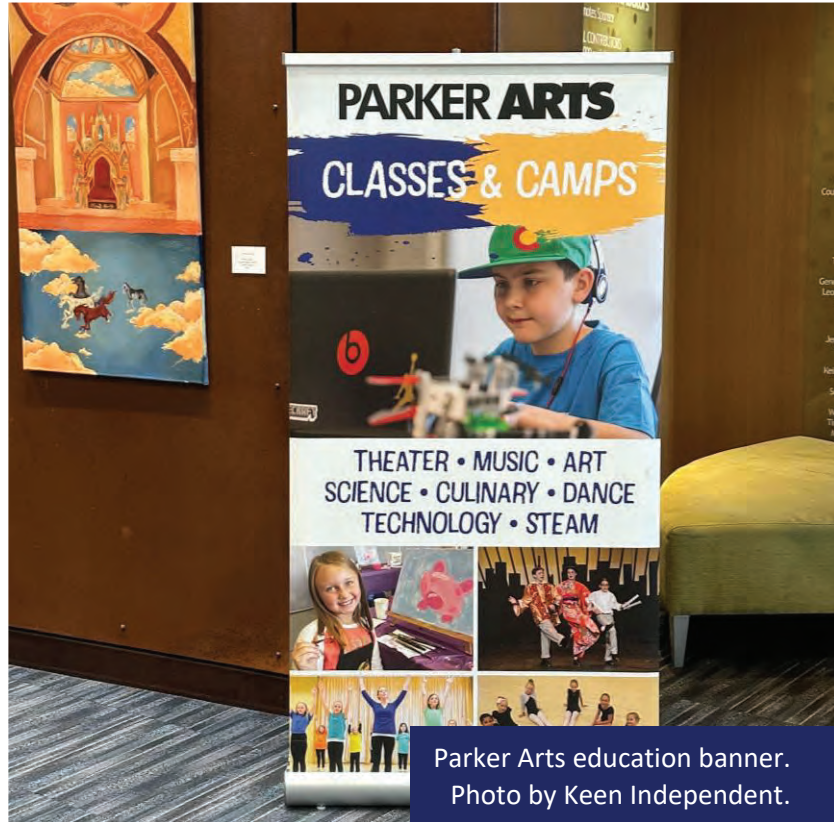
While some stakeholders expressed an interest in seeing the PACE Center expand its stage dimension and seating capacity, the study team found that the venue’s existing size is appropriate. As mentioned in Pro Forma Budget “Appendix G,” Keen Independent foresees capital improvement costs to focus on maintenance, upkeep and iterative renovations, not large-scale renovation or expansion.

### 3. Key Findings Summary — Weaknesses

**Role of Town staff in musical productions.** The current model of producing musicals is a significant operational challenge for Parker Arts. While in most cases nationwide the producing group selects the title to reflect their strength as a company and access to the necessary sets, Parker Arts' process involves the Town selecting a title and requiring community theatre groups to bid for the right to produce the musical. Interested groups must first qualify through a Statement of Qualification (SOQ) process and then submit a proposal for each title.

Stakeholders report that the intensive proposal process takes away from the time needed to produce a quality show. Once awarded, stakeholders observe that there is a need to clarify staff roles within the Cultural Department as they relate to musicals because many Parker Arts staff are currently involved in answering questions over email and assisting in the production. Parker Arts staff similarly describe a substantial, labor-intensive involvement in musical productions for many Town staff. Keen Independent recommends clarifying Town staff roles so that they prioritize administering and facilitating community access to the Town's cultural assets as opposed to sharing responsibility with the producing partner to present musicals. Clarifying staff roles and priorities will identify the producing partner as the lead on any musicals and free up staff time for outreach, development and other priorities.

**Unfocused education programming.** A notable weakness in Parker Arts' offerings is the lack of focus and strategic outreach around its education programming. For venues such as the PACE Center and The Schoolhouse, education programming is often a key driver of audience development and community engagement, but it requires clear goals and a well-designed curriculum to succeed.



