

Craig, Sondra

From: David Baumann <baumannbusiness6@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2023 9:24 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Make La Crosse a center of arts and culture

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I am writing you today to support the proposal to designate ARPA funds to support artists and the art community in La Crosse. This will help artists keep making art and will increase the presence of arts in our great city.

During the great depression, thousands of artists were allowed to continue making art by the support of the WPA Federal Art Project. This program funded some of the most important public works of art in our country. We have murals in public spaces today all over this country that were WPA funded.

Furthermore, it funded artists making a variety of types of art, for example abstract art that was considered unsellable in the 1930s, but within 10 years was considered the first specifically American art movement to be respected worldwide. Jackson Pollock was funded by this project for several years as an unknown painter prior to developing his signature style and becoming the most iconic painter of his generation.

The public funding of art in La Crosse will result in 2 main benefits to the community:

1. It will increase the presence of art in public spaces. Public buildings and outdoor spaces will gain artworks. These will be available to our citizens and enrich our local culture. Imagine our public city buildings containing art of quality and number like an art museum, for the benefit of the people of our city.
2. Funding will help local artists continue to make art. Most artists do not come close to selling enough art to make a living, even if they produce high quality or important work. If artists can sell just some work, they will keep working, strengthening the arts community.

The pandemic, like the great depression, has caused economic suffering for our local culture and arts community. In order to achieve a flourishing of art and culture in La Crosse, we need a significant investment of public funds.

Thank you for considering this.

David Baumann
La Crosse citizen