

MENLO PARK ARTS COMMISSION  
ARTS AND CULTURE NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

NOVEMBER 2001

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### PROJECT PURPOSE (page 6)

The purpose of this project was to assess Menlo Park's community needs in the area of arts and culture. This includes documenting the strength and characteristics of those needs, and framing choices about "next steps" for arts development in Menlo Park. This project and report also constitute the first phase of a two-part process to create a community cultural plan. Project methods included a market study, written community survey, and a profile of local arts resources.

### MARKET STUDY (page 8)

The purpose of the market study was to measure the overall strength and character of demand for arts attendance and participation in the Menlo Park area. The study showed that demand is substantially above national averages in all activities measured, suggesting a very strong overall market for the arts.

### COMMUNITY SURVEY (page 12)

The purpose of the written community survey was to assess greater detail of the strength and character of the arts market in Menlo Park, and investigate related attitudes about the arts. Taken as a whole, the results document a mandate for the City to assume a greater role in providing arts and cultural programs.

Respondents overwhelmingly desire more arts and cultural opportunities to be available in Menlo Park; have significant interest in attending an across-the-board range of performing, visual and literary arts events; support more public art; and strongly favor the use of City funds for the arts. There is a strong interest in arts events people can attend with children, and in classes for both children and adults. This survey is largely corroborated by the results of the City's separate 2001 Community Services telephone survey.

### PROFILE OF LOCAL ARTS RESOURCES (page 14)

The purpose of profiling local arts resources was to learn more about the specific needs and suggestions of local arts organizations, and to gauge the opinions of community leaders about the future direction of arts development in the community.

Compared with other communities, there are relatively few arts resources located in Menlo Park, however, these organizations include several substantial and well established components of the local arts ecology, and span a range of the performing and visual arts. The programs of the Arts Commission and the Community Services Department appear to be well designed in relation to their participants. Attendance and participation seems limited only by the available space and other resources.

Interviewees detailed a lack of infrastructure for arts support. While the lack of facilities is the most critical issue, there are also limited opportunities for local funding, marketing, communication, and information sharing. The arts in a community rarely flourish without a support infrastructure. There is probably a “chicken and egg” problem in Menlo Park: the arts have developed more elsewhere because of the lack of arts infrastructure, while the demonstration of local arts development has been needed to justify better infrastructure.

## FINDINGS (page 17)

The findings summarize the community needs, and gaps in services, identified in the needs analysis.

- *Overall Finding:* The overall finding of the arts and culture needs assessment is twofold: 1) there is a very strong demand in Menlo Park for the arts, and 2) there is a broad public mandate for the City to assume a greater role in providing arts and culture services.
- *Broad Range of Community Needs:* The community’s needs are strong and varied enough to warrant additional programs in a broad range of areas. Given this broad range of needs and interest, the issue appears to be what options would be the most appropriate and strategic for City action.
- *Major Need for Facilities:* There is clearly a major need for cultural facilities. This need encompasses facilities for both arts attendance and participation. That is, it is more than “replacing the Burgess Theater.” These facility needs include classrooms and rehearsal studios emphasizing the community’s demand for participating directly in arts experiences, for both adults and children, and on an amateur as well as professional basis. The facility needs also include performing and exhibition spaces. Further study is required to define the specifics of such facilities.
- *Related Infrastructure Needs:* In addition to facilities, the community’s needs include funding, marketing, communication, administration, and other related infrastructure services.
- *Broad Community Opinion on the Arts:* The community’s support for City action in meeting arts and culture needs is broad. It includes strong opinion favoring a public art program, spending City funds on arts programs, and the recognition of the value and role of the arts in community building and the development of young people.
- *Relative Lack of Competition:* As the City considers its options, there is relatively little problem of competition with other cities and arts resources.

- *Potential Partnerships:* Several organizations inside and outside Menlo Park indicated an interest in partnering with the City.
- *The Needs of Residents Predominate:* In Menlo Park, the key factor emerging from the assessment is the strength of residents' demand for programs. This suggests that the City's primary focus should be on meeting residents' needs for attendance and participation in the arts. This also frames the needs of the local arts resources: supporting them is a means of not only meeting their needs but also of serving the needs of residents.

## RECOMMENDATIONS (page 19)

Because of the strength of the market, the range of the community's needs, and the relative lack of competition, there is a variety of viable options for City action in meeting the community's needs in the arts. This section lists a number of recommended options that appear to be both strategic and feasible. However, this list is by no means exhaustive or conclusive—they are good ideas but not the only ideas. These options are grouped according to cost, with the lower cost options generally being less complex, and requiring less time, to begin implementation. The recommended options all require further planning and development, and will presumably require additional staff with specialized expertise in arts administration. Most options include a potential for partnerships.

### OVERALL RECOMMENDATION

**Develop a Community Cultural Plan:** The Arts Commission, together with Community Services Department staff, should proceed with Phase 2 of its two-stage process to develop a community cultural plan, with a three- to seven-year time frame. They should structure the planning process around the specific directions they choose to pursue, presumably including some of these recommended options. The community cultural plan will provide the City with a blueprint for specific action, including strategic and tactical plans; costs, staff, facility and other resources needed; assignments of lead parties; identification of partnerships; implementation schedules; and other more detailed plans. The community cultural plan, like other types of municipal master plans, will permit City Council members to make informed policy decisions about longer-term strategies, spending, financing, and administrative infrastructure.

### LOWER COST OPTIONS

- **Provide More Comprehensive Arts Classes:** Develop a more comprehensive and sequential curriculum of arts classes for children and adults, building on the Community Services Department's present capacity for delivering successful classes.

- **Expand the Summer Concert Series:** The summer concert series offers an immediate potential to meet the demand for performances. With increased funding, broader selection of artists, and perhaps improved technical capacity, the series can be developed into a more high profile, varied series, encompassing a more diverse selection of performing arts.
- **Create a Funding Program:** Many needs can be addressed through grants made to arts organizations, artists and/or teachers.
- **Provide Infrastructure Services:** Develop services to address the infrastructure needs identified in the assessment, such as a resource directory, information and referrals, joint marketing and communications services, and convening events (designed to bring together elements of the arts community).

#### *MEDIUM-COST OPTION*

- **Develop the Public Art Program:** The Arts Commission has already done substantial planning for a public art program, and created a first major project. The next steps would be additional planning to define appropriate funding, policies and procedures that better assure public participation, possible out-sourcing of administration, and other related issues. This option has far-reaching potential for enhancing and developing Menlo Park's image, integrating the arts into the community, improving the built environment, and providing educational opportunities. Because of this potential, and the potential for community controversy, it is especially important to refine program plans for public art, and take such extra measures as defining a pilot period of implementation, then evaluating first efforts. Also note that public art programs typically are financed by dedicated revenues that are not general revenues.

#### *HIGH-COST OPTION*

- **Cultural Facilities:** The most complex and expensive option is addressing cultural facilities needs. The main point of this recommendation is that addressing facility needs requires substantial specific planning, and is not merely an issue of costs. Building a multidisciplinary arts center—theaters, gallery(ies), studios, classrooms and related spaces—while expensive, is the most comprehensive solution and a feasible idea in terms of the market demand. With sufficient capacity, performing arts spaces could be shared with a resident organization, such as TheatreWorks, and rented to other regional performing groups as a “second home.” The specific location, use, configuration, capacity, financing, and administration of a facility would require additional study of the potential users, funders, partners, available land, and other issues. This type of project, however, holds the promise of galvanizing public attention and resources. A public/private partnership in some form is the most viable approach, not only because of cost-

sharing but also the community involvement that accompanies the private partner. Facilities developed and owned entirely by municipalities are often structurally less able to reflect and serve changing community needs. The City's current potential for utilizing Measure T funds for expansion of the Recreation Center, and a shared-use agreement with the high school should be investigated as partial solutions for this need.

## PROJECT PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this project was to assess Menlo Park's community needs in the area of arts and culture. This includes documenting the strength and characteristics of those needs, and framing choices about next steps for arts development in Menlo Park.

This project and report also constitute the first phase of a two-part process to create a community cultural plan:

1. Data collection and analysis (this report).
2. Formulation of community cultural plan, to follow this assessment and be based on its results.

This means that this project focuses on research and analysis, and stops short of strategic planning or program development for the arts. Nonetheless, the assessment results have led to clear potential directions for future arts development, and produced clear options for City action (see Findings and Recommendations, page 17).

### METHODOLOGY

The project methodology was designed to answer the following questions:

- What is the strength and character of the market, or demand, for arts and culture in Menlo Park?
- What are the current arts and cultural resources in and near Menlo Park?
- What are the community's arts and cultural needs? Where are there gaps in services?
- What options does the City have to meet community needs in the area of arts and culture? What partnership opportunities exist?

