



Thousand Oaks

ARTS & CULTURE

Existing Conditions | January 2020



CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Arts and culture play many and varied roles in the development of a vibrant community for residents, workers, and visitors. This report presents a summary of the existing conditions of the arts and cultural life in Thousand Oaks and presents key opportunities for cultural development policies for the Thousand Oaks General Plan Update (GPU) Arts and Culture Element.

Incorporated in 1964, Thousand Oaks is in Ventura County, less than an hour from downtown Los Angeles, and surrounded by hundreds of square miles of open space. Its population is 130,196 and is projected to grow slowly through 2040.¹ Thousand Oaks is known for the arts primarily through the theaters of the City’s Civic Arts Plaza²’s Bank of America Performing Arts Center offering touring performances, special events, and a venue for use by arts organizations in the community. Due to its proximity to Los Angeles, Thousand Oaks attracts the creative class – independent artists and performers, musicians, designers, tech workers, and others.

The inclusion and creation of the GPU Arts and Culture Element directly supports many of the City Council 2019 Goals including the following:

- Goal F. Continue city's commitment to community and cultural programs and services (such as performing arts/theatres, libraries, TOTV, visual arts, youth and senior programs).
- Goal G. Participate in public-private and multi-jurisdictional opportunities to ensure residents have access to high levels of parks, recreation, education and leisure programs and services.
- Goal H. Maintain a strong local employment base geared toward retaining high quality businesses; sustain a healthy business community; and diversify the local economy, with a specific emphasis on small businesses and high technology/ biomedical jobs.³

Opportunities exist for the GPU to address overall cultural policy to influence and enrich the quality of life for residents, and to support economic development.

¹ Source: *Southern California Association of Governments* (July 2019)

² In this report, the term, *Civic Arts Plaza*, refers to the entire civic complex encompassing two theaters, City Hall, and associated municipal offices. The two

theaters – the Fred Kavli Theatre and the Janet and Ray Scherr Forum Theatre (which doubles as city council chambers) – are referred to as the Bank of America Performing Arts Center (BAPAC).

³ *City of Thousand Oaks Citywide Goals for FY 2017–2018 & FY 2018–2019*

CHAPTER TWO: CITY ARTS AND CULTURE

Thousand Oaks History

In the first decades surrounding the formation of the City of Thousand Oaks, arts and cultural leadership, programming and facilities were primarily found in the community. Private nonprofits such as the Thousand Oaks Art Association and the Arts Council of the Conejo Valley formed in the 1960s and served as focal points for arts visioning, planning and programming. Institutions including the Conejo Recreation and Park District, California Lutheran University (formerly California Lutheran College) and the Conejo Valley Unified School District were important partners, supporters, and locations for arts programming beginning in the 1960s and continuing to the present day.

Thousand Oaks civic leaders planned for a major cultural facility since the early days of the city. A group of community leaders came together and formed the Civic Arts Complex Study Committee. The efforts of the committee resulted in the 1969 General Plan recommendation for two auditoriums to house cultural events. The City's formal involvement in arts leadership began in 1973 when City Council formed an Ad Hoc Committee on Housing for the Arts to explore creating a cultural center for the

community. In 1980, the Ad Hoc Committee became the City's Cultural Development Commission, which developed a Cultural Master Plan calling for the creation of the Alliance for the Arts. The Alliance was formed in 1981 for the purpose of providing an endowment fund which would be used to defray operating expenses of a permanent cultural site and/or theatre in the Conejo Valley.

Facility plans coalesced into the Civic Arts Plaza concept and, after several years of public debate and planning, the project was approved by the voters in 1987, construction began in 1991, and the two Civic Arts Plaza theaters opened in 1994. The Alliance for the Arts fundraising continued during this period and after the opening to successfully build the endowment fund.⁴ The theaters have remained the primary focus of City arts and cultural leadership and policy until recently.



Civic Arts Plaza. Photo: Civic Arts Plaza.

⁴ Key historical facts and dates are taken from *Arts in the Conejo 1926-1989: A Personal Reflection*, Richard G. Adams, 2000

In 2010, City Council reorganized its arts and cultural functions into a Cultural Affairs Department and Cultural Affairs Commission, whose focus includes the theaters plus a broader, communitywide mission. In 2017 the Alliance for the Arts merged with the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza Foundation to become the Thousand Oaks Alliance for the Arts (TOARTS).⁵ Also, in 2019, City Council disbanded the Cultural Affairs Commission and authorized formation of the Arts & Culture Roundtable, an advisory body for arts and cultural issues throughout the community.

Arts Timeline

- 1961 Thousand Oaks Art Alliance formed
- 1967 Arts Council of the Conejo Valley formed
- 1972 Conejo Futures Foundation formed
- 1973 City's Ad Hoc Committee on Housing for the Arts formed
- 1980 City's Cultural Development Commission established
- 1981 Alliance for the Arts formed
- 1987 Voters approve Civic Arts Plaza
- 1994 Civic Arts Plaza grand opening
- 2010 City's Cultural Affairs Commission formed
- 2017 Thousand Oaks Alliance for the Arts formed
- 2019 Arts & Culture Roundtable authorized



Conejo Valley Days Parade 1962, image courtesy of Conejo Through the Lens, Thousand Oaks Library.

⁵ Key facts and dates are taken from interviews with City staff and from consultants' report, *Cultural Arts Review*, The Cultural Planning Group, 2008.



Teatime, image courtesy of Conejo Through the Lens, Thousand Oaks Library.

Cultural Affairs Department

The primary function of the Cultural Affairs Department is to manage the operation of the Civic Arts Plaza’s Bank of America Performing Arts Center (BAPAC), one of the largest performing arts centers between Los Angeles and San Francisco. The 2020 Cultural Affairs Department budget is \$5.2 million for personnel, programs, maintenance, and operations costs.

