



ARTS AND CULTURE STRATEGIC WORK PLAN FY2025-2028

Purpose (*Just Cause*): To enhance Phoenix residents' and visitors' quality of life through meaningful arts, cultural, and educational experiences.

Vision: Phoenix's arts, culture, and educational sector is vibrant, sustained, diverse, and connected to the communities it serves.

Mission: The Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture supports, champions, and promotes the City's arts, culture, and educational community, making Phoenix a great place to live, work, and visit.

Values: Accountability, Collaboration, Community, Education, Equity, Leadership, Respect

Goals:

1. Increase resources and infrastructure by being bold and assuming greater leadership as an advocate for Phoenix's arts and culture sector.
2. Lead with equity in all agency programs, identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented any groups from fully participating in them, and engage underserved communities in the city.
3. Strengthen ongoing communications and increase opportunities for the sector to come together through networking, information, convening, and professional development.
4. Position Phoenix as an arts destination to promote economic development and uplift neighborhood and cultural identity.
5. Advance the department's capacity through collaborations and modeling best practices to ensure stable and effective management.
6. Ensure success for the department as it adds new programs, facilities, projects, and staff.

Goal 1: Increase resources and infrastructure by being bold and assuming greater leadership as an advocate for Phoenix’s arts and culture sector.

Objectives & Action Steps:

- 1. Develop a Comprehensive Advocacy Strategy**
 - **Action Step 1:** Create an advocacy plan that focuses on increasing funding, improving infrastructure, and promoting the importance of arts and culture to the local economy and community well-being.
 - **Action Step 2:** Engage with local stakeholders (e.g., artists, arts organizations, local government, business leaders) to build a coalition for arts advocacy.
 - **Action Step 3:** Develop a communication plan to raise awareness about the sector’s needs and benefits, including leveraging social media, public speaking, and partnerships with local media outlets.
- 2. Build Relationships with Public and Private Sector Leaders**
 - **Action Step 1:** Establish strong relationships with local policymakers, government officials, and private sector leaders to secure long-term commitments to the arts and culture sector.
 - **Action Step 2:** Advocate for continued arts funding in the city’s budget, pushing for increased public investment and public-private partnerships.
 - **Action Step 3:** Recreate “the Friends” group to include influential business leaders and city officials to prioritize arts and culture in city planning and policy.
- 3. Champion Public Investment in Arts and Culture Infrastructure**
 - **Action Step 1:** Advocate for developing cultural spaces, new and temporary public art installations, and performance venues throughout the city, ensuring equitable access to arts and culture in all neighborhoods.
 - **Action Step 2:** Identify potential locations for new arts centers or performance spaces in underserved areas of Phoenix and work with local planners and developers to bring them to fruition.
 - **Action Step 3:** Promote arts-related zoning and tax incentives to encourage the development of art districts and creative hubs.
- 4. Increase Public and Private Funding for the Arts**
 - **Action Step 1:** Advocate for expanding grant programs for arts and culture, working with local and national funding sources.
 - **Action Step 2:** Work with the business community to create sponsorship opportunities and partnerships that align with arts initiatives.
 - **Action Step 3:** Establish a long-term endowment fund that ensures continued financial support for Phoenix’s arts and culture sector.
- 5. Increase Visibility and Engagement with Arts and Culture in Phoenix**

- **Action Step 1:** Promote constituents’ events such as arts festivals, exhibitions, openings, and cultural celebrations to showcase the diversity and vibrancy of Phoenix’s arts and culture scene.
 - **Action Step 2:** Build a robust online platform to showcase local artists, organizations, and events to a wider audience, attracting local and national attention.
 - **Action Step 3:** Host town halls or community forums to engage the public in discussions about the future of arts and culture in Phoenix and encourage public participation in the arts.
- 6. Foster Equity and Inclusion in Arts and Culture Initiatives**
- **Action Step 1:** Ensure that arts programs, funding opportunities, and events are accessible to all, particularly to underserved and marginalized communities.
 - **Action Step 2:** Advocate for including diverse cultural perspectives and voices in public art and cultural programming.
 - **Action Step 3:** Collaborate with community leaders to ensure that arts and culture initiatives reflect the full spectrum of Phoenix’s demographics and histories.
- 7. Measure and Report on Progress**
- **Action Step 1:** Develop key performance indicators (KPIs) to track progress in securing resources, improving infrastructure, and increasing public engagement with the arts.
 - **Action Step 2:** Regularly evaluate the arts sector’s growth and provide transparent reports to stakeholders and the public.
 - **Action Step 3:** Host an annual arts summit or roundtable discussion to reflect on achievements, challenges, and future priorities.

Expected Outcomes:

- Increased public funding for Phoenix’s arts and culture sector and be a leader in the country's top 20 largest populated cities.
- More arts and culture infrastructure in underserved areas of the city.
- Greater visibility and community engagement in local arts and culture events.
- A stronger, more unified arts community in Phoenix that advocates for policies, funding, and programs that support the sector's growth.

By focusing on advocacy, resource mobilization, and infrastructure development, this goal will help ensure that Phoenix’s arts and culture sector thrives and receives the recognition, funding, and support it deserves.

