

**From:** [Christi Johnson](#)  
**Sent:** Monday, October 4, 2021 5:19 PM  
**To:** [PublicComment](#)  
**Subject:** Arts and Culture Commission

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Dear City Council Members,

I am writing in support of the Arts and Culture Commission that has been proposed to the council by interested community members and board members of HPAAC. As an HPAAC board member, and someone who has greatly benefited from the arts in our community, I know the importance of this proposal. There are many communities like Hastings who have adapted a similar plan. Take a look at Red Wing, Northfield, Grand Rapids, and Austin, Minnesota to name a few. These communities are known for their support and interest in the arts. I travel to some of these cities on occasion just to participate in the art and culture activities and festivals that are prioritized in these communities. There are several more cities in greater Minnesota and beyond who have a city arts commission. Through our own research, we know that the arts have economic and cultural impacts on local communities. They bring in tourists, bring a sense of pride to local citizens, and are a thriving way to bring a community together. I am asking that you continue the conversation with us about installing an arts and culture commission with the city of Hastings. There are many ways this plan can be implemented, and the citizens of Hastings are ready to see this happen.

Thank you for your time,

Christi Johnson

**From:** [snorthard@aol.com](mailto:snorthard@aol.com)  
**Sent:** Monday, October 4, 2021 6:41 PM  
**To:** [PublicComment](#)  
**Subject:** Hastings Arts Commission

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Hastings City Council Members:

I am writing to encourage Hastings City Council to create the Hastings Arts Commission. I am a member of the Board of Directors of the Hastings Prescott Area Arts Council (HPAAC) and a resident of Hastings for 44 years. HPAAC is an all-volunteer organization created in 2008 to promote the growth of Arts and Culture in the Hastings and Prescott area.

Hastings has become a beacon for the Arts and is known for its many contributions to the Arts and Culture. Hastings is home to ARTSPACE artist housing, two theatre groups, a Community Band, an Arts Center, multiple dance studios, graphic artists, sculptors, painters, photographers, a Writers Guild, several artist studios, dozens of talented musicians and bands, videographers and filmmakers, an award winning high school choir program and many other talented artists in our community. The Hastings Arts Commission would serve to encourage and promote the growth of this vital part of our community. A recent report by HPAAC revealed the hundreds of arts related jobs and millions of dollars it brings to this area every year.

During COVID, many used the Arts to connect with others online and create something from nothing. The Hastings Arts Commission would allow us to help the many artists, musicians, writers, actors, filmmakers, and others in our community who do so much to enrich our lives. We learned during COVID just how important the Arts are to all of us. We've seen many examples of how everyday folks and professional artists alike need to express themselves to others to combat loneliness and depression. Art nurtures the spirit and calms the mind. It allowed many to cope with the isolation and lack of face to face contact. Why not support this as part of our community?

Thank you for your support,

Scott Northard

Hastings, MN

**From:** [Barb HOLLENBECK](#)  
**Sent:** Monday, October 4, 2021 1:08 PM  
**To:** [CityCouncilGroup](#); [msjenfox@gmail.com](mailto:msjenfox@gmail.com); [Mary Fasbender](#)  
**Subject:** Response to City Administrator Not Supporting Arts & Culture Commission  
**Attachments:** Response to Dan Wietecha denial of an Arts and Culture Commission revised.docx

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Dear Mayor and Council Members,

Please find attached a response to the City Administrators non support of an Arts & Culture Commission. The document was formed by myself and several interested Hastings residents.

The document is numbered according to the memo.

I look forward to further discussion during the Council Meeting tonight.

Thanks,

Barb Hollenbeck

## Response to City Administrator denial of an Arts and Culture Commission Proposal

1. In response to statement number one:

There can be two tracts for the “Hastings is Arts” plan. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan is one tract and is used by developers. It does not need to be included in the 2040 Comprehensive plan but could be added as an appendix. The “Hastings is Arts” Plan could be used as a working plan should the Hastings Arts and Culture Commission (A & C Commission) be codified.

2. The request to consider a Hastings Arts and Culture Commission was formed through interested residents and community supporters.
3. Per Wendy Wulff and Patrick Boylan (representatives for Hastings on the Met Council) the Met Council does not review elements of a cities 2040 Comprehensive Plan that are outside of its’ purview – i.e. regional systems (sewer lines) and regional policies (transportation). Many cities include elements outside of these prescribed areas.
4. Within city budget discussions there are strains on resources, staff and budget. The budget reflects the priority of the community. An Arts and Culture Commission would support many of the areas that have been identified as strategic priority initiatives including making Hastings more inclusive, tourism, and economic development. An Arts and Culture Commission can help to achieve these strategic initiatives.
5. It is unclear what this proposal is referencing. It appears to come from the Hastings is Arts plan. Goals, objectives and strategies are simply road maps and do not commit staff to anything. The Hastings is Arts plan is just that – a plan. The plan would be used by an A & C Commission as a roadmap.
6. The City of Hastings has 5 commissions. They are the Charter Commission, Planning Commission, lead by John Hinzman, The Parks and Recreation Commission, led by Chris Jenkins, the Public Safety Advisory Commission led by Chief Schaffer and Chief Townsend and the Heritage Preservation Commission where Justin Forney acts as staff liaison. Some of these commissions are statutorily required. Commissions that are not statutory were formed to benefit the residents of Hastings. These non statutory commissions contribute our quality of life in Hastings.
7. It is unclear what proposal is being addressed. The assumption is that the reference is to the draft Ordinance. Some Council members have expressed interest as acting as a liaison to an Arts and Culture Commission. The council member would serve as a contact point if needed or warranted.

8. It is unclear what proposal is being addressed. The assumption is that the reference is to the draft Ordinance. The staff time commitment to the A & C Commission will be minimal. At this point, there are no budgetary considerations to be made. There are multiple funding sources outside of the city budget that could be accessed by the A & C Commission.
  
9. It is unclear what proposal is being addressed. It is assumed that the reference is to the draft ordinance. It is unclear what operational role is being addressed. As stated above, no budgetary request is being made for the A & C Commission.
  
10. References to an "arts task force" and "initiatives" imply a specific project with a completion date. The A & C Commission would be an ongoing entity providing continuity and commitment to arts and culture in Hastings.