As part of these management responsibilities, the department acts as liaison for the resident companies and other stakeholder groups. It sponsors art exhibits at the Fred Kavli Theatre Gallery (Library Services manages the City’s other gallery, the Community Art Gallery at the Newbury Park (Borchard) Library branch) and manages the Excellence in Arts Awards program. The department has recently initiated select community-facing events such as the Pop-Up Arts Festival, although does not yet fully serve a broader function as a local arts agency for the community.

Thousand Oaks Alliance for the Arts

The Thousand Oaks Alliance for the Arts (TOARTS), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, funds a portion of BAPAC theater operations through a partnership with the City of Thousand Oaks. Annually, TOARTS presents more than 60 performances at the BAPAC, provides arts education programming, and makes grants to community organizations utilizing the BAPAC venue.

TOARTS has an endowment of approximately \$14 million and conducts ongoing fundraising to support its activities. TOARTS has one employee, its development director, and the Cultural Affairs Department provides all other administrative staff for

TOARTS programs and operations on a pro bono basis. In a dual role, The Cultural Affairs Director serves as the Executive Director of TOARTS. The annual operating budget for TOARTS is currently \$3.7 million.

As noted above, TOARTS was created in 2017 through a merger of the former Alliance for the Arts and the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza Foundation. The Alliance had been responsible for raising private funds to support BAPAC and the Foundation was the nonprofit presenting arm of the theaters. The purpose of this merger was to consolidate functions and to secure the ongoing capability of the organization to fulfill its funding purpose. Key changes were a City contribution of \$4 million to boost the endowment fund, professional management through the Cultural Affairs Department staffing, and improved fundraising by qualified development staff.

Civic Arts Plaza

Designed by nationally renowned architect Antoine Predock, and opened in 1994 at cost of \$63.8 million, the Civic Arts Plaza is the crown jewel of Thousand Oaks. The building combines Postmodern and Modern architecture styles. The plaza is home to City Hall, City municipal departments, and The Bank of America Performing Arts Center (BAPAC) theaters.

The City is currently developing a Campus Master Plan, which will transform the current building and space of the plaza.

Bank of America Performing Arts Center (BAPAC)

BAPAC has two theaters—the 1,800-seat Fred Kavli Theatre and the 394-seat Janet and Ray Scherr Forum Theatre. The Scherr Forum doubles as a performance venue and City Council chambers. The box office processes more than 170,000 tickets and averages \$8.5 million in ticket sales each year, and more than 200,000 patrons and 15,000 school children attend 300 performances and events annually.⁶ BAPAC is home to three resident companies: Pacific Festival Ballet, New West Symphony, and 5-Star Theatricals. The performing arts center operates as a rental venue, with approximately 70% of the current theatre activity coming from local renters. The 2017 Thousand Oaks Community Survey reports 48% of residents purchased a ticket or attended an event at the BAPAC in the previous year.

While the BAPAC is considered a significant cultural asset for the community, many residents are not aware of the events and performances at the venue. There is a timely opportunity with the Campus Master Plan for a purpose-built community space, inclusive of outdoor music venues, a small amphitheater, and arts and cultural programming.

Table 2.1 Community Rating for BAPAC Performances

RATING	EXCELLENT / GOOD	FAIR	POOR/ VERY POOR	NOT SURE	PNTA*
Quality of Events	58%	14%	4%	18%	6%
Variety of Events	53%	18%	7%	16%	6%
Overall Entertainment Value	48%	18%	8%	20%	6%

*Prefer not to answer

Source: 2017 Community Attitude Survey



REO Speedwagon performs at BAPAC/Civic Arts Plaza. Photo: Civic Arts Plaza.

⁶ Toarts.org

Resident Companies

BAPAC houses three resident companies.

Pacific Festival Ballet (PFB)

Pacific Festival Ballet (PFB), founded in 1992 by Joyce Hurley, Kim Maselli and Lori Sorensen, is the regional ballet company of the Conejo Valley. They received their appointment as resident company in 2001. PFB performs classic ballets as well as original, full length ballets for audiences. Their performances include guest performers from New York City Ballet, Joffrey Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, San Francisco Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and the Kalinin Russian Dance Troupe. The ballet collaborates with other like-minded organizations to introduce ballet to the community. PFB's partnerships with the Thousand Oaks Alliance for the Arts, Support the Kids Program, and Project Plié enable the arts to reach thousands of underserved children in the Thousand Oaks area.⁷



Pacific Festival Ballet, Nutcracker performance at BAPAC/Civic Arts Plaza. Photo: Pacific Festival Ballet

⁷ <http://www.pacfestballet.org/history>

New West Symphony

Founded in 1995, the New West Symphony is a professional orchestra that draws its players from the talent pool of professional Los Angeles-area musicians. With artistic direction led by GRAMMY® winner Maestro Michael Christie, appointed as music director in December 2018, the Symphony is a resident company of BAPAC and also performs at the Rancho Campana Performing Arts Center in Camarillo. It presents six Masterpiece Series concerts annually, performing major works from the symphonic repertoire with internationally acclaimed artists as guest soloists. The Symphony provides outreach and educational opportunities for the communities it serves through its annual Symphonic Adventures concert programs for youth, its traveling Music Van, and the Laby Harmony Project, a year-round music and leadership program for underserved students.⁸



