**New Community Visions Initiative**

**Oklahoma City, Oklahoma Regional Meeting #2**

***The Arts and….***

**October 14, 2015**

*You’ve got to do it all. You can’t just focus on one thing at a time. We’re gaining experience with doing many things at once. No matter where you live in the city, no matter where you go to school, no matter your experience—the arts have to be important to you. In education, which is your topic for today—health information, nutrition, and financial expertise are all important and have to be part of the discussion, along with the arts.* ~ Oklahoma City Mayor Mike Cornett, welcoming everyone to a day of conversation about the role of arts in community building and development for healthy, equitable, and vibrant communities.

*At American’s for the Arts we speak with one voice for all of the arts across our country. In order to do that we have to hear the voices of our communities. That’s why I think this initiative is important and why I’m glad to be here today.* ~ Margie Reece, Americans for the Arts Board Member and Vice President for Programs at [Big Thought](http://www.bigthought.org/).

The New Community Visions Initiative of Americans for the Arts hosted the second of eight regional meetings on October 14 in Oklahoma City. XX people

from XX states met for a full day of conversation about the future of places,

community development, and the arts. About two-thirds of the people in the room were

artists or represented arts organizations, the rest were from other sectors of the

community. About half of the people were from the Oklahoma City area and the rest from other parts of the state, as well as from Wisconsin, Missouri, and Kansas. XXX.

**Building Community**

Michael Rohd asked Americans for the Arts’ Clay Lord four questions to start the day.

* What is Americans for the Arts?

*Americans for the Arts is a national organization that advocates for and supports arts and culture. We work at the national level to create national clout. We work with a lot of government agencies and influencers at the national level. My team works at the local level to create services for artists and arts organizations and others who are creating art in communities.*

* What is NCVI?

*NCVI stands for New Community Visions Initiative and it is a two-year initiative at Americans for the Arts. It is designed to help us and local arts agencies as well as foundations, arts organizations, individual artists, understand what is going to happen in communities over the next 10 to 15 years, and how the arts can contribute and be part of the community conversation over that time.*

*New Community Visions Initiative sits at the intersection of arts and community. We want to understand how the arts can be part of creating healthy, equitable, vibrant, places.*

*We are having eight of these cross-sector, one-day think tanks across the country. We’re seeing new knowledge about how people interact to create stronger communities.*

*We’ve published the first of three books that we’ll release as part of this initiative to understand the role of arts and communities today, as well as what’s going to happen in those places, and how the arts can be part of that change going forward.*

* What does AFTA hope to learn?

*We want to learn how arts function in communities and how they can work better inside other sectors. We want to surface new knowledge and understand how systems work in communities and the role that arts play in that work.*

*We also want to create a variety of new relationships for Americans for the Arts, and across sectors in your communities, as we work toward more integration of the arts in other sectors for strong communities of the future.*

*Our goal is for AFTA to take lessons from these meetings to develop tools, systems, and services, which can make it easier for arts to be at the table for these community initiatives.*

Michael added: *These meetings are not conversations about how we can get more funding for the arts. The center of these conversations is: how are we thinking about other sectors in our community and how those areas are changing, and how we are hopefully moving toward healthier, more vibrant and equitable communities, and how the arts can help ensure that this happens. How do we get the arts to those tables and in that work?*

*While the conversation about the value of the arts is critical, today’s conversation is about the arts and other sectors. Moreover, we believe that by doing this work with other sectors, we are also making the case for the value of the arts to communities.*

* What do you hope this convening offers today, for those who are here?

*We hope you have the opportunity to develop new relationships that provide value beyond this meeting.*

*This should be a day of really interesting conversation and deep thinking about things you don't always have the chance to delve into in your day-to-day work. Some new connections and conversations you can carry forward into the future and that will stick with you as you think about developing ways to address community issues in your own work.*

*We’ll keep you informed about what we learn from today and in other meetings. And we hope you feel free to provide feedback to us because that is what will make this work more valuable for all of us.*

**NCVI: A national two-year effort; research, cross-sector think tanks, publications, & creating action-oriented tools and resources; exploring “Arts And” opportunities;**

**Goals: new relationships, make & surface new knowledge about how healthy, vibrant, equitable communities are achieved, and what role the arts can play in getting there.**

**After a series of introductory prompts, the participants responded to Michael’s request for responses:  *What do you know about who is in the room?***