Retaining experienced, skilled teachers is critical for delivering high-quality instruction, building relationships with Parker Arts' students and fostering repeat participation. Additionally, outreach is essential to ensure that education opportunities reach diverse audiences, attract new participants and strengthen Parker Arts' presence in the community. For stakeholder and community perception of Parker Arts' education programming, see Appendix E "Analysis of Stakeholder and Community Input."

### 3. Key Findings Summary — Weaknesses

**Membership-driven model of development.** Parker Arts’ membership-driven development model has been successful but the focus on membership may limit overall fundraising and opportunities for meaningful patron cultivation. Membership programs are valuable for building loyalty and providing predictable revenue, but when they are an organization’s primary focus, they often cap growth by emphasizing small, transactional contributions rather than encouraging larger gifts, sponsorships or planned giving. Performing arts venues like the PACE Center thrive when they diversify revenue streams and develop deeper relationships with patrons, such as through engaging them as donors, advocates and long-term investors in the Town’s arts and culture mission. A comprehensive strategy that moves beyond memberships to cultivate mid- and major-level donors can improve the Town’s ability to fund innovative programming, maintain and improve arts and culture facilities and expand its impact within the community. For more information, see Appendix C, “Financial Analysis.”

**Limited Town event offerings.** Parker’s limited Town-run cultural event offerings represent a gap. An events strategy can be a core engine for community engagement, resident pride and economic vitality. Research by the National Endowment for the Arts has found that local events can increase small business annual revenues by up to 30 percent.<sup>8</sup> This research also positions events as catalysts for civic pride, social identity and community cohesion. New events, such as a film festival or Chalk Fest, could engage residents, encourage tourism and stimulate economic activity. For more information on strategies regarding events, see Appendix F “Benchmarking.”



Parker Days event.  
Photo by Town of Parker.

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<sup>8</sup> Live from Your Neighborhood: A National Study of Outdoor Festivals (August 2010). National Endowment for the Arts. Retrieved on August 25, 2025 from <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Festivals-Report.pdf>

### 3. Key Findings Summary — Opportunities

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External factors are current or future environmental conditions related to the economic, social, cultural, political, geographic, technological or other contexts in which an arts and culture department operates.

The study team identified the following factors as opportunities.

#### OPPORTUNITIES

- Refining scope of the PACE Center and The Schoolhouse
- Collecting visitor information
- Growing public art initiatives
- Developing financial sustainability
- Redefining school engagement

#### **Refining the scope of the PACE Center and The Schoolhouse.**

Refining the scope of the PACE Center and The Schoolhouse represents a strategic opportunity to position these venues as true anchors of Parker’s arts and culture strategy. Clarifying each facility’s role, whether as a flagship for professional performances, a hub for community programming or a platform for education and partnerships, creates operational focus, streamlines staff roles, reduces internal competition for resources and strengthens brand identity. Clarifying scope of its arts and culture venues is an opportunity for the Town to align programming with community demand, optimize staff and technical resources, attract new funding streams and make a stronger case for public and private investment. See Appendix B, “Programming and Utilization,” and Appendix G, “Business Plan Pro forma,” for recommendations regarding programming decisions.

**Collecting visitor information.** Collecting visitor information across the downtown Mainstreet area is an opportunity to take a foundational step toward developing a data-driven arts and culture strategy. Understanding where visitors come from, how long they stay and which venues they visit may empower the Town to make more informed decisions about programming, investments and marketing to position Parker as a cultural destination. Tracking visitor patterns also helps Town leadership better estimate economic impact, strengthen support for funding requests and measure the broader benefits of arts and cultural activities for the community. This information can be shared with local creatives, business owners and residents to guide partnerships and improve outreach efforts. By adopting a thoughtful approach to visitor analytics, Parker can fine-tune its downtown cultural offerings, support businesses and better understand its identity as a vibrant arts and culture hub.

### 3. Key Findings Summary — Opportunities

**Growing public art initiatives.** Parker is particularly well positioned to expand its public art initiatives and elevate its arts and culture profile. Building on the momentum of its recently completed Public Art Master Plan and the clear enthusiasm among residents and community members found throughout this study, the Town has an opportunity to beautify public spaces, foster civic pride, share different community stories and drive economic and cultural activity by attracting visitors and supporting local artists. The current enthusiasm for public art means the Town can harness community energy and stakeholder support, increasing the likelihood of successful partnerships and long-term sustainability. Parker can position public art as a visible and defining feature of its cultural identity.