New West Symphony Music Director Michael Christie. Photo: New West Symphony

⁸ <https://newwestsymphony.org/about/>

5-Star Theatricals

5-Star Theatricals (formerly Cabrillo Music Theatre) is the resident musical theatre production company of BAPAC, and a nonprofit theatre organization. Its mission is to provide high quality theatre experiences, to foster educational opportunities, and to promote cultural and artistic enrichment to enhance the quality of life in Southern California. 5-Star has helped launch the professional careers of many performers and provides free outreach programs for more than 45,000 underserved children, in-need seniors and active military.⁹



5-Star Theatricals, *Matilda*, performed at BAPAC/Civic Arts Plaza. Photo: Ed Krieger

⁹ <http://5startheatricals.com/history/>

Arts & Culture Roundtable

The City is in the process of forming a new body to advise City Council on artistic and cultural activity within the community and present an annual report to Council. The Arts & Culture Roundtable will be composed of up to 15 members, including representatives of local arts organizations, local working artists, and arts educators, who will discuss issues, challenges, and collaborative opportunities in the community. The Roundtable replaces the former Cultural Affairs Commission, which was disbanded in 2019. This change reflects a desire to focus the body more broadly on community arts issues and not just on the theaters.

City Arts Funding

There is a long-standing City arts funding policy that provides context for this report. The Civic Arts Plaza was originally authorized by the voters in 1987 along with a 1984 advisory initiative (Measure B) stating that City subsidy cannot be used for theater operations. The theaters – now referred to as BAPAC – operate as an enterprise fund which is to be self-supporting on revenues and private contributions, without reliance on City general funds for operations. In actuality, the City has over the years made special allocations of general funds for specific needs at BAPAC (e.g., increasing endowment funds, making up annual shortfalls, and addressing capital needs) amounting to millions of dollars.

At the present time, BAPAC has succeeded in achieving the funding policy objective. Through an agreement with the City,

TOARTS provides \$500,000 to the theaters' enterprise fund, derived primarily from interest on its endowment fund. The theaters generate the balance of needed operating revenues from ticket sales, user fees, related theater revenues, and fundraising. There is a shared sense of satisfaction that theater leadership has been able to arrive at a successful funding formula that eliminates the need for a general fund operating subsidy, and that the TOARTS endowment is now sufficient to secure its annual operating commitment to the theaters.

The great majority of City “arts dollars” are funds that pass through the BAPAC enterprise fund. There are additional, more modest expenditures for other functions of the Cultural Affairs Department, such as the Pop-Up Arts and Excellence in Arts Awards. There is no prohibition on using general funds for the arts, outside of BAPAC, but in practice allocations of departmental staff time and program funds for non-theater activities have been very limited because the priority is meeting the management and operating needs of the theaters.

The City is in the process of considering new arts functions outside of BAPAC. The Campus Master Plan contemplates a new outdoor performance venue and programming to activate the public spaces, which would include the arts. To take on additional arts functions, such as these, the City will need to consider sources of funding, apart from the policy related to BAPAC and the self-sufficiency of its enterprise fund.



Bank of America Performing Arts Center, Fred Kavli Theatre. Photo: Civic Arts Plaza.

CHAPTER THREE: THOUSAND OAKS COMMUNITY

Thousand Oaks Cultural Assets

Thousand Oaks is home to an abundant and diverse collection of cultural assets including organizations, venues, people, and cultural heritage places. Cultural asset identification plays a vital role in elevating arts, culture, and the heritage of a place. It is a crucial step in integrating culture within City decision-making and strengthening the cultural sector.

Cultural assets in Thousand Oaks are illustrated in Figures 3.1-3.3 and listed in Tables 3.1-3.3. These assets were identified by stakeholders, City staff, the IRS, and other sources and are summarized below.

Nonprofit Arts and Cultural Organizations

There are 37 tax exempt arts and cultural groups recognized by the IRS in Thousand Oaks (see Figure 3.1). They encompass a broad range of disciplines – music, museums, theater/musical theater, visual arts, dance, cultural heritage and botanical gardens. The oldest organization was founded in 1955 and there is an even “age spread” indicating a continuous development of new arts and cultural nonprofits in the community in each decade (see Table 3.1).