The consultants used the following tools to implement this methodology:

- Advisory Committee (page 39): The Advisory Committee was composed of two Arts Commissioners and two staff members. This group oversaw the project, provided essential information to guide the research, reviewed and helped interpret research results, and helped connect the project to the community.

- **Market Study (page 8):** This study measured the overall strength and character of demand in the Menlo Park area for 1) arts attendance at performances, museums, exhibits and other arts events, and 2) participation in arts classes, amateur groups, and other arts activities.
- **Community Survey (page 12):** This written survey of residents provided additional and more detailed information about the strength and characteristics of the community's arts interests. It also probed attitudes about cultural facilities, public art, City arts funding, and other relevant issues.
- **Profile of Local Arts Resources (page 14):** The consultants profiled local arts resources in relation to Menlo Park's emerging community needs. They researched the local arts community, conducted telephone and in-person interviews, and led an open community meeting. The profile helped assess the needs and attitudes of local organizations and community leaders, and define the gaps or niches for City action. Finally, they collected suggestions about issues such as the City's role and potential programs.
- **Data Analysis (page 17):** The results of the different research tools were analyzed together to compile a set of findings and recommendations.

## MARKET STUDY

The market study was conducted in August 2001, using market research data supplied by Claritas, a major national provider of research materials. The purpose of the market study was to measure the strength and character of demand for arts attendance and participation in the Menlo Park area. The market study is one of several research tools used in the overall cultural needs assessment, and is analyzed in the context of the other results.

### SUMMARY

- Demand in the Menlo Park area is substantially above national averages in all activities measured, suggesting a very strong overall market for the arts.
- In descending order of strength, the community's interest in attending arts events is for museums, live theatre, music performances and dance performances.
- In descending order of strength, the community's interest in participating in arts activities is for taking photographs, playing a musical instrument, and painting or drawing. The study includes both amateur and professional interest.
- The study examines the market in two geographical areas: within a 10-minute and a 20-minute drive of City Hall. Both areas show very strong demand, with relatively minor differences in interest. Naturally, the larger, 20-minute drive time contains a much greater number of people interested in the arts.

### METHODOLOGY

- The market study predicts likely arts interest in the Menlo Park area by compiling a profile of the community, then comparing it to national average arts interest for that profile, and to national average arts interest for the US population as a whole. One of the advantages of this type of study is that it profiles all households within the community. A limitation on use of this data is that it is based on projections, not on actual contact with each household.
- The market study specifically gauges likely attendance at museums, and music, theatre and dance performances. It also measures participation, on an amateur or professional basis, in taking photographs, playing a musical instrument, and painting or drawing.
- The market study measures the overall strength and character of demand. However, to complete the needs assessment, it is necessary to gain a broader understanding of the character of this

demand, more in-depth information about what types of arts activities Menlo Park residents want, and their related attitudes. The community survey and profile of local arts resources were used to provide this information.

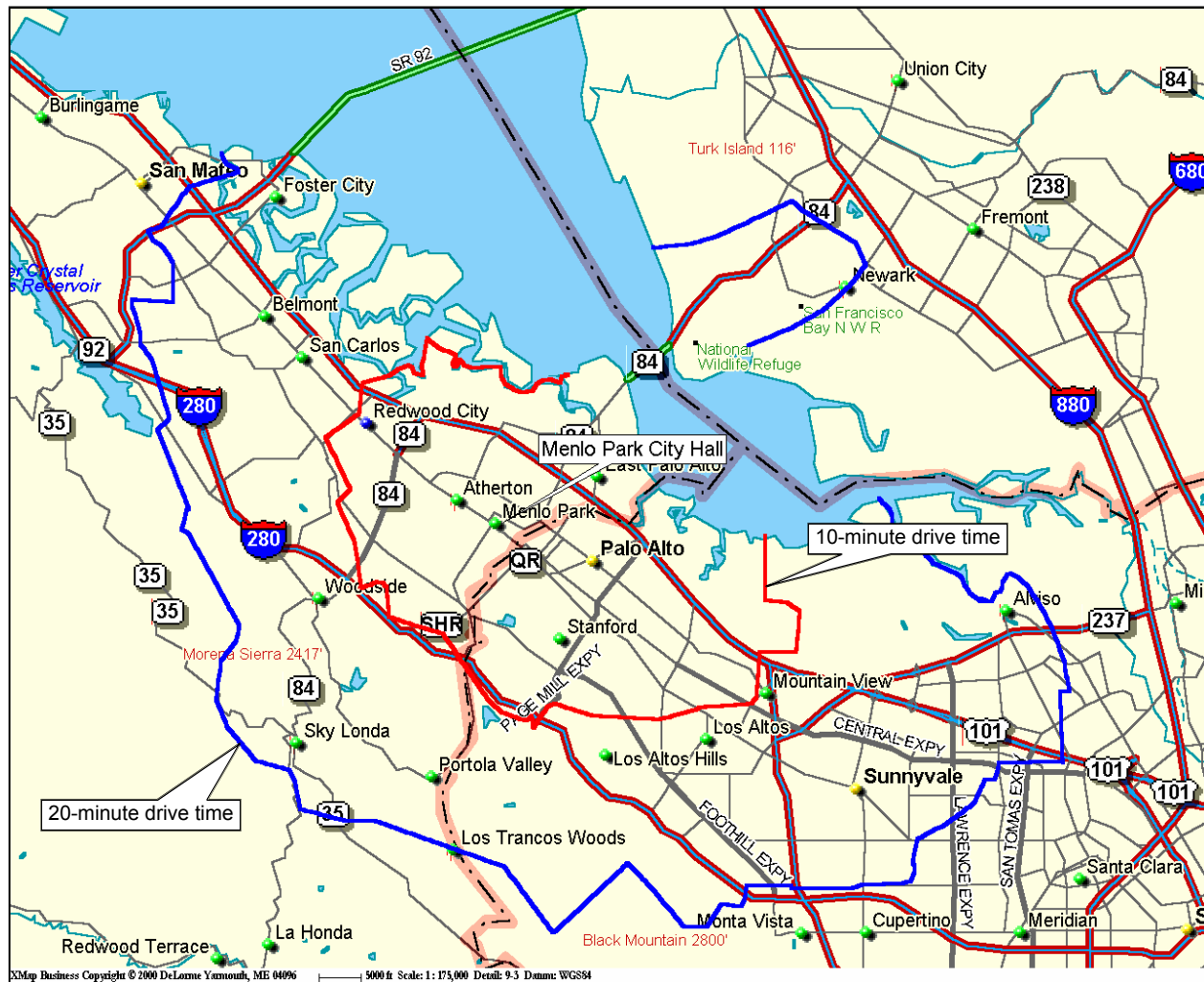
MARKET DATA

<b>Menlo Park Market for Arts Activity</b>				
Arts Activity	Within 10 Minute Drive-time		Within 20 Minute Drive-time	
	% Above Natl. Avg.	Population	% Above Natl. Avg.	Population
Go to Museums	249%	71,500	288%	381,600
Attend Live Theatre	247%	70,600	265%	347,800
Attend Music Performance	165%	68,600	175%	333,900
Take Photographs	167%	37,500	167%	173,100
Play a Musical Instrument	160%	19,900	163%	93,100
Attend Dance Performances	220%	17,100	148%	52,900
Paint or Draw	145%	5,900	109%	20,400

<b>Menlo Park Arts Interest Detail</b>						
Arts Activity	Within 10-Minute Drive-time			Within 20-Minute Drive-time		
	% Above Natl. Avg.	Households	Population	% Above Natl. Avg.	Households	Population
Attend Museum						
At least once in last year	249%	27,519	71,500	288%	146,762	381,600
Once a month or more	271%	4,761	12,400	365%	29,518	76,700
Attend Theatre Performance						
At least once in last year	247%	27,139	70,600	265%	133,754	347,800
Once a month or more	210%	4,782	12,400	218%	22,948	59,700
Attend Music Concert						
At least once in last year	165%	26,367	68,600	175%	128,437	333,900
Once a month or more	187%	5,953	15,500	208%	30,568	79,500
Take Photographs						
At least once in last year	167%	14,416	37,500	167%	66,559	173,100
Once a month or more	157%	10,544	27,400	185%	57,311	149,000
Once per week or more frequent	144%	2,802	7,300	137%	12,223	31,800
Play Musical Instrument						
Once a month or more	149%	7,658	19,900	163%	35,801	93,100
Once per week or more	160%	5,510	14,300	149%	25,379	66,000
Attend Dance Performance						
At least once in last year	220%	6,590	17,100	148%	20,353	52,900
Paint or Draw						
At least once in last year	145%	2,258	5,900	109%	7,836	20,400

The map displays the 10- and 20-minute drive time areas analyzed in the market study. The most significant area for this report is the 10-minute drive time, which includes all of Menlo Park, Palo Alto and Atherton, and extends approximately to Redwood City in the north, and to portions of Mountain View in the south.