* People love dogs
* People who work in the arts don’t have a lot of time for other things
* Family matters
* We’re very interesting
* We’re passionate about arts
* People love food and cooking...and wine
* We’re all on journeys
* People are engaged in their community outside their jobs
* We’re seed planters
* We’re people who like to travel
* Sometime you have to get dirty to be creative
* People like to be outside
* We’re raising chickens and playing rugby
* People are constantly working toward their goals

***What do we know about how to think about place? What do we know about how to think about the future?***

* We need equitability for working moms
* We have a confidence problem
* Places are going through transformation and renewal
* We can all be a source of hope for people looking for hope
* Some scope is very small scale and some is huge
* We are socially connected
* We need to listen to each other
* We are worried about sustainability of communities
* Young people are ambitious and want to save the world
* We are concerned about education and education systems in our cities
* Emotions play a big role in people’s perception about where they are and arts can help draw out emotional response in positive ways
* We’re energetic
* We’re very excited about the potential of our places
* Politics and technology play a huge role in our places
* The arts and people in the arts sector can impact social change
* Everyone and everything is in transition
* We need to be able to pay people a sustainable wage for them to be able to see arts as a part of their future

Michael Rohd: *Before we break, let’s talk for a minute about audience. Who are we talking to today? Who is this conversation for? I asked Americans for the Arts this question and they told me there are three different audiences for the work.*

*First Audience: Americans for the Arts. They want to learn and identify tools they can build for others to enhance this work.*

*Second audience - Local arts agencies, funders, government, and business. These are the arts enabling ecology of service and support entities.*

*Third audience- Artists, arts organizations, and non-arts sector partners.*

**Defining Healthy, Equitable, Vibrant Community**

Michael started this part of the day by talking with Clay Lord: *Why are we talking about the future? As you talked to the authors in the book of essays about the future, what did you ask them to think about?*

Clay: *The initiative is all about the future, with a focus on a manageable time frame of 10 to 15 years from now. We wanted to focus on the future because it feels like the whole country is in the midst of an amazing transition that is messy and confusing. The arts and artists are in the middle of that transition too, and like others, they are not clear on their role in the transition. We wanted to take about two years to think about all that and to ask a group of people who work in different parts of our country think about that transition and how they think they can be involved.*

Michael: *The essays focus on other sectors in the future. And then they focus on how the arts can intersect with those changing sectors in ways that help create healthy, equitable, vibrant communities. We’re not talking about the future of the arts. And we’re not talking about the arts in those communities, but how the arts help build that kind of community by working with other sectors. As we talk about how to define healthy, equitable, vibrant communities, we’ll focus on how you would want the local arts agency in your community to think about these words.*

**Americans for the Arts provided a starting point for the definition of community: *A collection of people sharing place, affinity, or interests.***

Participants discussed this definition for their local arts agency: What questions do they want printed on the wall of the local arts agency as a reminder to consider when defining community?

* Who gets a voice in the community structure?
* Does the community want what we think they need?
* Who defines the boundaries of a community?
* How do we meet people where they are?
* Who do we serve and who are we beholden too? Are they the same or different?
* What do we do for individual artists?
* How do we assure there are no borders are edges to the community?
* How do we support inclusivity without being exclusive?
* How do we ensure we’ve inclusive in listening to our communities?
* Who are we not including?
* How do we collaborate to foster understanding?
* What barriers and obstacles do we face?
* How do we make our objectives clear from the onset?
* How do we measure the impact of our mission to the community we serve?
* How do we explain our mission and vision in working with the city?
* Do your programs and activities bring people together?
* What about virtual communities?
* Have we engaged stakeholders that are representative of our entire community?
* What non-arts do we collaborate with?
* How do we define membership in our community?
* How can we strategically respond to community’s needs creatively?
* Where do we find the intersection of the spirit of community and the practical parameters of community?
* How do we champion inclusivity across physical, economic boundaries?
* Are we respecting and nurturing various cultural subcommunities?
* How can we keep arts accessible to everyone in the community?
* How do we help everyone feel included, especially those who cannot read or are non-English speakers? [As reframed later in the day: Because all of our communication and messaging is in the English language, how can we make sure everyone feels included, especially people who cannot read or are non-English speakers? Noting that the way we frame a question has assumptions.]
* How can we get volunteers involved and feeling a sense of ownership in their community?
* Is the audience representative of our community?
* Do newcomers feel welcomed?
* How can we help people feel heard?
* How do we engage artists and arts organizations who work outside the traditional 501(c)(3) models?
* Are our trade beads good enough? (Referencing privilege, systems, agency, and values)
* Is our audience representative of our community? And what do we mean by audience?
* How important is physical vs. digital in the worldwide community?