**Developing financial sustainability.** The Town has an opportunity to budget and plan to ensure a sustainable financial future for Parker Arts because Town leadership and Parker residents alike recognize the value of arts and culture as a municipal service. For more information on how residents view the PACE Center and Parker Arts as driving their decision to move to Parker, for instance, see Appendix E “Analysis of Stakeholder and Community Input.” Additionally, upgrading Parker’s arts and culture infrastructure presents a significant opportunity to improve both financial and operational sustainability, with Discovery Park’s amphitheater offering a clear example. Technical updates such as upgrading to a permanent lighting system (including LED fixtures and waterproof features) may reduce costs by lowering electricity bill and requiring less maintenance. For a municipality, these efficiencies translate into dollars that can be reinvested into programming, staffing and community engagement rather than ongoing facility expenses. By prioritizing infrastructure modernization, Parker can demonstrate fiscal responsibility, environmental stewardship and a forward-looking commitment to sustaining high-quality cultural experiences. See Appendix H for more information regarding recommended technical upgrades to the Town’s arts venues.

**Engaging local schools.** Local schools’ eagerness to host and collaborate on Parker Arts outreach efforts represents an opportunity to expand the Town’s cultural footprint and deepen community impact. Because many schools have limited access to buses, they cannot easily bring students to the PACE Center or other Town venues, which makes on-site outreach essential. By bringing programming directly into schools, Parker Arts can overcome transportation barriers while cultivating early appreciation for the arts, strengthening relationships with parents and educators and broadening access to cultural experiences for students of diverse backgrounds. These collaborations can also serve as a pipeline for participation in classes, camps and events at Parker Arts’ venues. Aligning outreach with schools amplifies Parker Arts’ visibility and reinforces its role as a community partner.



Parker Arts outreach event.  
Photo by Town of Parker.

### 3. Key Findings Summary — Threats

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Next, we discuss potential threats.

## THREATS

- Market competition
- Dependence on sales tax revenue
- PACE Center’s competing organizational roles and focus
- Lack of patron development
- Cost of touring acts

**Market competition.** Increasing competition from neighboring communities investing in their own cultural infrastructure poses a threat to sustaining the PACE Center and The Schoolhouse. The greater Denver metro area has a robust performing arts market. Lone Tree is planning a new amphitheater, which could further draw Parker residents and visitors to attend performances elsewhere. This combination of market saturation and leakage means that Parker risks losing both audience share and discretionary spending. To address this threat, Keen Independent recommends a clear strategy to differentiate Parker Arts’ offerings, strengthen local audience engagement and emphasize the unique value of its venues and programs.

**Dependence on sales tax revenue.** Sales tax revenue is directly tied to consumer spending, which can fluctuate significantly due to factors such as recessions, inflation or shifts in retail behavior. This funding model can also constrain growth, as it does not inherently build long-term investment from patrons, donors or partners who could help stabilize revenues. Keen Independent recommends diversifying income streams, such as through sponsorships, grants and private contributions, so that the Town builds resiliency and increases its ability to deliver consistent, high-quality cultural experiences to its residents. See Appendix C, “Financial Analysis,” for more information.

**PACE Center’s competing organizational roles and focus.** Operating the PACE Center as a venue that simultaneously serves as a roadhouse, a production house and a rental space presents a strategic risk that could undermine both financial stability and program quality. Each of these functions requires distinct resources, staff expertise, marketing strategies and operational priorities. Attempting to meet all three demands within one facility can overextend budgets, dilute staff focus and create scheduling and technical conflicts that ultimately reduce the quality and consistency of offerings. This model may also confuse the market, making it harder to build a clear brand identity and cultivate loyal audiences. Keen Independent recommends developing a well-defined prioritization strategy to amplify the PACE Center’s impact and sustainability so that the performing arts center serves as a competitive advantage rather than an operational challenge. For more information see Appendix B “Ticketing Analysis.”