*Menlo Park Arts Market Area (10- and 20-minute drive times from City Hall)*





## COMMUNITY SURVEY

The community survey was conducted in September 2001. The purpose of the survey was to assess in greater detail the strength and character of the market for arts and culture in Menlo Park. The survey employed a written questionnaire (page 36) and results were tabulated and analyzed as shown in the appendix (page 22). The survey is one of several research tools used in the overall cultural needs assessment, and is analyzed in the context of the other results.

### SUMMARY

- Respondents overwhelmingly desire more arts and cultural opportunities to be available in Menlo Park: 76% rate this as important, very important or extremely important. (Q1.)
- A strong majority of respondents support more public art in Menlo Park; 62% consider it to be important, very important or extremely important. (Q8.)
- There is a local audience for nearly all forms of arts events. There is a significant interest in attending an across-the-board range of performing, visual and literary arts events. (Q2.)
- There is a strong interest in arts events people can attend with children. (Q4.)
- When asked about classes, visual arts classes hold the strongest interest for both adults and children. The next-highest interests are for music and dance lessons, for both adults and children. (Q5.)
- The two primary reasons that respondents do not attend arts events or classes in Menlo Park are that event/classes are not available, or that people don't know what's available. Almost as important is having little spare time. This picture aligns with the market study: very busy, "high demographic" people with an interest in, but without the ready opportunity to, participate locally in the arts. Taken together with the other results, it also suggests that effective marketing will be equally as important as availability in meeting local demand, and realizing the potential for local arts attendance. (Q7.)
- With regard to price, there is a healthy market for low- and mid-price arts events, and a moderate market for expensive events. Similarly there is a healthy market for low-price classes, and a moderate market for mid-price and expensive classes. (Q3 & Q6.)
- Respondents ranked a theater and indoor performance space as the greatest cultural facility needs; an outdoor performance space and art gallery were the third- and fourth-highest-rated facility needs. Only 6% said no cultural facilities were needed. (Q9.)

- Respondents strongly favor the use of City funds for the arts; only 5% said that City funds should not be used to support the arts. However, there is not a majority opinion in favor of any single source of City funding. Respondents most favor the use of public and private development funds (“percent for arts”), and use of City general funds for the arts is ranked the third-highest. (Q10.)
- In their narrative comments, respondents anecdotally praised the Arts Commission’s summer concert series but criticized its most recent public art project, “Convertibles.” While the concerts are clearly successful and well regarded, the criticisms of “Convertibles” are probably due more to issues in the process of creating the project than to fundamental concerns about public art. National best practices for public art programs demonstrate that public participation is a key component of success. Policies and procedures that assure public input and participation at different critical stages of the process increase public acceptance and appreciation of the work. It appears that this type of process enhances the quality of art projects and their appropriateness to the community.
- This survey is largely corroborated by the results of the City’s 2001 Community Services telephone survey (page 38). That survey documented that residents overwhelmingly believe arts are important to a community and overwhelmingly support spending City funds on a broad variety of arts programs. They are moderately satisfied with existing City programs.
- Taken as a whole, these results document a mandate for the City to assume a greater role in providing arts and cultural programs.

## METHODOLOGY

- The total number of questionnaires distributed was 9,500. They were sent primarily by mail to Menlo Park households throughout the City’s various neighborhoods, and were also handed out by Arts Commissioners and staff to interested residents.
- The total number of responses received was 412, a rate of return of 4%.
- The survey results are particularly useful when considered together with the results of the market study. Respondents to the community survey tended to be self-selecting for residents with a greater interest in arts and culture. Therefore, this data provides a greater level of detail and understanding of the character of community arts needs. It fleshes out our picture of the strong overall demand documented by the market study.

## PROFILE OF LOCAL ARTS RESOURCES

The consultants profiled local arts resources in relation to the emerging picture of Menlo Park's needs. They researched the local arts community, and conducted telephone and in-person interviews with 21 representatives of selected arts organizations, municipal arts agencies, school districts, and City Council members and staff during October and November 2001 (page 39). An open community meeting was also held on September 20, 2001. The purpose was to learn the specific needs and suggestions of local arts organizations, and to gauge the opinions of community leaders about the future direction of arts development in the community.

### SUMMARY

- Compared with other communities, there are relatively few arts resources located in Menlo Park, however, these organizations include several substantial and well established components of the local arts ecology. Menlo Park arts organizations show a significant existing capacity, given their limited budgets, and the ability to expand. Several examples: TheatreWorks, a major professional theater with a budget of \$5 million, performs in Palo Alto and Mountain View because of the available facilities, but was founded and maintains its administrative office in Menlo Park. The Menlo Players Guild, the local community theater, provides an extensive amount of performances and educational services to a large audience, even after the closure of the Burgess Theatre. The Art in Action Foundation has developed a significant arts education program for area schools, based on a design created by the J. Paul Getty Trust.
- Local arts resources located in Menlo Park include performing and visual arts, and arts education organizations and programs. They do not include major "presenting" programs, such as Stanford Lively Arts, that bring touring artists into the community for performances and other services.
- The programs of the Arts Commission and the Community Services Department appear to be well designed in relation to their participants. Attendance and participation seems limited only by the available space and other resources. As noted in the Community Survey, Menlo Park residents anecdotally praise the summer concert series, and the arts classes and performance opportunities provided by the Community Services Department are well attended. As mentioned, Community Survey respondents also anecdotally criticized the Arts Commission's recent public art project, "Convertibles," however this appears to be due to process issues—probably the need for better public participation—and it is clear that the Arts Commission has done substantial work in developing the framework for a public art program that can become more effective in meeting the community's needs.

- As is well known, there is a rich variety of arts resources in the neighboring communities. Their audiences almost all include a portion of Menlo Park residents, so clearly the community's demand for arts services is being met to some extent by traveling within the region.
- Interviewees detailed a lack of infrastructure of arts support. They frequently cited the lack of facilities as the most critical issue, which is a major factor limiting the number and variety of performances, exhibitions, classes and other programs they can provide. Also, they have limited opportunities for local funding, marketing and communication. Information sharing inside and outside the arts community is relatively weak. It is common for arts development in a community to parallel the development of such types of infrastructure. We tend to hold an image of artists as creating despite all obstacles, and that is certainly true for a few individuals. However, the arts in a community rarely flourish without a support infrastructure of appropriate facilities, marketing, funding, administration and other assistance. There is probably a "chicken and egg" problem in Menlo Park: the arts have developed more elsewhere because of the lack of arts infrastructure, while the demonstration of local arts development has been needed to justify better infrastructure.
- Interviewees often stated that Menlo Park does not have a strong image as an arts community or "arts place." However, they often discussed the extensive public participation in the arts both in Menlo Park and in neighboring communities, and saw a potential for the local resources to have a higher profile and reach a broader public. This underscores the need for a stronger infrastructure to both amplify the impact of existing arts resources and attract new resources.
- Local school districts with schools in Menlo Park report having both some arts education programs and the need for additional programs and resources. Some schools have a combination of arts specialist teachers and outside arts programs, provided by such organizations as the Art in Action Foundation. However, none of the districts or schools approaches the comprehensive, standards-based arts instruction mandated by the California Department of Education. The responsibility for fulfilling this mandate, of course, rests primarily with the local school district boards. However, one of the lessons of the arts education movement of the past twenty-five years is that arts education can best be accomplished by partnerships involving both school and community resources. There clearly is a role, albeit limited, for the City to play in meeting the community's need for arts education services.
- While the existing programs and efforts of the City and Arts Commission are somewhat understood and appreciated by local arts organizations, there is a relatively weak connection at present with the local arts community. That is, the relationships between the arts community and "the City," including the Arts Commission, are relatively unformed. Nearly all interviewees supported and welcomed additional efforts by the City to take an expanded role in the arts. Those

from outside the City echoed this attitude, reflecting their observation that the community need is strong enough to encompass new initiatives.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings summarize the community needs, and gaps in services, identified in the needs assessment. These findings and recommendations are based on analysis of all information elicited by the research tools—the market study, community survey, profile of local arts resources, and Advisory Committee.