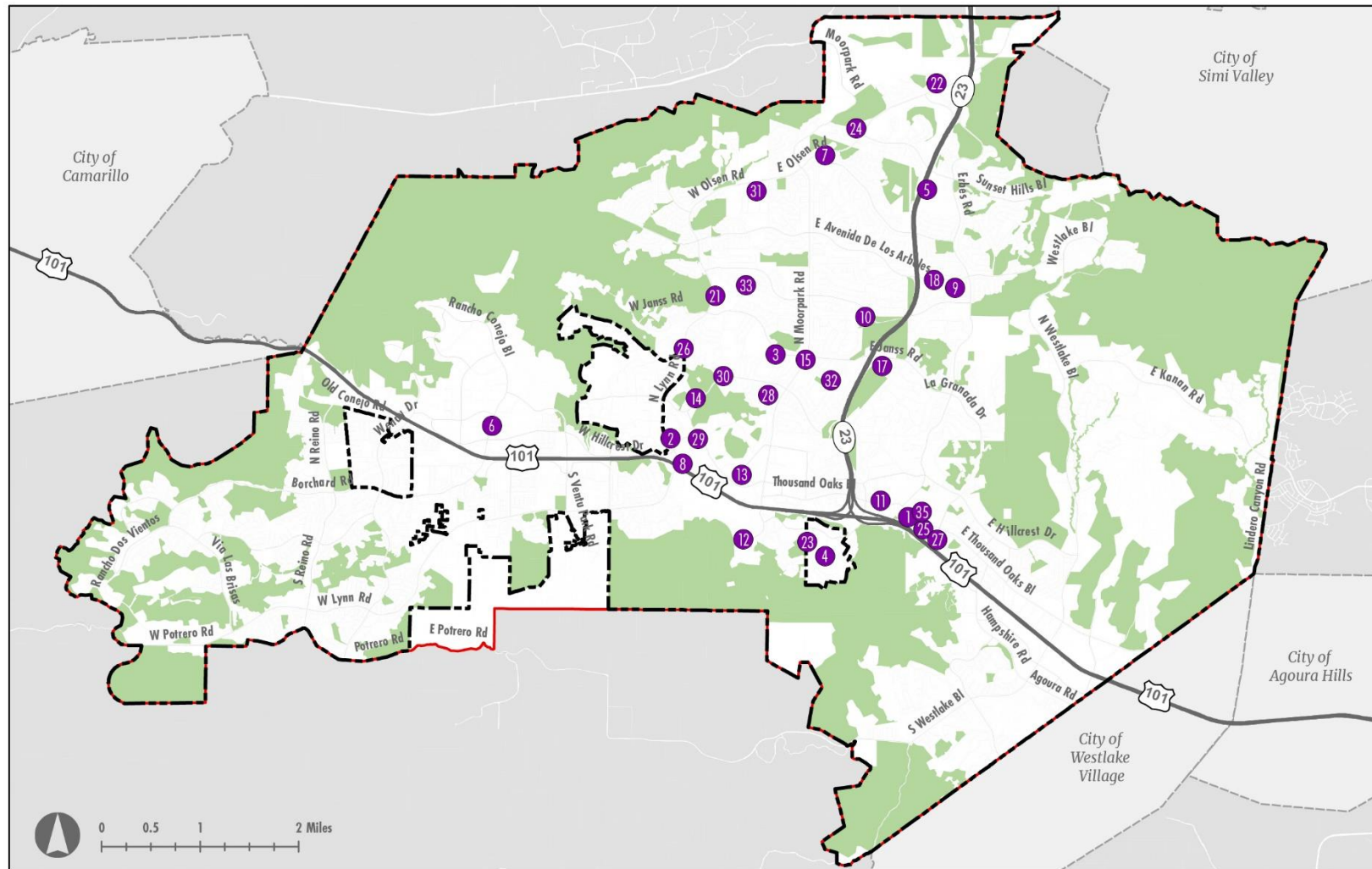
Performing Arts Venues

There are ten theaters in Thousand Oaks, ranging from BAPAC’s Fred Kavli Theater, with 1,800 seats, to the Hillcrest Arts Center’s Theater on the Hill, a black box venue with 112 seats (see Figure 3.2). Two are large venues, with 1,000 seats or more, and the other eight are small- and mid-sized. There is a total of nearly 5,000 theater seats in the city. These venues are owned by the City, California Lutheran University, Parks District, Conejo Valley Unified School District, and a private nonprofit. This list of purpose-built performing arts venues is supplemented by additional places used occasionally for performances, such as the libraries, parks, churches, and community rooms. There is a range of outdoor public festivals and celebrations produced each year in Thousand Oaks and there is a demonstrated need for and interest in developing a large-scale amphitheater and festival site in or near the city. A list of theaters is found in Table 3.2.

Public Artworks

While the City does not currently have a public art program, it formerly had a City Council policy based on the city’s capital improvement projects. There is a small collection of outdoor sculptures located at the City Hall complex and at the Grant Brimhall Library. In recent years, there has also been a project of public art sculptures, *Conejo Cottontails*, which are standardized but individually artist-decorated rabbit figures, sponsored jointly by two local nonprofits, Art Trek and the Arts Council of the Conejo Valley.

Figure 3.1 Nonprofit Arts and Cultural Organizations in Thousand Oaks



Raimi + Associates 2019 | Data Source: City of Thousand Oaks, County of Ventura, County of Los Angeles



- Nonprofit Arts and Culture Organizations
- Unincorporated Counties Land
- Major Roads
- Freeways
- Adjacent Cities
- City Limits
- City Sphere

Table 3.1 Nonprofit Arts and Cultural Organizations

Name	Discipline	Map #*
Agoura Hills Harmony Chorus (Sweet Adelines International)	Music	1
Alleluia Dance Theater - Alleluia Dancers	Dance	2
Allwayz On Stage	Theater	3
American Harp Society	Music	4
Arts Council of the Conejo Valley	Visual Arts	5
Art Trek	Multidisciplinary	6
Cabrillo Music Theatre (5 Star Theatricals)	Musical Theater	7
California Museum of Art Thousand Oaks	Visual Arts	8
Carolwood Foundation	Historic preservation	9
Community Gardens of the Avenue of the Flowers	Botanical Garden	10
Conejo Chinese Cultural Association	Cultural Heritage	11
Conejo Valley Botanic Garden	Botanical Garden	12
Conejo Valley Quilters	Craft, Textile Arts	13
Conejo Valley Youth Orchestra (Conejo Oaks Symphony)	Music	14
Conejo Players	Theater	15
Conejo Valley Art Museum	Visual Arts	16
Educational Television for the Conejo	Media	17
Gold Coast Performing Arts Association	Theater	18
Guitar Center Music Foundation	Music	19
Heritage Music Foundation	Music	20
Institute for Music and Brain Science	Music	21
Kingsmen Shakespeare Company	Theater	22
Musicians on a Mission California	Music	23
National Society Colonial Dames XVII Century	Cultural Heritage	24
New West Symphony Association	Music	25
Of Note Productions	Musical Theater	26
Pacific Festival Ballet	Dance	27
Panic Productions	Theater, Musical Theatre	28

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Play Conejo	Parks & Recreation, Arts Education	29
Redwood Viking Band	Music	30
Scandinavian American Cultural & Historical Foundation	Cultural Heritage	31
School of Music Ministries International	Music	32
Society of Singers	Music	33
Sons of Norway	Cultural Heritage	34
Thousand Oaks Alliance for the Arts (TOARTS)	Presenting, Arts Education	35
Thousand Oaks Art Association	Visual Arts	36
Westlake Village Art Guild	Visual Arts	37

*Figure 1 omits several nonprofits whose address is a post box.