The study team also recommends identifying a front-of-house and back-of-house coordinator, or “Event Manager,” to ensure renters, production partners and community groups have a designated point person for all communication. Event Manager” responsibility can be assigned to different Parker Arts staff depending on event needs and team capacity but would not require additional FTE support.

### 3. Key Findings Summary — Threats

**Lack of patron development.** Building on the previously identified weakness around reliance on a membership-driven model, the lack of a broader development strategy also poses an external threat to sustaining Parker’s arts and culture over the next decade. As audience expectations evolve and competing cultural offerings expand across the region, audiences that remain engaged only through transactional memberships are less likely to deepen their commitment, increase their giving or advocate for municipal arts and culture offerings. Keen Independent recommends cultivating long-term relationships and moving patrons up from members to donors, sponsors and champions to mitigate the risk of losing revenue and loyalty to initiatives that actively invest in patron cultivation.

**Cost of touring acts.** The rising cost of hosting touring acts presents a significant threat to Parker’s ability to attract top talent to the PACE Center. Touring productions often come with high artist fees, travel, lodging and marketing expenses that can quickly exceed the capacity of a municipally run venue, especially in a competitive regional market. Without sufficient sponsorship to offset these costs, Parker risks being priced out of presenting high-profile performers and therefore reducing the appeal of its programming to broader audiences. Related to the previously discussed threat of the PACE Center’s lack of focus, operating the venue as a roadhouse with a limited booking strategy may expose the Town to a cycle where fewer marquee acts mean lower ticket sales and less visibility, making it harder to grow audiences and justify future investment. Keen Independent recommends identifying whether hosting touring acts is a Town priority and, if so, making budgeting and programming decisions to sustain this focus.



Wedding photos at the PACE Center.  
Photo by Silver Sparrow Photography.



Children participate in an art activity.  
Photo by Parker Arts.

### 3. Key Findings Summary — Takeaways

Keen Independent synthesized the key findings of the SWOT analysis into high-level takeaways discussed below.

- **Arts and culture are thriving in Parker.** Participation levels, Parker Arts ticket sales and the range of existing programming demonstrate a growing cultural ecosystem. Parker’s existing arts and culture assets are a solid foundation to build upon.
- **The community wants more.** Residents and community members express enthusiasm for expanding programming and increasing access to cultural offerings.
- **Arts and culture drive economic vitality and quality of life.** Cultural activity supports local businesses, attracts visitors and contributes to Parker’s identity as a desirable place to live, work and visit.
- **Parker Arts can’t—and shouldn’t—do it alone.** Sustainable growth requires collaboration across Town departments, community partners, nonprofits, schools and the private sector. The Town welcomes individuals and organizations to develop arts and culture offerings in Parker.
- **Empowering others builds long-term success for all.** Supporting artists, organizations and community-led initiatives distributes responsibility when it comes to the delivery of programming and strengthens the overall cultural ecosystem.
- **Continued Town investment is still going to be essential.** Strategic public investment remains critical to meet demand for arts and culture, as well as ensure equitable access and sustain momentum over time.

#### The Town’s commitment to arts and culture is visible across its vision, mission and the 2050 Comprehensive Plan<sup>9</sup>

*To be the pre-eminent destination community of the Denver metro ... be an area leader in economic development ... and quality of life.*

*Town of Parker’s Vision*

*To enrich the lives of residents by providing exceptional services, engaging community resources ... We support sustainable development and foster a strong local economy.*

*Town of Parker’s Mission*

#### The following Town values listed in the 2050 Comprehensive Plan, which was in draft form at the time of this study, relate to the implementation of this Cultural Strategic Plan:

- History, culture and sense of place
- Recreational opportunities
- Economic vibrancy; and
- Connected community.

<sup>9</sup> The 2050 Comprehensive Plan was in draft form at the time of completion of this Cultural Strategic Plan.

Town of Parker vision and mission statements were retrieved on January 7, 2026 from <https://www.parkerco.gov/2020/Vision-Mission-and-Strategic-Plan>