### FINDINGS

- **Overall Finding:** The overall finding of the arts and culture needs assessment is twofold: 1) there is a very strong demand in Menlo Park for the arts, and 2) there is a broad public mandate for the City to assume a greater role in providing arts and culture services. The market study, community survey, and profile of local arts resources are consistent in demonstrating a very strong local market for arts attendance and participation, and opinion favoring City action in meeting the community's needs. These findings are also consistent with the City's separate Community Services Department telephone survey, conducted in summer 2001.
- **Broad Range of Community Needs:** The community's needs are strong and varied enough to warrant additional programs in a broad range of areas. This range encompasses: attending performances, exhibitions and other events; participation in classes, community performing groups and clubs; virtually all artistic disciplines (performing, visual, literary and media); public art; and cultural activities, such as fairs, and multicultural and heritage programs. Given this broad range of needs and interest, the issue appears to be what options would be the most appropriate and strategic for City action.
- **Major Need for Facilities:** There is clearly a major need for cultural facilities. This need encompasses facilities for both arts attendance and participation. That is, it is more than "replacing the Burgess Theatre." The community's needs for cultural facilities are broader than even the capacity of the Burgess. These facility needs include classrooms and rehearsal studios emphasizing the community's demand for participating directly in arts experiences, for both adults and children, and on an amateur as well as professional basis. The facility needs also include performing and exhibition spaces, although further study is required to define the specifics of such facilities. The need for cultural facilities is strong but it is by no means the only need. Facilities are only one element of infrastructure and cannot be addressed without consideration of other types of arts support.
- **Related Infrastructure Needs:** In addition to facilities, the community's needs include funding, marketing, communication, administration, and other related infrastructure services. These capacities are essential, but less visible, forms of support that will better enable arts development.

- **Broad Community Support for the Arts:** The community's support for City action in meeting arts and culture needs is broad. It includes strong opinion favoring a public art program, spending City funds on arts programs, and the recognition of the value and role of the arts in community building and the development of young people.
- **Relative Lack of Competition:** As the City considers its options, there is relatively little problem of competition with other cities and arts resources. Analysis of local resources shows that while there are a number of excellent programs and facilities available in neighboring communities, and within a 10-minute drive time, virtually no one is concerned about supply exceeding demand. Rather, the community's need for arts services, and for facilities, is strong enough to warrant new services in Menlo Park. In fact, interviewees often cited, and welcomed, opportunities for Menlo Park to provide new programs. The consultants' experience is that other arts communities have loudly protested against perceived potential competition, so the consistent opinion of interviewees in this project is solid evidence of community need. Although competition is not an overall problem for Menlo Park, the gaps in services are not universal. It would be very risky, for example, to try to start another professional theater with programs similar to TheatreWorks. Further arts planning in Menlo Park must consider the specifics of what is available within the drive time, and how competitive it might be to what is contemplated in Menlo Park.
- **Potential Partnerships:** Several organizations inside and outside Menlo Park indicated an interest in partnering with the City and the Arts Commission. For example, TheatreWorks, which is contemplating a major capital campaign to build a new facility, invited a dialogue with the City about the potential of a shared use agreement. Also, the City of Palo Alto's Arts and Culture Division invited discussion about serving as an outside contractor in providing infrastructure services under contract to the City of Menlo Park. Most Menlo Park arts organizations interviewed expressed interest in partnering with the City in developing arts programs and infrastructure. The City is already investigating a potential shared use agreement with the High School facility.
- **The Needs of Residents Predominate:** In Menlo Park, the key factor emerging from the assessment is the strength of residents' demand for programs. This suggests that the City's primary focus should be on meeting residents' needs for attendance and participation in the arts. This also frames the needs of the local arts resources: supporting them is a means of not only meeting their needs but also of serving the needs of residents.
- **Market Area for the Arts:** Meeting the needs of residents will necessarily involve consideration of a local market area that includes some non-residents. This is, of course, a familiar circumstance for many City programs. The reality of arts marketing is that potential arts consumers are defined primarily by distance from a desirable service. In practice, this is mostly

within the 10-minute drive time discussed in the market study, which includes all Menlo Park residents, but also some from neighboring cities (see map, page 9).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Because of the strength of the market, the range of the community's needs, and the relative lack of competition, there is a variety of viable options for City action in meeting the community's needs in the arts. This section lists a number of recommended options that appear to be both strategic and feasible. However, this list is by no means exhaustive or conclusive—they are good ideas but not the only ideas. These options are grouped according to cost, with the lower cost options generally being less complex, and requiring less time, to begin implementation.

The recommended options all require further planning and development, and will presumably require additional staff with specialized expertise in arts administration. Most options include a potential for partnerships.

### *OVERALL RECOMMENDATION*

***Develop a Community Cultural Plan:*** The Arts Commission, together with Community Services Department staff, should proceed with Phase 2 of its two-stage process to develop a community cultural plan, with a three- to seven-year time frame. They should structure the planning process around the specific directions they choose to pursue, presumably including some of these recommended options. The community cultural plan will provide the City with a blueprint for specific action, including strategic and tactical plans; costs, staff, facility and other resources needed; assignments of lead parties; identification of partnerships; implementation schedules; and other more detailed plans. The community cultural plan, like other types of municipal master plans, will permit City Council members to make informed policy decisions about longer-term strategies, spending, financing, and administrative infrastructure.

### *LOWER COST OPTIONS*

- ***Provide More Comprehensive Arts Classes:*** Develop a more comprehensive and sequential curriculum of arts classes for children and adults, building on the Community Services Department's present capacity for delivering successful classes. The change would not only be in the number of classes, but in choosing subject areas that can be combined for greater impact. For example, a broader offering of children's music classes could lead to a children's performing ensemble. And classes could seek to provide significant educational opportunities not available regionally, such as a model children's creative writing program. This option that can be planned and implemented in a relatively short time frame, although such a class program can clearly develop over time. Further program planning should include a detailed analysis of current class

offerings, other available classes, available teachers and other resources, the potential to partner with arts organizations, available spaces, and costs. Although additional space would presumably be required, Community Services should consider the possibility of rented or donated classroom and studio spaces.

- **Expand the Summer Concert Series:** The summer concert series offers an immediate potential to meet the demand for performances. With increased funding, broader selection of artists, and perhaps improved technical stage capacity, the series can be developed into a more high profile, varied series, encompassing a more diverse selection of performing arts. Potential partnerships or collaborations include block booking of artists, or sharing information about artists, with other concert series, and working with local performing arts groups. This option would require further program planning in relation to the schedule, noise and other limitations on the current series, plus an analysis of the other specific summer concert offerings.
- **Create a Funding Program:** Many needs can be addressed through grants made to arts organizations, artists and/or teachers. Even a modest budget for grants can leverage a significant amount of new program activity targeted to needs defined by the grant maker. This option would require further program planning to define specific goals for grants, eligibility, selection, accountability, and other technical aspects.
- **Provide Infrastructure Services:** Develop services to address the infrastructure needs identified in the assessment, such as a resource directory, information and referrals, joint marketing and communications services, and convening events (designed to bring together elements of the arts community). This option would require further program planning for the services desired, and the consideration of partnerships and out-sourcing.

#### *MEDIUM-COST OPTION*

- **Develop the Public Art Program:** The Arts Commission has already done substantial planning for a public art program, and created a first major project. The next steps would be additional planning to define appropriate funding, policies and procedures that better assure public participation, possible out-sourcing of administration, and other related issues. This option has far-reaching potential for enhancing and developing Menlo Park's image, integrating the arts into the community, improving the built environment, and providing educational opportunities. Because of this potential, and the potential for community controversy, it is especially important to refine program plans for public art, and take such extra measures as defining a pilot period of implementation, then evaluating first efforts. Also note that public art programs typically are financed by dedicated revenues that are not general revenues.

*HIGH-COST OPTION*

- **Cultural Facilities:** The most complex and expensive option is addressing cultural facilities needs. The main point of this recommendation is that addressing facility needs requires substantial specific planning, and is not merely an issue of costs. Building a multidisciplinary arts center—theaters, gallery(ies), studios, classrooms and related spaces—while expensive, is the most comprehensive solution. It also appears to be feasible in terms of the market demand. With sufficient capacity, performing arts spaces could be shared with a resident organization, such as TheatreWorks, and rented to other regional performing groups as a “second home.” The specific location, use, configuration, capacity, financing, and administration of a facility would require additional study of the potential users, funders, partners, available land, and other issues. This type of project, however, holds the promise of galvanizing public attention and resources. A public/private partnership in some form is the most viable approach, not only because of cost-sharing but also the community involvement that accompanies the private partner. Facilities developed and owned entirely by municipalities are often structurally less able to reflect and serve changing community needs. The City’s current potential for utilizing Measure T funds for expansion of the Recreation Center, and a shared-use agreement with the high school should be investigated as partial solutions for this need.

## APPENDICES

### COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS BY QUESTION

These results are reported by each survey question, including any narrative responses and a commentary in bullet point form.