**Americans for the Arts provided a starting point for the definition of equitable: *Fair, accessible, guaranteed opportunity and advancement for all, lacking in barriers that have prevented full participation.***

*How would you want a local arts agency to think and talk about the word, idea, and action of the word equitable?*

* What do we believe everyone should have access to?
* How do you reconcile the decisionmakers who help fund the arts and connected members of the community who do not have resources?
* What is everyone contributing to the process?
* What arts in our community aren’t equitable?
* Equity requires access: how do we ensure that the door is even open?
* Do we deal with the usual suspects a little too often?
* Since equitability implies a certain power for those who have access, how do you ensure that those how you are trying to offer equitability want the thing that is being offered?
* Does access mean that it should be given away for free?
* Do you sacrifice excellence in the name of equity?
* What kinds of capacities are needed for dealing with questions of equity?
* What’s difference fairness and equity?
* If our arts organization closed tomorrow at noon what would our

audience actually miss?

Clay highlighted a conversation between participants about the privilege of controlling the words we choose to use in a conversation about the definition of equitable. *One group discussed the word “help” in the context of the ability to control the language that you use in a conversation about equity is a privilege. The vocabulary and the power of words are important when population and power is shifting in a community over time.*

Michael invited **examples of the arts working in collaboration with another sector to create a more healthy, equitable, vibrant community**.

*heather ahtone from Norman, Oklahoma said that her city is growing very fast and some years back there was a needs survey of the region. One of the needs identified was finding a way to deal with the congestion on the roads by making the city more bike friendly. The arts community responded by offering to work with the city on developing beautiful bike racks. This allowed artists to respond to the needs of the city in a creative way. The racks themselves are very vibrant and allowed the artists to respond after listening to community needs.*

*Robyn Hilger described the El Sistema program in Oklahoma City, which serves families with a free orchestra program for after school music until 6 PM. They are offering something the schools cannot offer by partnering with the local University and a local worship community. They provide transportation, food, and help with homework, in addition to the arts. This goes beyond an arts need. Music is a tool—but the program prioritizes the physical and emotional and educational services over the music. They are leveraging social services to meet non-arts needs established by teachers and schools, like health care, transportation, and other social supports.*

**Americans for the Arts provided a starting point for the definition of healthy: *Vigor of mind, body, and spirit.  A state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being.***

**Americans for the Arts provided a starting point for the definition of vibrant:**

***Full of life and activity. Responsive, sensitive, bright, strong, powerful.***

*The participants discussed: What are the questions that we want to be in a conversation at a local arts agency about the meaning of the words healthy and vibrant communities?*

* Are we thinking about these words in a holistic way, regarding the whole mind, body, and spirit?
* No one questions the value of math and tech—can we get to a place where people value the arts too?
* Can we create a healthy environment to help people feel good about themselves, create successful kids by helping them think about classical music?
* One person’s vibrancy can be another person’s noise, are we creating a broad definition of what vibrancy is and is appropriate in a place?
* Are challenging voices of artists and others included in healthy and vibrant? Are our definitions really inclusive of all voices?

***In the next session, participants were invited to join a circle and share an experience they’d had or observed, or would like to see in the future. Each circle focused on a different Arts and… topic.***

***Michael asked them to consider:***

***Who are the stakeholders who have to be involved and invested?***

***What are the needs that the project is responding to and how did those needs get discovered or revealed?***

***What is the artistic practice?***

***ARTS AND...***

***WORKFORCE***

Read a full essay on this topic at [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions](http://www.americansforthearts.org/CommunityVisions)

*“This essay looks at changes in the American economy and the workforce and the role the arts may play in positively impacting those changes over the next 10–15 years and beyond. In particular, this essay proposes the following trends and associated arts interventions:*

* *Devices will become more prevalent and more active, creating ubiquitous connectivity and a new paradigm for engaging with each other. Artists and creatives will be a driving force for dictating the design, structure, and nature of that new paradigm.*
* *The rise of 3-D printing and similar technology will usher in an era of mass customization of products and services. The creative worker will drive that customization, and the unleashing of creative and personalized impulses among the larger population will drive a general artistic renaissance and the return of the artisan.*
* *An explosion in the mobility of the workforce and a shift in the nature of work will catapult artists and creative workers to the forefront in terms of redefining where, when, and what people do to be productive economic drivers. The result will be a new era defined by creativity and anchored in the creative impulse.”*