Table 3.2 Theaters

Venue	Seats	Map #
BAPAC / Fred Kavli Theatre	1,800	1
BAPAC / Janet and Ray Scherr Forum	394	2
California Lutheran University / The Kingsmen Stage/Park	1,000	3
California Lutheran University / Preus-Brandt Forum Theatre	200	4
California Lutheran University / Blackbox Theatre	100	5
Thousand Oaks High School Performing Arts Center	450	6
Newbury Park High School Performing Arts Center	374	7
Westlake High School Carpenter Family Theatre	371	8
Conejo Players Theatre	185	9
Hillcrest Center for the Arts / Theatre on the Hill	112	10
Total Seats	4,986	

Art Galleries

There are relatively few galleries and visual arts venues in Thousand Oaks and the lack of exhibition spaces was a theme of stakeholder comments. There are two galleries operated by the City, the Thousand Oaks Community Art Gallery at the Newbury Park (Borchard) Library and the Fred Kavli Theatre Gallery. A third is located at the Hillcrest Center for the Arts, operated by the Conejo Recreation and Parks District and the Arts Council of the Conejo Valley. These spaces often exhibit and serve area artists. They are complemented by the William Roland Gallery of Fine Art at California Lutheran University and The California Museum of Art Thousand Oaks (CMATO), and the Conejo Valley Museum at Janss Marketplace, which have a broader curatorial focus.

Cultural Heritage Sites

Thousand Oaks has a diverse collection of 15 historic and cultural sites, ranging from museums and historic homes to heritage trees (see Figure 3.3). They span historical periods from Native American to recent 20th Century landmarks. All are available to the public (with various restrictions) and many are listed on national and/or county registries of historic places. Several have museums and interpretive programs. A list of cultural heritage sites is found in Table 3.3.

Artists and Creatives

As noted in the Creative Economy section, below, Thousand Oaks has a high proportion of artists and other creative professionals. The nearly 9,000 creative jobs in the city reflects a population of photographers, musicians, writers, designers, and others who

live and/or work in Thousand Oaks. A few are celebrities (working and retired), while many others are successful working artists/creatives in their fields. There are additional people, not included in the count of 9,000, who consider themselves “passionate amateurs.” Collectively they represent an under-utilized cultural asset of creative talent and potential civic engagement. There are indications of this potential in the recent volunteer appearances of celebrity musicians from Thousand Oaks at memorial fundraising events held at BAPAC in response to the Borderline shooting tragedy and the Hill and Woolsey Fires.



Hillcrest Center for the Arts art gallery. Photo: Hillcrest Center for the Arts.

Table 3.3 Cultural Heritage Sites

Site	Website	Map #
Banning Dam	https://www.conejovalleyguide.com/welcome/banning-dam-lake-eleanor-dam-in-thousand-oaks-is-a-ventura-county-historical-landmark	1
Case Study House #28	https://www.laconservancy.org/locations/case-study-house-28	2
Chumash Indian Museum	https://www.chumashmuseum.org	3
Crowley House	https://www.toaks.org/departments/city-manager-s-office/public-information-office/history	4
Former Timber School House and Timber School Auditorium	https://www.toaks.org/departments/city-manager-s-office/public-information-office/history	5
Gardens of the World	http://www.gardensoftheworld.info	6
Goebel's Lion Farm Site (aka Jungleland)	https://www.toaks.org/departments/city-manager-s-office/public-information-office/history	7
Hillcrest Center	https://www.hillcrestarts.com	8
Hunt Olive Tree	https://www.conejovalleyguide.com/dosomethingblog/hunt-olive-tree-historical-landmark-in-thousand-oaks.html	9
Janss House	https://www.toaks.org/departments/city-manager-s-office/public-information-office/history	10
Joel McCrea Ranch	https://www.mccrearanchfoundation.org/visiting-the-ranch.html	11
Oakbrook Regional Park Archaeological Area	https://www.conejovalleyguide.com/welcome/oakbrook-regional-park-archaeological-area-in-thousand-oaks-is-city-historical-landmark-5	12
Pederson House and Water Tower	https://www.toaks.org/departments/city-manager-s-office/public-information-office/history	13
Stagecoach Inn Museum	https://stagecoachinnmuseum.com	14
Sycamore Tree	https://www.conejovalleyguide.com/dosomethingblog/california-sycamore-tree-historic-landmark-in-newbury-park.html	15

Cultural Participation

Cultural participation is an overarching term denoting activity of individuals and groups in the making and enjoyment of cultural services and products. It is a gauge of how active people are in arts and culture, and the nature of their engagement. The term is intentionally inclusive and has widened its definition of activities as a result of social and cultural change.

Designing cultural policies to promote cultural participation and enhancing it in alignment with the desires of the community, is a goal of the GPU Arts and Culture Element.

The cultural participation of a community is better understood when quantified through surveys or a market demand study. The data currently available for Thousand Oaks is a mix of quantitative and qualitative data, gathered primarily through



Jackie Evancho performs at BAPAC/Civic Arts Plaza. Photo: Civic Arts Plaza.

discussions and interviews with residents and stakeholders, and extracted from the 2017 Community Survey.

The demographics of Thousand Oaks residents and strong presence of creative workers are strongly correlated with high levels of cultural participation. Key identifiers are higher levels of education, income, and past exposure to the arts.