*Question 1. How important is it to you to have more arts and cultural opportunities offered in Menlo Park? (Check one.)*

Extremely important	26%
Very important	29%
Important	21%
Somewhat Important	10%
Not Important	7%
No Responses	7%
Total	100%

Commentary:

- Respondents overwhelmingly desire more arts and cultural opportunities available in Menlo Park: 76% rate it as important, very important or extremely important.
- This aligns with the results of the market study, which documents a very strong local market for arts attendance and participation.

*Question 2. Which arts performances and exhibits would you like to attend in Menlo Park? (Check all that apply.)*

<i>All Responses</i>	
Community Theatre	49%
Classical Music	47%
Professional Theater	44%
Historical Art Exhibit	42%
Contemporary Art Exhibit	38%
Cultural Festival	38%
Children’s Theater	38%
Readings/Lectures	37%
Jazz	36%
Broadway Musical	33%
Crafts Exhibit	32%
Children’s Art Exhibit	32%
Ballet	28%
Popular Music	26%
World Music	25%
Modern Dance	23%
Comedy	22%
Ethnic Dance	22%
Opera	17%
Country & Western	11%
Rock	9%

<i>Visual Arts</i>	
Historical Art Exhibit	42%
Contemporary Art Exhibit	38%
Crafts Exhibit	32%
Children’s Art Exhibit	32%
<i>Performing Arts</i>	
Community Theatre	49%
Classical Music	47%
Professional Theater	44%
Cultural Festival	38%
Children’s Theater	38%
Jazz	36%
Broadway Musical	33%
Ballet	28%
Popular Music	26%
World Music	25%
Modern Dance	23%
Comedy	22%
Ethnic Dance	22%
Opera	17%
Country & Western	11%
Rock	9%
<i>Literary Arts</i>	
Readings/Lectures	37%

Commentary:

- The three highest-ranked arts events are community and professional theater, and classical music.
- The three lowest-ranked are rock music, country & western and opera.
- There is significant interest in historical and contemporary arts exhibits; these are the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> highest-ranked interests. Tying for fifth are also cultural festivals and children’s theater.
- In the context of very strong local arts demand, these results confirm a significant interest in attending a diverse, across-the-board range of events. There is a local audience for nearly all forms of arts events.

Write-in suggestions:

Big Bands	outdoor performing things you can take a picture with a bunch of friends
R & B Music	Cello chamber music
Concerts	Bluegrass and Folk Music
Reduce Taxes	music festival, R&B Music performance, gospel music
Music in the park	Blue Grass
Renaissance Faire	we certainly do not need more auditoriums
The Japanese Drum Band was excellent	Tap
Rock - Teens	Ballroom
Classical non amplified	recitals
40's popular Music	
Tap Dance	

Question 3. Assuming I wanted to attend, the **most** I would pay for a ticket to an arts performance/event in Menlo Park would be: (Check one.)

Free	4%
\$10	9%
\$20	23%
\$30	21%
\$40	13%
\$50	17%
\$75	7%
\$100	2%
\$125	2%
Other/No Response	2%
Total	100%

Commentary:

- Very few would not pay anything: only 4% would attend only if it were free.
- Healthy market for low-cost events: about one-third would pay \$10 – 20.
- Healthy market for mid-price events: about one third would pay \$20 – 40.
- Moderate market for expensive events: only 28% would pay more than \$40; only 11% would pay more than \$50.

*Question 4. How often would you like to attend arts performances and events with your children, grandchildren or friends' children in Menlo Park? (Check one.)*

Very Often	12%
Often	30%
Occasionally	40%
Rarely	9%
Never	8%
No Response	1%
Total	100%

Commentary:

- There is a strong market for events people can attend with children. This aligns with the results of the market study, which confirms the family character of the local population.
- 42% would like to attend often or very often with children.
- 40% more would like to attend occasionally with children.

*Question 5. In which arts programs would you, or your children, like to participate in Menlo Park? (Check all that apply and write in any suggestions you have for specific types.)*

<i>For Children</i>		<i>For Adults</i>	
Art classes	36%	Art classes	46%
Music lessons	27%	Dance classes	24%
Dance classes	25%	Music lessons	19%
Acting classes	20%	Creative Writing	19%
Performance Opportunities	19%	Acting classes	10%
Creative Writing	10%	Performance Opportunities	8%

Commentary:

- Art classes are the strongest interest for both adults and children.
- The next-highest interests are for music and dance lessons, for both adults and children.

Write-in suggestions:

Children’s Art Classes:

Pottery  
 Watercolor, all arts  
 Painting  
 Drawing & Painting  
 especially important because of lack in schools  
 oil + H2o color - ceramic  
 painting/clay/crafts  
 ceramics  
 Painting/clay/etc  
 with a professional teacher not just "play act"  
 crafts  
 for grand children  
 multi-media for boys  
 murals, collage, assemblage

General  
 drawing, painting, collage  
 pottery  
 Yes! Drawing/watercolor/arts  
 ceramics  
 drawing, ceramics  
 Good Quality Not Crafts Actual  
 ceramics  
 fine art - painting  
 ceramics  
 drawing, painting  
 acrylic, watercolor, sculpture

Children’s Music Lessons:

cello  
 violin  
 piano, violin, flute  
 schools do this  
 piano+ recorder  
 guitar  
 instrument piano etc.  
 singing  
 piano, guitar  
 needs programs  
 piano  
 piano, guitar, drums

Children’s Acting Classes:

Drama "Camp" for kids  
 children, yes  
 schools do this  
 quality plays  
 K-6  
 speaking theater  
 Yes!

Children’s Dance Classes:

Tap, Ballet  
 2 dance studios do this  
 movement + free dance  
 3 - 18 tap ballet  
 good quality  
 Ballet  
 cultural  
 ballet  
 ballet, tap  
 with different teachers

Children’s Performance Opportunities:

Plays  
 plays + recitals  
 plays  
 Ballet  
 theater camp  
 with disabilities  
 theater

Children’s Creative Writing:

poetry  
 possibly workshops  
 in Menlo Park, and not even 1 program or event

Other/Children’s:

Tall High-rise Buildings  
 Have no children or grandchildren in area  
 My son 7 years old has no free time  
 Have no children at home  
 pottery/ceramics, photography  
 nature classes  
 voice  
 For teens

Adult Art Classes:

Print Making  
 Pottery, Water Color  
 Watercolor  
 possibly  
 Watercolor  
 welded sculpture  
 advanced painting & drawing  
 painting, drawing, computer graphics  
 oil painting, photography  
 photography digital 35mm  
 weaving  
 pottery, water painting, calligraphy  
 painting, collage, assemblage, jewelry  
 Painting - Drawing  
 pottery  
 pottery/ceramics, furniture design antiques  
 restoration  
 drawing  
 ceramics/jewelry making/lapidary/collage.  
 Woodworking  
 painting, ceramics  
 drawing  
 Watercolor  
 Adult drawing - watercolor  
 Watercolor  
 drawing, photography  
 photography  
 ceramics  
 ceramics, glassblowing, bookbinding, etc.  
 photography  
 drawing, painting

Adult Music Lessons:

Piano  
 guitar  
 guitar - piano - recorder  
 symphony band  
 piano  
 composition classes  
 casual (pop) choral group

singing in harmony  
 guitar lesson  
 piano  
 Piano  
 jazz, classical, world, percussion  
 guitar

Adult Dance Classes:

Aerobics or Jazz dance  
 Tap  
 Ballroom  
 ballet  
 modern, jazz, good quality  
 ethnic, Afro, Asian  
 TAP  
 African  
 ballet  
 swing  
 Hawaiian/Hula  
 ballroom  
 jazz, ballroom, swing  
 ethnic dance

Adult Performance Opportunities:

Community Theater  
 plays  
 modern dance

Adult Creative Writing:

story contest  
 poetry

Other/Adult:

Tai Chi  
 Community Chorus, Maybe  
 Cooking Lesson  
 yoga, meditation, hiking, painting out doors  
 Film I can teach it.  
 Pilates equipment classes  
 Knitting circles & Classes  
 History of Area  
 Reduce Traffic  
 Quilting  
 Foreign language lessons  
 This would be our #1 priority  
 We have other adult resources in the area  
 Sewing  
 photography  
 nature classes  
 yoga would like more school time classes  
 computer related, bridge, golf  
 Sing - a - long  
 caning  
 There are ample of music, dance art classes.  
 If I am able  
 local artist shows  
 photography/ filmmaking  
 most of these are offered by other org. No need to repeat  
 art tours, voice, singing, folk music classes,  
 Broadway tunes  
 Crafts classes

Question 6. Assuming I wanted to attend, the **most** I would pay for an arts class in Menlo Park would be: (Check one.)