Participant response: *Artists need work, and at the same time many people who work are also artists. What if all companies would have their employees do something creative that they would exhibit in a sort of work-placed gallery? This would bring people together across the barriers and boundaries that can exist in the workplace? This could get people talking about new things and ideas that they don’t typically share with one another.*

***POLITICAL ACTIVATION***

Arts, Political Activation, and Immigration

at [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions](http://www.americansforthearts.org/CommunityVisions)

Read a full essay on this topic at [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions](http://www.americansforthearts.org/CommunityVisions)

“What changes will occur in the meaning of citizenship and political activation of individuals, particularly through the lens of immigration issues, over the next 10–15 years? What role might the arts play in positively impacting those changes?  Some ideas/examples drawn from the essay include:

•                      A melding of technology and cultural awareness will catalyze a growing immigration movement through easier activation of cultural memory, the crossing of media for amplified effect, and a stronger connection among intersectional identities. The arts will provide a solid platform from which to tell their stories, build allies, and link issues across diverse identities as they creatively connect their assets for collective thinking and action.

•                      A generation of immigrants brought to the United States as children and living under an unauthorized status—as well as other youth immigrants that enjoy authorized status—will find themselves navigating an increasingly complex identity formation process. Arts and culture can be utilized as a mechanism for crystallizing self-definition of the individual and the group and activation of political will.

•                      As the demography of America continues to dramatically shift, a redefinition of the American Dream, the dominant culture, and what it means to be a citizen will occur. Much of that shift will be driven by the crossing and melding of disparate artistic and cultural traditions, which will also allow for a resistance to outright assimilation over time.”

Participant response: *We’d like to organize a food festival with the goal of getting people to register. We’d start by putting an artist in residence at each of the political districts. We think this could work because while lots of people don’t trust government, an artist could curate a festival with the idea of building trust in government, the role of government. We’d have to partner with the health department on where food can be prepared. And we’d get the nonprofit involved in getting out the vote to help with planning. We’d ask arts organizations to support this work because it would also be in their interest.*

***PRISONS AND REHABILITATION***

Read a full essay on this topic at [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions](http://www.americansforthearts.org/CommunityVisions)

“This essay looks at changes in the American prison system and the role that the arts may play in positively impacting those changes over the next 10–15 years. In particular, this essay proposes the following trends and associated arts interventions:

* The next 10–15 years will see a continued rise in the number of children who have been impacted by the incarceration of a family member, and the psychological implications of experiencing such trauma threaten to perpetuate cycles of incarceration into a new generation. Innovative arts interventions and partnerships hold the possibility of both easing the trauma of having a parent incarcerated through expressive activity, highlighting the unique issues of children of those incarcerated to a larger audience, and providing an alternative, less destructive path that may help break the cycle.
* Shifts from mass, mostly short-term, incarcerations to fewer, mostly longer-term sentences, including Life without Possibility of Parole, will correspond with a decline in the already minimal interest from the public in interventions that help rehabilitate prisoners who may re-enter society. The importance of prison-based arts programs, of which there are a handful today, will only grow in that new era, as long-term prisoners seek opportunities to maintain humanized, varied lives. Arts-based interventions may be able to increase prisoners’ connection to others, improve psychological health, and enable prisoners to tell their stories.
* As attention and care shifts away from an increasingly permanent prison population serving long or terminal sentences, political and public will to address core issues—who we lock up; the correlation of childhood conditions with future crime; capability of change—will wane. The role of the arts, particularly as vessels through which prisoners can communicate their stories to the world at large, will become paramount.”

**CLAY ADD A STORY HERE**

**Participants discussed community capacities required for success:**

Political Activation and Immigration

* Technology
* Intergenerational communication
* Platform of discovery and idea-generation within organizations
* Political agreement
* Cross-cultural trust
* Leveraging connections with adjacent sectors

Workforce

* Having educated people with money who accept the HR plan and leadership goals
* Understanding the end game
* Willingness to change and learn
* Having a dedicated person in charge of these partnerships
* Supporting education
* Getting a dedicated person in charge

Prisons and Rehabilitation:

* Ability to commit to the work for the long term
* Ability to be positive and optimistic
* Humility on part of arts orgs
* Understanding that arts orgs have to partner to be successful
* Willingness to change existing programs to keep costs down
* Volunteer and management training
* Willingness to train and support over artists over time
* Helping artists and arts orgs understand the culture before they start
* Need Time
* Risk aversion is an obstacle
* Collective collaboration is a capacity
* Ideas have to be authentic and come from the community
* Not having the resources/voices in the room

**Challenges/Barriers/Obstacles**

Participants discussed barriers to success:

Prisons and Rehabilitation

* Perception: people think that the people in prison can’t be changed and are bad and are therefore not deserving of these services
* Limited capacity of parties involved to start something new or reinvent the wheel
* Issues with clearance for prisoners, officers, and people coming into the prison to do the work
* Burnout and exhaustion
* Political will
* Each prison environment is really different, making scaling and learning difficult across places

Political activism and Immigration

* Communication with diverse populations
* Risk aversion, sometimes the work seems challenging putting people off
* Authenticity and balancing top-down and grassroots up, ensuring that it isn’t overwhelmed by one or the other, no matter where the conversation starts.
* Verifying authenticity

Workforce

* Limited mindset - people’s attention, time, and priorities
* Budget limitations
* Siloing
* Getting Board interested
* Making time to participate
* Institutionalization of giving programs
* Turnover
* Getting people to value working with the arts and give time to it

**K-12 Education**

The participants turned to a focused discussion on the **Arts and...K - 12 Education.**

“This essay looks at pending changes within the K–12 American formal education system and the role that the arts may play in positively impacting those changes over the next 10–15 years. In particular, this essay proposes the following trends and associated arts interventions:

* What is expected of students will shift from simple fact recitation and rote memorization toward deeper and more nuanced learning via systems and concepts. This shift opens up opportunities for the arts to be engaged to create more well-rounded learning environments, as well as a need for the arts to step in to achieve equity in access to quality education.
* The blurring of boundaries between the digital and physical learning environment and the increased acceptance of non-place-based learning environments as legitimate alternatives to in-school learning will increase, possibly increasing access to education, but also posing a very real possibility of niche learning experiences that may narrow the worldview of students. The arts will play a role in providing a commons for place-based engagement and learning, as well as an outlet for combating such insulated views.”

**Six experienced leaders shared thoughts from their own experience.**

**Q: What’s going to change in K-12 education over the next 10 - 15 years?**

**HIND JARRAH, Texas Muslim Women’s Foundation**

*We have created a program introducing the art of geometric patterns into schools and academia, universities in partnership because it will be an efficient way to bridge stem into steam. A repetition of patterns is in all sciences. We are hoping to get students interested in science through the arts. Over the next 10 - 15 years, the schools will be more diverse, prompting a change in the way we teach and learn. Art will be a big tool in making this change.*

CAMAL PENNINGTON, American Federation of Teachers

*I’m an Oklahoma City teacher from a family of teachers. Over the 10 - 15 years, we will see the end of career teachers. Teach-4-America is a trend that will grow in public schools. It may be more like military service where everyone teaches for a while, then goes on to another career. We are losing the sustained knowledge of career teachers. This year, a third of Oklahoma City teachers have not taught before. Standardized testing will continue, and will be tied to merit pay for teachers. Kids will have to go to school more days to achieve those new goals. Demographic change in this time period will require that schools take a holistic approach with students, offering other services at schools.*

FRANK WANG, Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics

*Need to have a solid grounding, so 10 - 15 years from now, we’ll still be needing the depth of knowledge and the lessons on the basics. There will need to be deeper grounding in the fundamental concepts, fewer topics but no more superficial learning. We need a commitment to depth and rigor and we have reason to be concerned that might change in the future.*

*In the past, there were only three things a woman could be in the past: a secretary, a nurse, and a teacher.*

**Q: How do you think the arts might intersect with K- 12 education? What will that look like? What will happen? Who will be impacted? What’s possible?**

JEAN HENDRICKSON, National A+ Schools

*We will need to open up to longer days to meet educational goals. There will be more use of technology and we need to marry that to better ways of assessment. If you think about a school for a child you love, can you imagine it without an arts program? If it’s not a good idea for a child you love, it shouldn’t be a good idea for any child.*

LAURA STEWART, Director of Fine Arts for the Division of Arts & Humanities, Chickasaw Nation

*Good teacher are using art to engage people who learn well using the arts as a tool. Time is an obstacle for schools and for the artists it’s hard to get into the schools. That’s why we started an arts academy outside the schools. Higher education is going to have to change if we are going to let the arts assist with the future of K-12 education.*

LAURA GOODWIN, Walton Art Center [Note did this name change? Erica Gwynn?]