The primary message received about cultural participation in Thousand Oaks is that residents, artists, and workers want more, and more varied, opportunities in the city. Many attend and/or participate in cultural activities elsewhere for this reason.

Additional observations include:

- Many residents attend BAPAC, while other residents are aware of BAPAC but don't necessarily attend performances either due to affordability or relevancy.
- There is a long history of public festivals in Thousand Oaks. Residents attend events in large numbers, including the OakHeart Country Music Festival, the Scandinavian Festival, Conejo Valley Days, and the Fine Arts Spring Fest.
- Thousand Oaks youth want opportunities to participate in cultural activities in the city. Currently, events are geared toward older residents (over 40) or the very young (under 10). Teenagers and young adults are seeking activities such as speaker series, creative spaces to collaborate on projects, places to gather with other like-minded youth, music festivals, and more accessibility to arts activities.
- The library is one of the central points for cultural participation in the community and has significant arts and cultural offerings.

- According to the 2017 Community Survey, 51% of residents feel that providing cultural and performing arts is an *extremely important* or *very important* role of the city, and 80% of those residents are satisfied with the city’s service in this area. Although, it should be noted, this is specific to the services provided by the Cultural Affairs Department, not a measurement of the overall importance of arts and culture to residents. It is also not gauging total cultural participation of the community.
- California Lutheran University is a cultural partner for the city. They offer a depth of depth of arts and cultural resources for the community including the very popular Kingsmen Shakespeare Festival. Many of the events offered by CLU are accessible and affordable. CLU is seeking more opportunities to be a partner with the City, especially with the upcoming transformation of the Civic Arts Plaza through the Campus Master Plan.
- Many residents go outside of Thousand Oaks for their cultural participation since, currently, there are limited opportunities in the city. In part, this is due to the city’s location within the Los Angeles region, which is one of the nation’s great cultural centers, and it is understandable that residents pursue their interests in multiple places. From a policy perspective, retaining cultural participation in a community is desirable because it contributes to economic benefits and builds cultural capital. Thousand Oaks has the opportunity to be a cultural destination for both its residents and regional visitors.

Arts Sector

A robust arts community, and significant talent and resources, are present in the Thousand Oaks community. Performing arts are abundant and considered a pillar of the city’s arts identity. Local arts organizations are excited the City is investing in an arts and culture element for the general plan and appreciate the value BAPAC brings to the community. Through interviews and discussion groups, the following were identified as main issues for the arts sector:

- A need for enhanced communication between the arts sector and City leadership
- More equitable access to arts education in schools and youth arts programming
- Additional affordable spaces for artists to work and exhibit
- A review of diversity in arts leadership
- Consideration of dedicated public revenue source for the arts
- Assistance for arts organizations to address the new costs and requirements of new state employment laws affecting the use of independent contractors

Challenges also exist with audience development as Thousand Oaks’ population ages and lacks the amenities and vitality to retain and attract a younger population of arts patrons.



Hillcrest Center for the Arts. Photo: Hillcrest Center for the Arts.

CHAPTER FOUR: CREATIVE ECONOMY

Overview

The term creative economy is used to describe creativity throughout a whole economy.¹⁰ It is comprised of economic systems where value is based on imaginative qualities rather than the traditional resources of land, labor and capital. The foundation for a vibrant creative economy is the creative sector of industries and occupations. Creative industries include arts, culinary, craft, agriculture, advertising, design, entertainment, architecture, books, media, software, and more. Creative workers (creatives) are individuals with advanced training and experience in the design and production of a broad range of cultural products and services, including individual artists of all disciplines.

The creative industries and occupations are a vital force in individual and community development. They empower people to take ownership of their own development and stimulate the innovation that drives inclusive sustainable growth. When well-supported, the creative economy is a source of structural economic transformation, socio-economic progress, and job creation and innovation.¹¹

¹⁰ John Howkins. *The Creative Economy*, www.creativeeconomy.com

¹¹ United Nations Development Program, <http://www.hdr.undp.org/en/content/how-cultural-and-creative-industries-can-power-human-development-21st-century>

Thousand Oaks Profile

The Creative Vitality™ Index (CVI), a data source provided by WESTAF, ¹²provides a portrait of Thousand Oaks creative economy. In 2018, CVI reported a high total of 8,930 creative jobs in the city, which represents 14% of all employment in the city. The top five creative sector occupations are: 1) Photographers, 2) Writers and authors, 3) Musicians and singers, 4) Interpreters and translators, and 5) Graphic designers. These occupations represent approximately 42% of the total creative sector jobs in Thousand Oaks. Overall, Thousand Oaks' creative sector jobs have increased 3% from 2017 to 2018.



Total earnings for Thousand Oaks creative industries were \$340 million in 2018, with industry sales at approximately \$840 million. The top five creative industries reported are: 1) Independent artists, writers, and performers,

2) Motion picture and video production, 3) Advertising agencies, 4) Software publishers and 5) Industrial design services. These

¹² Creative Vitality™ Suite is an industry standard data solution for measuring the for-profit and nonprofit arts, culture, and creative sectors provided by Western States Arts Federation.

GAIN

▲ **4%**
since 2017

2018 Creative Industries



\$340.5M

Total Industry Earnings

There is a gain of \$13.0 million in creative industry earnings in the region since 2017

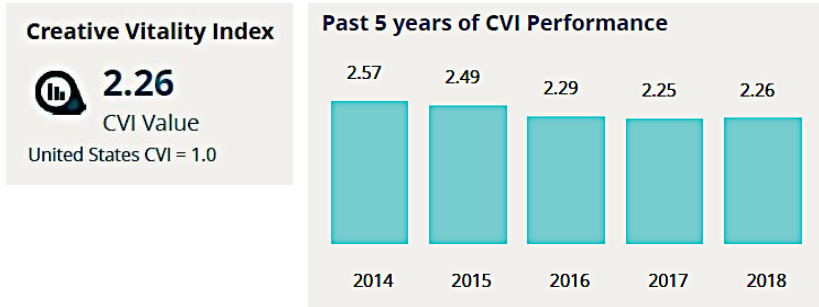
five industries represent approximately 44% of the total creative industries in Thousand Oaks.