Free	3%
\$10	8%
\$20	14%
\$30	11%
\$40	10%
\$50	9%
\$75	9%
\$100	10%
\$125	6%
Other/No Response	20%
Total	100%

Commentary:

- Very few would not pay anything: only 3% would participate only if it were free.

- Healthy market for low-cost classes: about one-third would pay \$10 – 30.
- Moderate market for mid-price classes: about one-fifth would pay \$40 – 50.
- Moderate market for higher-cost classes: only one-quarter would pay more than \$50.

Question 7. If you do **not** currently attend arts events or classes in Menlo Park, why not? (Check all that apply.)

What I want isn't offered	22%
Don't know what's available	22%
Have little spare time	21%
Quality of what's offered is not satisfactory	15%
Scheduled at inconvenient days and/or times	15%
Not that interested	7%

Commentary:

- There three primary reasons for not attending locally: arts events/classes are not available, people don't know what's available, and having little spare time.
- Quality, scheduling and lack of interest are not as significant reasons for not attending.
- This picture aligns with the market study: very busy, high demographic people with an interest in, but without the ready opportunity to, participate locally in the arts. It also suggests that marketing will be equally as important as availability in meeting local demand, and realizing the potential for local arts attendance.

Write-in responses:

We do attend currently  
 Burgess Theatre Closed this Spring  
 With the property tax collected-they should be no fee!  
 I go to Palo Senior Center or Canada.  
 baby is still too young for children's classes  
 Just moved to Menlo Park  
 Better offerings in Palo Alto, Redwood City, Mt. View  
 Ceramics, pottery  
 rarely seem to get brochure from city  
 Have found classes in neighboring towns - Portola Valley Art & Atherton Dance  
 My health  
 Disabled  
 Not City's business to provide art!!!!  
 classes often full with hours of sign up  
 Palo Alto has super programs so MP should partner with them.  
 Belong to Menlo Art League, which could use some City's Support  
 "sofas are silly in Willows"  
 recently moved to MP  
 auctions sporting event-fund raisers  
 Theater closed no visual arts  
 Will retire soon  
 music in parks is great  
 Presently disabled  
 Do not offer what I am interested in.  
 Too old!

Attend events in SF, SJ, PA (Lively Arts)  
 see comments  
 I just moved here  
 on SSI low income  
 all classes offered thru parks & rec & art center in P.A. ore too expensive  
 see attached  
 Age  
 Taking classes in PA  
 Many arts events in area, so not necessary in Menlo Park.  
 is anything offered??? where??

*Question 8. How important is it to you to see more public art in Menlo Park? (Check one.)*

Extremely important	12%
Very important	25%
Important	25%
Somewhat Important	21%
Not Important	13%

Commentary:

- A strong majority of respondents support public art; 62% consider having more public art available in Menlo Park to be important, very important or extremely important.

*Question 9. What types of cultural facilities does Menlo Park need? (Check all that apply.)*

Theater	53%
Indoor Performance Space	45%
Outdoor Performance Space	43%
Art Gallery	31%
Concert Hall	26%
Dance Studio	20%
None	6%

Commentary:

- Respondents clearly agree with the overall need for cultural faculties: only 6% responded “none.”
- Respondents ranked a theater and indoor performance space as the greatest facility needs.
- An outdoor performance space and art gallery were the third- and fourth-highest-rated facility needs.

*Question 10. What types of City arts funding would you support? (Check all that apply.)*

Use portion of City development funds	50%
Tax private development (“percent for arts”)	38%
Use general funds	34%
Create tourist tax (on hotel/motel stays)	29%
Voters approve a bond issue	26%
Don’t know	14%
None	5%



Commentary:

- Respondents clearly favor the use of City funds for the arts; only 5% said that City funds should not be used to support the arts.
- However, there is not a majority opinion in favor of any single source of City funding.
- Respondents most favor the use of public and private development funds (“percent for arts”) for City arts funding.
- Use of City general funds for the arts is ranked the third-highest.

Write-in suggestions:

Private donations or foundations  
 Would need to know details  
 Cooperate w/Menlo Atherton High School for Theater space  
 Build Theater with High School  
 Private fundraising  
 I do not want taxes raised  
 Property Tax!  
 Leisure  
 Not in City limits  
 Why do you want to steal money from others! Self-funding  
 Let's build a multi purpose theater like San Jose has  
 indoor performance space, which would include theater & concert in one space  
 quality landscape & architecture more important at this time  
 Bond vote if necessary  
 Use Budget as all recreational programs  
 If funds are available. I liked the Whimsical Art in Palo Alto  
 I'd rather see nice drought tolerant landscaping  
 library raffle of various items they used this to raise \$ at another town I lived in  
 Collaboration with Menlo Atherton high school  
 Don't know but would be interested in other tax services.  
 Parks/nature areas/community gardens. Charge annual fee for park use  
 Needs citizen approval and combine indoor  
 I support using public funds to support the arts.

Question 11. What neighborhood do you live in? (Check one.)

<i>East of Middlefield Road</i>	
Belle Haven	1%
Lorelei Manor	2%
Suburban Park	4%
The Willows	10%
Subtotal	17%
<i>Between 101 and El Camino Real</i>	
Felton Gables	2%
Flood Triangle	2%
Linfield Oaks	5%
Vintage Oaks	1%

Subtotal	10%
<i>Between El Camino and Alameda De Las Puelgas</i>	
Allied Arts	8%
Downtown	9%
Oak Knoll	3%
West Menlo	32%
Subtotal	52%
<i>West of Alameda</i>	
Sharon Heights	11%
Stanford Park	1%
Subtotal	12%
Other/No Response	9%
Total	100%

Location of Respondents	
Between El Camino and Alameda De Las Puelgas	52%
East of Middlefield Road	17%
West of Alameda	12%
Between 101 and El Camino Real	10%
Other/No Response	9%
Total	100%

*Question 12. What other comments or suggestions do you have about arts programs or facilities?*

We currently spend a lot of time attending arts events and classes in Palo Alto, many of which are really oversubscribed.

We really need a new Community Theater to replace Burgess Theater.

Several organizations I belong to find it difficult to find meeting space with piano & audio-visual equip.

A new facility which could provide this would be wonderful. What about considering a theater in the round?

I like concerts at Fremont Park

Contemporary art (Open Air) in MP and PA is bad, expensive trendy "art". Small theater would be a pleasure. Actually, Stanford covers most of our needs very well

More park perform like at Fremont Park. Great Support!

Menlo Park must either relocate and rebuild the old Burgess Theater or build a complete new Theater complex that would include a dance and performance complex.

Nice as all this things are to have, in this time we should be fiscal prudent.

We need large performance facilities, out-door and indoors to accommodate the whole peninsula community. How about locating in the former dump ground, now park?

I actually think the City does a good job of offerings, but if I could waive a magic wand I would like to see hands on Art like Pottery for Kids and Adults. Also, there is a great need for performance Art for Kids.

Performance facilities could be combined for multi use.

Either fix up Burgess Theater or build a new one!

Have no grandchildren or children in vicinity. I applaud Menlo Park's art, library, recreation activities.

This year I am not able to attend but that does not rule out future attendance.

Use at this point in time Palo Alto and San Francisco for Arts Programs

I'm a documentary filmmaker, so if there is a facility I mean a hall, it's good.

Think you should fix Burgess Theater. I probably can't serve until I get from work

Consider redoing Burgess Theater with a more attractive efficient building, proving architectural value to our town

I would rather see city money spent on instructor and traffic control/ improvement

Menlo should retrofit and remodel Burgess Theater Have a community center for classes!!

For #8, I loved out door Shakespeare in the Summer. As I get older I'd love to see more quality arts programs closer to home. I support whatever you can do to make it better.

Atherton & No. Fair Oaks residents would make use of M.P. facilities -- non-resident fee could help with funding.

Definitely should have some type of performance facility like Burgess Theater

Menlo Park is way behind the times. Go over to Redwood City & Take a long look at Red Morton - the library - the railroad crossing etc. Menlo Park has been left in dust! It is not 1955 any more! If they have the money to up grade why don't we.

It is difficult to provide public art that is of high enough quality in the context of Menlo Parks size & financial standing. I would prefer money were used to enhance outdoor recreation facilities and to continue to support the current classes offer

We attend Palo Alto arts Center and Palo Alto Children's Theater because Menlo Park does not have these

Stanford university has all the art programs I need. Cantor is free and others are reasonably priced. Menlo Park would have a poor attempt at duplication.

We as a City are moving backwards in the Arts over the years there is less Theater, classes and Exhibits.

I would support a collaboration between the City and the high school district in building a theater/performing arts center such as the one in San Mateo. Who ever voted to OK the permanent display of crashing sofas in Willow Oaks Park?

We love music in the park.