*Will see more highly committed partnership between arts and schools in the future. Arts sector is working together to get educators to assist with ensuring access to the arts venues and performances. There will be more of this in the future: more access outside the schools. It’s a civil rights issue - to ensure equitable access, we’ll have to work together to get high-level political commitment to it.*

Participant comments in reaction to speakers and small-group conversation

* *How do you sustain cross-sector partnerships with transitions in leadership and staff?*
* *There are inequities across neighborhoods in cities and as taxpayers we’re allowing citizens in different neighborhoods to have an uneven experience. We’re complicit in these inequities.*
* *The public perception of teachers has continued to decline. We have to do something about it.*
* *If there are more teachers without training and experience, how do we create the experience kids get today with experienced teachers?*
* *We can use the arts as the incentive to keep kids in school.*
* *National priorities of government and economic sector (business) are an important part of how we decide where to invest.*

Reactions from participants:

SHAWN SHEEHAN, Algebra Teacher in Norman Oklahoma, Teacher of the Year

*It sounds like it would be foolish to be an educator now. What if every class had art in every class every day? That makes all teachers artists? The goal of school is character, citizenship, and scholarship. Can arts be part of that?*

DONNA NEUWIRTH, Wormfarm Institute

*Art doesn’t work as a tantalizing tool unless it’s brilliant. Don’t let it get dumbed down. Art is a cure for curious-less-ness.*

**Conclusion**

How do we learn from this day? What do we want Americans from the Arts to take from this day? What have you gained from these conversations and speakers that you want them to take back? What do you need to make *Arts And...*work?

**What Capacities/Skills do we need to develop for *Arts and...* to work?**

* *What do we need to do to make sure young artists coming out of school or early in their career have the tools for community dialogue? What do they need to be good partners with different community partners so they can be effective agents of change? How do we teach people to listen?*
* *People need to know how to be advocates for this work.*
* *People need an agreed upon message to share.*
* *We need to build the capacity for people to talk about this approach.*
* *We need a single thought about where we are going.*
* *AFTA needs to articulate the WHY for this work (not just economic development, but also intrinsic). We need the WHY for each sector, and the WHY in local communities. The messages may be different in different sectors and communities.*
* *Advocates and supporters, community leaders need data to persuade elected officials on WHY.*
* *We have to elect the right decision-makers.*
* *We need community organizing skills. We need to learn from another sector and learn to do it effectively.*
* *Schools and conservatories need to teach artists things about their community, teach them to interact with their community.*
* *We have to understand how advocacy works—how to plan for it—what are tools to do it—from beginning to end, how do we do it?*
* *We need to educate artists about being entrepreneurial?*
* *We need the support for communications skills to work across different communities.*

What partnerships and alliances should we build to accomplish these capacities and skills? Locally, regionally, and generally?

* *Business Council/Chamber of Commerce partnership to endorse legislative agenda.*
* *People shy away from people who seem different for unrelated. When missions are different, there are barriers to entry for that conversation. This is especially true when it’s a business perspective. We have to remember the difference between mission and values. We can work with others if we share values.*
* *Convention and vistors’ bureaus are good partners.*
* *Get business to see nonprofit as a real partner.*
* *American Planning Association, Urban Land Institute.*
* *City government can be helpful in smoothing the way if you call the right person.*
* *Arts and Humanities organizations should partner more often at all levels: local, state, and national.*
* *We need help with competencies for cross-sector conversation. We need to work with foundations that can help identify partners. But we have to develop the language to talk to funders who don’t work in the arts.*

Clay Lord of Americans for the Arts concluded the day: *We’ve gotten many interesting stories with practical ideas about what the future looks like, what it will take to get there and have healthy, equitable, vibrant communities, and what’s missing and is needed to improve the journey. We’re trying to define where we want to be, and the state of the road that will get us there. We heard about partnerships, capacity building, advocacy and policy, communications and more. Our sense of arts and culture in communities is becoming richer and more connected. These are the stories we’re looking for in these meetings.*

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Closing and thank you notes wrapped up the day. Next steps include blog posts and rough summaries, blog salons, pre-conference and plenary about this work at the annual conference in June. Followed by a synthesis of the findings and a plan for action.