



# **BENNINGTON COUNTY CULTURAL PLAN**

**Public Feedback Meeting  
March 27, 2019**

## **JULIA DIXON**

Creative economy  
consultant, writer, and  
educator based in  
North Adams, Mass.

[julia@juliakimdixon.com](mailto:julia@juliakimdixon.com)





[Oldcastle Theatre]



# **CULTURAL PLANNING PROCESS**



# DESIGN THINKING

Human-centered design

# TIMELINE

1

PHASE 1: RESEARCH & REVIEW

2

PHASE 2: DATA COLLECTION

3

PHASE 3: INFORMATION SYNTHESIS

4

PHASE 4: DRAFTING & FEEDBACK

5

PHASE 5: REFINEMENT & PUBLICATION





**40**

Reports and plans

**55**

Direct interviews

**540**

Survey respondents

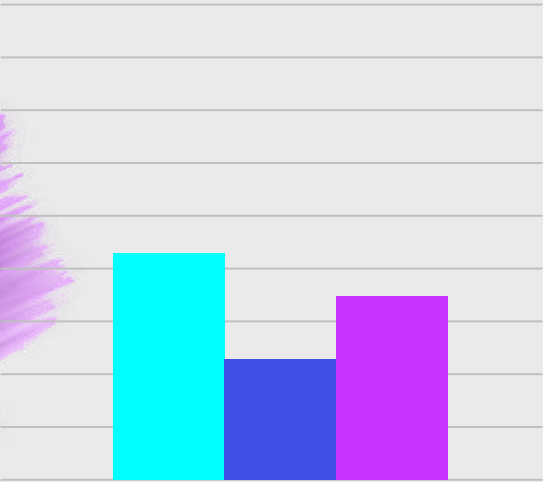


## DATA

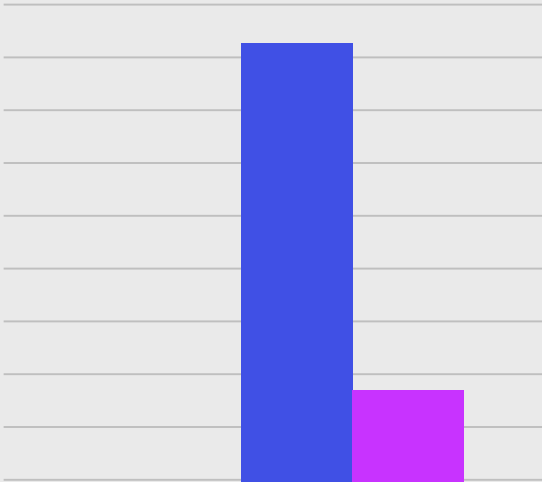
- **90%** had been to a cultural institution at least once
- **90%** believe that investment is important
- Top 3 barriers to participation are **time**, **cost**, and **awareness**
- One third want more **music** in Bennington County



### NORTHSHIRE



### SOUTHSHIRE



A legend box with a white border and a purple brushstroke background. It contains three entries: a cyan square followed by the text 'NORTH', a blue square followed by 'SOUTH', and a magenta square followed by 'BOTH'.

- NORTH
- SOUTH
- BOTH



# PLAN ELEMENTS

What's in a good plan  
(What's in this plan)



[Studio Hill Farm]



“

Arts destination

Creative economy

Rich culture...  
creative community

Municipal engagement

Youth participation

Accessibility

Northshire and  
Southshire

Access to information



**GOALS**

**CREATIVE  
VIBRANCY**

**SECTOR  
BUILDING**

**COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT**

**CRITICAL  
RELATIONSHIPS**



# STRATEGIES

1. Establish a toolkit for local **creative producers**
2. Establish a toolkit for local **creative consumers**
3. Create an internal **cultural advocacy** message
4. Create an external **cultural tourism** message
5. Develop **innovative art-making**, programming, and engagement activities
6. Create a mechanism for **shared leadership** within the arts and cultural sector





# TACTICS

1. Establish a toolkit for local **creative producers**

Network & connect creatives across media, industry, and geography

Expand existing financial and business training programs

Create a communication tool that provides artists and creative entrepreneurs with access to resource information



# TACTICS

2. Establish a toolkit for local **creative consumers**

Create a communication tool that provides residents with access to up-to-date information about cultural activities

Coordinate a curated indoor holiday market

Coordinate countywide open studios



## TACTICS

3. Create an internal **cultural advocacy** message

Develop call-to-action assets that can be easily/widely shared and used

Establish and organize a countywide creative advocacy day

Commission and/or participate in economic impact studies that quantify creative activity



# TACTICS

4. Create an external **cultural tourism** message

Strengthen relationships with local and regional tourism and hospitality businesses and organizations

Find opportunities to collaboratively promote cultural activities

Improve signage and wayfinding for arts and cultural assets

Develop a culture and heritage trail



## TACTICS

5. Develop **innovative art-making**, programming, and engagement activities

Encourage pop-up events and activities in underutilized spaces

Establish public art commissions or committees

Cultivate new residency opportunities in all industries and fields for local artists



## TACTICS

6. Create a mechanism for **shared leadership** within the arts and cultural sector

Extend the work of the steering committee to ensure plan outcomes and assist partners in facilitation

Convene working group(s) to better fund, schedule, and promote activities of Bennington County's cultural and historical institutions

Create and maintain an online asset map





**QUESTIONS?**



# DESIGN THINKING WORKSHOP



# **GROUND RULES**

**NOT REQUIRED**

**DON'T TAKE ANY OF THE  
MATERIALS HOME WITH YOU**

**ANONYMOUS**

**TIME IS IMPORTANT**

**ASK QUESTIONS**

**BE RESPECTFUL**



The image features a vibrant blue background with a textured, brushstroke-like appearance. The blue is composed of several overlapping horizontal strokes, creating a sense of movement and depth. The edges of the strokes are irregular and feathered, giving it a hand-painted feel. In the center of this blue area, the text "WHAT TACTICS ARE MISSING?" is written in a clean, white, sans-serif font. The text is arranged in two lines, with "WHAT TACTICS ARE" on the top line and "MISSING?" on the bottom line. The white text stands out sharply against the blue background. The entire composition is framed by a thin white border.

**WHAT TACTICS ARE  
MISSING?**

The background of the slide is a vibrant blue color, achieved through several thick, horizontal brushstrokes. The strokes have a textured, painterly quality with visible bristles and some white highlights, giving it a dynamic and creative feel. The strokes are layered, with some overlapping others, creating a sense of movement and energy. The overall effect is a bold and artistic backdrop for the text.

# **BRAINSTORM & BUNDLE**





**HOW MIGHT WE  
ACCOMPLISH THESE  
TACTICS?**



**THANK YOU!**