It would be nice to have more visual arts in MP

I'd like to see more theater, music and artwork available to see - however my 1st priority would be for MP to plant tons more trees!!! Not slow growing oaks, either It's so barren looking at this point. (see attached)

We already have sufficient sources to meet the demand.

loss of burgess theater is devastating! A theater is a priority!

It would be nice to not have to go to the city to see artist events of caliber

The offering currently are narrow, and some of teachers are pretty poor (e.g. Tap and ballet teacher Lois Wood). More varied classes jazz with someone other then Maryann or Jane Kellam. With better caliber teachers please.

I am a senior but I recognize that our youth should have more cultural opportunities as they develop.

This is a big part of education too! Give them music and creativity at a young age!

Concert in the park at Fremont Pk. Are great. It brings people together and being great grandparents we love to see the little ones dancing & the parents there with them.

Both cities to the north and south have fantastic arts programs - let's try to get something going here public performing arts are more important than public fine arts. Don't need public sculptures.

Please no more outdoor art. The new piece on Willow Road is wretched.

Menlo Park should create a park at the on the order of Mt. View's Shoreline Park.

Always provide some free art & music & theater programs

Thank you for sending this survey. We really need more arts- related activities & performances in particular

I am interested in a variety of arts. However my needs are more than satisfied in our surrounding communities. I don't need a Menlo Park specific fix.

Children's theater would be nice unless those interested are already accommodated at Lucie Sterns Fremont Park Summer Concert Series, Excellent !!! Keep it up

fix the burgess theater, utilize allied arts facilities

Burgess needs re open & available for inexpensive rental to community members

The summer concert series are terrific. Keeping coat low/ free scene to encourage more people to come prefer arts events that ate kid friendly w/ community/ children theater think you would have a good turnout for suck events.

traffic & easing congestion on El Camino is crucial to the where to locate Arts - I will not take kids over to Burgess any more after 4-6 pm

Arts programs at schools

Something closer to Sharon Heights. A rec center and a pool

Let's get going. We are woefully behind as a community with regard to arts.

Based on Willow Road :Sculpture of Rocks" - Waste of \$\$! The best City program is beautiful landscaping and streetscapes. God knows beauty. Should concentrate on City admin. Public Safety,, and Streets. If there are \$ left over, City taxes

Arts is part of MP overall recreational Program & should STOP asking for special \$

There are really terrific performing arts programs offered close by - Theater works, Stanford Lively Arts, etc. MP should spend it's budget on new library looks, not a theater for another production, unless a joint facility. See attached for rest

Menlo Park has significantly fewer arts programs & facilities than Palo Alto. There needs to be more MP to build a greater sense of community

Please improve downtown parking. Like your Fremont Park Program and Sunday's on Sunday

We need local theater productions which young & old can enjoy with out spending a fortune to go to - and parking availability close by. Not everyone in MP or Atherton are wealthy!

Interested in a better kid's swimming pool & community center (see Palo Alto's facilities)

I think MP should sponsor a program similar to "Project Look" In Palo Alto. But younger children 2 and up should be involved as well.

Art Gallery is a must

If the "Sofa" Art @ Willow Park is on example of \$50k + spending - forget it more needed - on all art fronts

Menlo Park needs a performing Arts center like the one in Mt. View

Professional guidance must oversee these programs go the quality is high

Before any more construction is done I Menlo Park parking garages are needed in downtown.

Sunday "NO PARKING" until Menlo Park Presbyterian church services end.

M-A & MP badly need large theater

second-rate art is pointless. MP can't compete with SF for opera, ballet & museum-quality art. It should concentrate on less expensive genres, such as early music, baroque music, chamber music, & serious theater.

Arts programs, especially for young people seem to be completely lacking. We need programs! I believe public art enhance the community significantly. As far as performance art, if it is not of highest quality, I an not prepared to support it.

I loved the concert series this summer in Fremont Park - eclectic, something for everyone

MP is a great place to live & the city already provides many good classes & opportunities to learn.

We should not try to duplicate what is already available merely.

MP has a critical shortage of outdoor playing fields; acquisition of remaining undeveloped open space should be given 1st priority in expenditure of \$ available

Community Theater Very Important - Company MAHS

I am frustrated that I often have to go outside MP for art/dance programs for my children. MP has very little to offer families.

Whatever you do have enough parking and do not exacerbate down town traffic! I think a theater is the most important. Our M-A doesn't even have a decent theater. Could this be shared?

To maximize tax dollar's benefit it is imperative that the city work with the local high school to build facilities that are mutually beneficial

Summer, out door programs are great, but they are kid-oriented - or I haven't heard of adult programs...? Looking for quality adult fare.

In years past, I have thoroughly enjoyed most of the plays at Burgess theater; recently I have been disappointed. A theater seems vital to provide access to a proper building to encourage their enthusiasm.

We are fortunate to live in an area that offers many and varied arts programs. I am not sure that our small city should duplicate theses facilities.. The taxes might better be spent on developing programs & facilities for youth – oriented activities

We love the Summer Concert Series-keep this!!

Love music in the park - keep it!

however we have noted vagrants & drinks bothering children in the park. I find this very distressing.

We have thoroughly enjoyed Wednesday, Sundays in the Park. Scottish music please, enjoy some ethnic music.

Coordinate with neighbors & don't duplicate

have the concerts in the park

We have enjoyed your Wednesday evening attractions

we have enjoyed the concerts. Not only for the music but for the atmosphere - what a great family actually!!

Summer Concerts are a great idea but better musical performers

With the other facilities so close to us, another "Building" would be over kill - Not necessary & public art is great for the artist - but again there is plenty of art around the area. Don't make it painful for developers

We need more parks, like Palo Alto, so people can be in nature more often. A community garden would be a good start!

We live next door to Stanford where many cultural and art opportunities are available.

To become better known, perhaps the Art Center could put together a program for local organizations.

Keep animals from street art fairs. Have the fair policed and person fined if the request is disregarded.

1) Since I live in County, not City, it is easy for me to support a city tax! 2) It would be very exciting to have a concert hall & I would support it.

Parking is a big problem one cannot even go out at lunchtime to shop!

Am not sure what niche Menlo Park is trying to fill. Enjoy local theater productions, but for symphony, Opera, etc., we go elsewhere

Menlo Park needs to fix a lot other town issues, the park facilities are below PAR for the wealth of the community

We need to support local theater groups and performing groups

I am 100% in favor of providing space for local amateur productions of every kind.

Return the benches to Library

a lot of the homegrown dance/theater/performance in the past was lousy - if you're trying to raise \$ for local vanity performances.

Outdoor public Art along with tree planting.

With Palo Alto and Stanford, San Jose and San Francisco so close I do not think we need programs.

We attend 12-15 concerts a year.

We need a comprehensive music program housed under one outer, and more art in general.

I'd rather see our roads repaired than spend more \$ on non-essentials

The city needs a theater. Please either replace or fix burgess theater

I'm glad you are asking us about our community resources. I love our community life & strongly support Art & Cultural programs.

I would like to see the addition of art in downtown Menlo.

Don't display ugly red or colored metal structures just because they are presented to the city, they look awful in other towns, let us refuse them.

Gunn High School has a very active, successful and enriching theatre program, due significantly to presence of a Palo Alto organization.

I would like to see the city offer as a discount similar to senior discount for people with disability who are on SIS.

We enjoyed the Burgess Theater and saw a couple of Shakespeare plays there- a good production of the Tempest by Menlo Players and the Jungle Book.

Please support arts w/purchase of art & sculpture for permanent display. Continue summer concert in the park. Please no new buildings to increase traffic.

Our family likes to do things together, not just sit and watch things.

Burgess Theater should be renovated & could be a combination theater & art gallery in lobby section.

What's happening with the Allied Arts Guild? I've been going there for 40 years!!

I enjoy the concert in the summer evening. It would be nice to have more good theater small concerts in the winter as well

Please do everything possible to make MP a very cultured city by keeping our theater & culture opportunities alive!

Do not attempt to compete w/TheaterWorks Mt. View, jazz- Stanford - find new niche.

Bring in small groups from different backgrounds & areas for focused effect Good Luck

Every time once a month approx I drive to Mt. View to their center for performing arts. I wish we had a center in MP.

Happy with present situation except realize burgess theater must be replaced

MP desperately needs theater space & art presence. We currently go elsewhere which my kids have done for 14 yrs.

I usually go to PA or Stanford it would be nice to have more cultural programs exhibits in MP

summer music concerts are very enjoyable

I definitely think we need more public art. Look at the art outside at Stanford University.

Current programs are limited by segregating children, seniors, and adults.

There are lots of cultural opportunities for theatre, museums, etc. at Stanford, San Jose, San Francisco, etc.

For the size of Menlo Park and the amount of money necessary for quality programs.