The fact that “independent artists, writer and performers”

is the largest creative industry, coupled with the number of creative jobs in the city and strong earnings, suggests that there is a greater presence of creatives in the city than is generally known and are a “hidden” resource.

Thousand Oaks Creative Vitality Index

CVI also provides a national benchmark of the creative economy. Thousand Oaks demonstrates a strong CVI score of 2.26, which is more than twice the national average. The CVI for Ventura County is 1.01 and for Los Angeles County is 2.38. Thousand Oaks’ index has remained steady the last year with a 2017 index of 2.25, although is slightly lower than the 2014 index of 2.57.



CHAPTER FIVE: KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Overview

This Chapter introduces the issues and opportunities for arts and culture within the City of Thousand Oaks.

Economic Development

The 2017 Thousand Oaks Economic Development Strategic Plan includes a goal of attracting young technology workers to the community. The GPU Arts and Culture Element should support the City's economic development goals including creating a more culturally vibrant place for workers and businesses.

The Campus Master Plan

The upcoming Campus Master Plan is a priority for City leadership. It presents the opportunity to transform the relationship between BAPAC, City Hall and the community through the development of spaces for community, visual arts, performances, and events; and to include arts and cultural programming to activate the campus through community stakeholder partnerships.

Citywide Cultural Development

The General Plan Update Arts and Culture Element has the opportunity to focus on citywide cultural development, creating pockets of cultural vitality throughout Thousand Oaks, and developing partnerships with the community to deliver programming, arts education, etc. Additionally, the GPU Arts and Culture Element can help the city define the next generation of its cultural identity and city brand. It can also link ecotourism to Thousand Oaks' arts and culture.

Public Art

Public art is an opportunity to suffuse art in daily life and throughout the community. It can increase cultural vitality/activity for the new downtown, in parks and trails, and in other gathering places. It can be broadly defined to extend beyond outdoor sculpture to encompass a range of permanent and temporary cultural experiences.

Arts Education and Youth Arts

Thousand Oaks is known for being family friendly and for its exemplary education system. The GPU can consider cultural policies that advance arts education in schools and in the community, which can serve many purposes: career pathways, youth safety, mental health, crisis and trauma management, academic achievement, tolerance, and many others. It can also cultivate the next generation of arts patrons and retain youth to work and live in Thousand Oaks.

Artists in City Government

Thousand Oaks has a high concentration of artists and creatives who live and work in the city, offering opportunities to engage artists in municipal government and civic issues. There is a wide field of possibility, everything from artists enhancing community engagement and communications, to artists on design teams for mobility projects, to artists and creatives on civic boards and commissions.

Community Cultural Collaborations

Thousand Oaks has a well-established practice of City collaborations with the Library, Conejo Recreation and Park District, California Lutheran University, and others. There are opportunities to expand and leverage these relationships for cultural programming, information sharing, and facilities.

Arts Funding

The City is at a juncture where it is considering new arts functions outside of BAPAC. To take on additional arts functions, the City will need to consider sources of funding, apart from the policy related to BAPAC and the self-sufficiency of its enterprise fund.



Civic Arts Plaza from Gardens of the World. Photo: City of Thousand Oaks.

APPENDICES

Terms and Definitions

The various terms used in this report are inclusive of *artists*, the *arts*, and the *culture* within Thousand Oaks. The definitions draw an indistinct circle around the central domain of the arts sector and expands to encompass the unique culture of the City, its residents, and its *creative economy*.

Artist¹³

The title of “Artist” is traditionally applied to a person who engages in an activity deemed to be an art – creating, practicing, and/or demonstrating an artistic practice, typically within a discipline such as visual, performing, or literary arts, music, or dance. Today, the definition of an artist is broader, running the gamut from an individual, traditional artist to the commercially oriented creative worker. Artists are moving across business, industrial, and creative sectors working in collaboration with the commercial world and are significant drivers of economic growth and innovation. In *Living with Art*, Mark Getlein proposes five activities, services or functions of today’s artists: They create places for human purpose; they create extraordinary versions of ordinary objects; they record and commemorate; they give

tangible form to the unknown and to emotion; and they refresh our vision and help us to see the world in new ways.¹⁴

With the vast changes in the technology sector, the artist is working in a more collective, team-based model, especially in design fields. Although some studio and performing artists still work more traditionally, digital artists do not. Digital artists are part of the fastest growing working groups in the world and are in the forefront of creative industries.

Creative Worker¹⁵

Creative workers, like artists, are very diverse. They are responsible for creative output in the areas of design, media and the arts whereby the production process is reliant on creativity both as an individual skill and as an organizational source of competitive advantage. The occupation categories typically include writing, design, theater, television, radio, motion pictures, related crafts, advertising, marketing, scientific research and development, product development, digital media, software development, engineering, and more. Individual communities may define creative workers either more broadly or narrowly depending on their specific creative sectors.

Arts¹⁶

The term *arts* traditionally meant the fine arts: visual arts, music, theater, dance and literature. The recent shift in the definition of artist affects the current definition of the arts. Choreographer Liz

¹³ *What Do We Mean by Art, Artists, Culture, and Industry? The evolution of meaning in relation to changing patterns of work*, Ann M. Galligan, 2007.

¹⁴ *Living with Art*, Mark Getlein, 10th edition, 2012.