I would like to see Burgess Theater saved/re-built/replaced by a better facility.

Info kiosks strategically placed throughout the community to keep public apprised as to what's happening in Menlo Arts.

Need new theater. Would love children's arena/performance. Now we have to go to Mt. View/PA/Sunnyvale

Plant trees, not art. No more outdoor sculpture like the one on Willow.

Use little theatre that was near Menlo Library- use facilities Art & Entertainment with Palo Alto.

Not only is very little offered for kids but the schedule that is sent out is difficult to read.

It is regrettable Menlo Park has no cultural.

I enjoy the excellent programs at Fremont Parks

Miss Burgess Theater

courses for kids - art, acting, dance, gymnastics, sports, Most important to me.

COMMUNITY SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

*City of Menlo Park Arts Commission*

# Five Minute Arts Survey

*Take five minutes to support the arts!*

Your responses will help the Arts Commission understand what types of arts and cultural programs would be best for the community of Menlo Park. If you prefer, you can complete this survey online at [www.menlopark.org](http://www.menlopark.org). The deadline to return your survey is September 30, 2001.

1. How important is it to you to have more arts and cultural opportunities offered in Menlo Park?

- Extremely important     Very important     Important     Somewhat Important     Not Important



2. Which arts performances and exhibits would you like to attend in Menlo Park? (Check all that apply.)

- |   |   |  |                                       |
|---|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contemp. Art Exhibit   | <input type="checkbox"/> Broadway Musical     | <input type="checkbox"/> Popular Music     | <input type="checkbox"/> Ballet       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historical Art Exhibit | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Theater | <input type="checkbox"/> Jazz              | <input type="checkbox"/> Modern Dance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crafts Exhibit         | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Theatre    | <input type="checkbox"/> Rock              | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic Dance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Art Exhibit | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Theater   | <input type="checkbox"/> Country & Western | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Festival      | <input type="checkbox"/> Comedy               | <input type="checkbox"/> Opera             | _____                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Readings/Lectures      | <input type="checkbox"/> World Music          | <input type="checkbox"/> Classical Music   | _____                                 |

3. Assuming I wanted to attend, the **most** I would pay for a ticket to an arts performance/event in Menlo Park would be: (Check one.)

- Free                       \$20                       \$40                       \$75                       \$125  
 \$10                       \$30                       \$50                       \$100                       Other: \_\_\_\_\_



4. How often would you like to attend arts performances and events with your children, grandchildren or friends' children in Menlo Park? (Check one.)

- Very Often               Often                       Occasionally               Rarely                       Never



5. In which arts programs would you, or your children, like to participate in Menlo Park? (Check all that apply and write in any suggestions you have for specific types.)

For Children

- Art classes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Music lessons: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Acting classes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dance classes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Performance Opportunities: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Creative Writing: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

For Adults

- Art classes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Music lessons: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Acting classes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dance classes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Performance Opportunities: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Creative Writing: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Assuming I wanted to attend, the **most** I would pay for an arts class in Menlo Park would be: (Check one.)

- Free                       \$20                       \$40                       \$75                       \$125  
 \$10                       \$30                       \$50                       \$100                       Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*Continued other side....*

7. If you do **not** currently attend arts events or classes in Menlo Park, why not? (Check all that apply.)

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> What I want isn't offered                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know what's available                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Have little spare time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of what's offered is not satisfactory | <input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled at inconvenient days and/or times | <input type="checkbox"/> Not that interested    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                  |  |   |



8. How important is it to you to see more public art in Menlo Park? (Check one.)

- Extremely important    Very important    Important    Somewhat Important    Not Important



9. What types of cultural facilities does Menlo Park need? (Check all that apply.)

- |                                      |  |                                       |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art Gallery | <input type="checkbox"/> Dance Studio              | <input type="checkbox"/> Concert Hall |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Theater     | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Performance Space |                                       |



10. What types of City arts funding would you support? (Check all that apply.)

- |   |  |                                     |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tax private development ("percent for arts") | <input type="checkbox"/> Use general funds                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use portion of City development funds        | <input type="checkbox"/> Create tourist tax (on hotel/motel stays) | <input type="checkbox"/> None       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Voters approve a bond issue                  |  |                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                 |  |                                     |



11. What neighborhood do you live in? (Check one.)

- |                                      |  |   |   |                                       |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allied Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Downtown      | <input type="checkbox"/> Flood Triangle | <input type="checkbox"/> Oak Knoll      | <input type="checkbox"/> Vintage Oaks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> West Menlo  | <input type="checkbox"/> Stanford Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Linfield Oaks  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sharon Heights | <input type="checkbox"/> The Willows  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Belle Haven | <input type="checkbox"/> Felton Gables | <input type="checkbox"/> Lorelei Manor  | <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban Park  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____  |

12. What other comments or suggestions do you have about arts programs or facilities?

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**Optional** If you would like to be on the Arts Commission's mailing list, please give us your name and address. PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY!

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your assistance.*

Please return your survey form by September 30, 2001 by one of the following methods:

- Mail it back to the City (fold so that return address is showing and attach 34¢ stamp).
- Fax it to 650-324-1721 (please fax both sides).
- Drop it off at the Community Services Department, located at 701 Laurel Street.
- If you prefer, you can complete this survey on-line at [www.menlopark.org](http://www.menlopark.org).

**COMMUNITY SERVICES 2001 TELEPHONE SURVEY RESULTS**

*For questions pertaining to arts and culture.*

- 90% believe that the availability of arts and other cultural programs contributes a great deal or somewhat to the quality of a community.
  - 48% great deal
  - 42% somewhat
  
- Satisfaction with City’s specific performing arts and cultural programs:
  - 22% 5/6 (6 = very satisfied)
  - 44% 3/4
  - 11% 1/2
  - 23% don’t know/refused to answer
  
- Percentage of residents who strongly or somewhat favor the City spending money for:
 

Public art	74%
Live theater	83%
Musical concerts	86%
Art exhibits or shows	81%
Children’s art, music or other cultural classes	90%
Adults’ art, music or other cultural classes	86%

**Commentary:**

- People overwhelmingly believe arts are important to a community; they recognize its community value and role.
- They are moderately satisfied with existing City programs.
- They overwhelmingly favor spending City money on a broad variety of arts programs.
- This provides the City with a mandate to assume a greater role in providing arts and cultural programs, and is corroborated by both the market study and community arts survey done in the cultural needs assessment.

**PLANNING PARTICIPANTS**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Randy Adams	Executive Director	TheatreWorks
Chris Alonso	Executive Director	Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce
Robert Boesch	City Manager	City of Menlo Park
Mary Jo Borak	Council Member	Menlo Park City Council
Sue Borg	Resident	
Frank Briski	Resident	
Barbara Britschgi	Property Manager & Chair	Redwood City Art Center Redwood City Civic Cultural Commission
Curtis Brown, Jr.	Director	Menlo Park Community Services Department
Robert Browne	Commissioner	Menlo Park Arts Commission
Nancy A. Chillag	Chair	Menlo Park Arts Commission
Vera Clark	Director of Curriculum	Ravenswood City Elementary District
Paul J. Collacchi	Council Member	Menlo Park City Council
Peg Crookston	Resident	
Michael Gibson	Music Director	Menlo Park Community Chorus
Maria Gomes Andresen	Resident	
Nicholas P. Jellins	Mayor	Menlo Park City Council
Donalyn Julihn	Commissioner	Menlo Park Arts Commission
Leon Kaplan	Director	City of Palo Alto Arts & Culture Division
Elaine Knapp	Commissioner	Menlo Park Arts Commission
Marina La Palma	Commissioner	Menlo Park Arts Commission
Leonard Leving	Annual Art Show Coordinator	Menlo Art League
Wendy Lewis-Rakova	Director	Little House
Angela McConnell	Interim Executive Director	Community School of Music and Arts
Ellen Miner	Executive Director	Mountain View Center
Jo Mitchell	Director of Curriculum	Menlo Park City Elementary District
Cheryl Passanisi	Commissioner	Menlo Park Arts Commission
Robert Roessler	Business Manager	Menlo Park Community Services Department
Judy Sleeth	Executive Director	Art in Action Foundation
Mary Ann Somerville	Superintendent	Las Lomas Elementary District
Richard Spiersen	Arts Education Coordinator	San Mateo County Office of Education
Jennifer Stokley	Season Producer	Menlo Players Guild
Lois Wagner	Director	Stanford Lively Arts

**Advisory Committee**

Nancy A. Chillag	Chair	Menlo Park Arts Commission
Donalyn Julihn	Commissioner	Menlo Park Arts Commission
Curtis Brown, Jr.	Director	Menlo Park Community Services Department
Bob Roessler	Business Manager	Menlo Park Community Services Department