¹⁵ WESTAF <https://cvsuite.org/learn-2/creative-industries/#workers>

¹⁶ *What Do We Mean by Art, Artists, Culture, and Industry? The evolution of meaning in relation to changing patterns of work*, Ann M. Galligan, 2007.

Lerman, a MacArthur Genius Award recipient, describes the shift to a modern definition as a vertical hierarchy becoming a level playing field, with all art forms holding parallel value with a different focus, from the mural artist doing community-engaged work to the classically trained musician on stage.

Culture

Historically, the term culture described tending to the earth and fostering growth, or cultivation and nurture, and then evolved to culture as a thing in and of itself. It is most often defined in anthropological terms: *“An integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior. The outlook, attitudes, values, morals, goals, and customs shared by a society or group...”* (Cultural Anthropology, McGraw Hill, 1990). It includes the characteristics and knowledge of a community, encompassing language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts.

Culture is understood to be broad and inclusive, although for a specific community, the definition is idiomatic and is defined by the place and the people who live there.

“Culture encompasses religion, food, what we wear, how we wear it, our language, marriage, music, what we believe is right or wrong, how we sit at the table, how we greet visitors, how we behave with loved ones, and a million other things,” (Cristina De Rossi, Anthropologist, London, 2017).

Creative Economy¹⁷

Economic systems where value is based on imaginative qualities rather than the traditional resources of land, labor and capital. Compared to creative industries, which are limited to specific sectors, the term is used to describe creativity throughout a whole economy.

Creative Industries¹⁸

Creative industries are the types of business enterprises – for profit, nonprofit and sole proprietor – comprising the creative economy. Individual urban areas may define their creative sectors to include a different set of industries, although business types commonly included are:

- Fine Arts – Venues for the Arts, Museums, Performing Arts, Music, Visual Arts, Arts Organizations
- Design – Engineering, Architecture, Manufacturing Technology, Fashion
- Support Services for Creative Industries – R&D Services, Consulting, Post-Secondary Education
- Media/Communications – Advertising, Graphic Design, Marketing, Public Relations, Publishing, Broadcasting
- Entertainment – Media, Educational and Training Film Development, Post-Production, Recreation, Video Gaming Development
- Data Sciences – Communications, Internet, Telecomm
- Software and Hardware – Manufacturing and Retail Software, Healthcare Devices

¹⁷ WESTAF Creative Vitality Suite <https://cvsuite.org/learn-2/creative-economy/>

¹⁸ WESTAF Creative Vitality Suite, <https://cvsuite.org/learn-2/creative-industries/#industries>

2018 Creative Vitality Index

Creative Vitality™
SUITE

Snapshot of the Arts in Thousand Oaks 2018

Creative Vitality Index



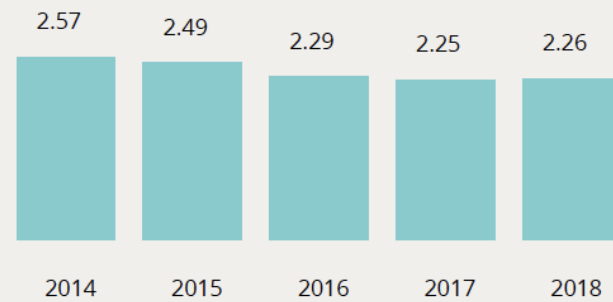
2.26

CVI Value

United States CVI = 1.0

This regional snapshot report gives the big picture of a region's creative landscape. It provides an overview of creative jobs, industry earnings, FDR grants, and Nonprofit revenues.

Past 5 years of CVI Performance



GAIN

▲ **3%**
since 2017

2018 Creative Jobs

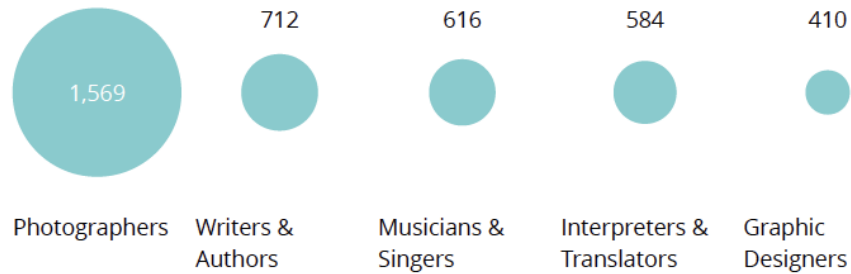


8,930

Total Creative Jobs

There are 250 more creative jobs in the region since 2017

Occupations with greatest number of jobs



Snapshot of the Arts in Thousand Oaks 2018

GAIN

▲ 4%
since 2017

2018 Creative Industries



\$340.5M

Total Industry Earnings

There is a gain of \$13.0 million in creative industry earnings in the region since 2017

Industries with greatest earnings

Industry type

Industry Earnings

Industry type	Industry Earnings
Full-service restaurants	\$98.4M
Artists, Writers, & Performers	\$61.2M
Industrial Design Services	\$16.1M
Film & Video Production	\$15.3M
Advertising Agencies	\$15.2M

LOSS

▼ 14%
since 2017

2018 Cultural Nonprofit



\$9.1M

Nonprofit Revenues

There are \$1.5 million less in revenues in the region since 2017

DATA SOURCES: Economic Modeling Specialists International, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, National Center for Charitable Statistics
CREATIVE VITALTY SUITE: The Creative Vitality Index compares the per capita concentration of creative activity in two regions. Data on creative industries, occupations, and cultural nonprofit revenues are indexed using a population-based calculation. The resulting CVI Value shows a region's creative vitality compared to another region. For more information on data sources visit: learn.cvsuite.org