Goal 2: Lead with equity in all agency programs, identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented any groups from fully participating in them, and engage underserved communities in the city.

Objectives & Action Steps:

1. **Assess Current Programs for Equity Gaps**
 - **Action Step 1:** Conduct a thorough review of all current programs to identify barriers that may prevent underserved groups from fully participating.
 - **Action Step 2:** Collect data on program participation demographics and analyze the representation of different groups.
 - **Action Step 3:** Engage with stakeholders (e.g., staff, community leaders, clients) to understand perceived barriers to participation.
2. **Implement Anti-Discrimination and Inclusion Policies**
 - **Action Step 1:** Develop and enforce clear policies that address discrimination, bias, and exclusion in all programs.
 - **Action Step 2:** Train staff, panelists, and other stakeholders on cultural competency and unconscious bias practices.
 - **Action Step 3:** Create a feedback mechanism (e.g., surveys, focus groups) for marginalized groups to voice concerns and suggest improvements.
3. **Increase Accessibility of Programs**
 - **Action Step 1:** Ensure that programs are accessible to individuals with disabilities by offering accommodations (e.g., ASL interpreters, physical accessibility improvements, digital tools for remote participation).
 - **Action Step 2:** Simplify application and registration processes to ensure they are easy to understand and navigate for people from all backgrounds.
 - **Action Step 3:** Offer language support services (e.g., translation, multilingual staff) for non-English and Spanish speakers.
4. **Engage Underserved Communities**
 - **Action Step 1:** Develop partnerships with community organizations serving underserved groups to understand their needs better and build trust.
 - **Action Step 2:** Host community meetings, listening sessions, or focus groups to gather feedback directly from underserved populations about their experiences and barriers.
 - **Action Step 3:** Use targeted outreach strategies, such as social media, flyers, or partnerships with local leaders, to ensure program information reaches underserved communities.
5. **Allocate Resources for Equity Initiatives**
 - **Action Step 1:** Secure funding or reallocate existing resources to support programs specifically designed to address the needs of marginalized or underserved communities.

- **Action Step 2:** Provide scholarships, stipends, or other financial assistance to ensure that cost is not a barrier to participation.
 - **Action Step 3:** Invest in outreach and engagement programs that are specifically designed to connect with underserved groups.
- 6. Monitor and Measure Progress**
- **Action Step 1:** Develop clear metrics to track the success of equity initiatives, including participation rates from marginalized groups, program outcomes, and satisfaction levels.
 - **Action Step 2:** Establish regular check-ins to assess progress on eliminating barriers and improving engagement from underserved communities.
 - **Action Step 3:** Create an annual report on equity efforts to share successes, challenges, and next steps with stakeholders and the broader community.
- 7. Promote Inclusive Leadership**
- **Action Step 1:** Ensure diverse representation in decision-making bodies and leadership positions within the agency.
 - **Action Step 2:** Support and mentor individuals from marginalized backgrounds for leadership development within the organization.
 - **Action Step 3:** Foster a culture where equity and inclusion are core values in all program areas.
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Expected Outcomes:

- Increased participation of underserved groups in all agency programs.
- More inclusive and accessible programs with no barriers related to discrimination, financial hardship, or lack of resources.
- Stronger partnerships with community organizations and a deeper understanding of the needs of underserved communities.
- Improved overall equity in the agency's service delivery.

This goal can guide organizational transformation and promote lasting, systemic change to ensure equal access to programs and services for all community members.

Goal 3: Strengthen ongoing communications and increase opportunities for the sector to come together through networking, information, convening, and professional development.

Objectives & Action Steps:

1. Establish a Centralized Communication Platform

- **Action Step 1:** Create or enhance dedicated digital platforms (e.g., website, app, or online forum) where arts and culture professionals can share information, resources, and opportunities and ensure all stakeholders are aware of opportunities promptly.
- **Action Step 2:** Develop and execute a regular e-newsletter or email digest highlighting upcoming events, funding opportunities, workshops, and sector news.
- **Action Step 3:** Promote the platform through various channels (social media, community outreach, partner organizations) to ensure it reaches a broad audience.

2. Host Regular Networking Events and Convenings

- **Action Step 1:** Organize quarterly or biannual networking events (virtual or in-person) for professionals in the arts and culture sector to connect, share ideas, and collaborate.
- **Action Step 2:** Partner with other businesses, institutions, and community groups to host informal gatherings, panels, or roundtable discussions where artists and organizations can share knowledge and discuss challenges and opportunities.
- **Action Step 3:** Focus on creating inclusive spaces for all types of artists and cultural organizations, ensuring representation from diverse backgrounds, disciplines, and geographic areas within the sector.

3. Enhance Professional Development Opportunities

- **Action Step 1:** Offer workshops, webinars, and training sessions focused on key skills needed in the arts and culture sector, such as grant writing, marketing, financial management, digital media, and diversity and inclusion.
- **Action Step 2:** Develop a scholarship or stipend program to support attending industry conferences, events, or courses, ensuring that underfunded or emerging artists can participate.
- **Action Step 4:** Organize leadership development programs to prepare emerging leaders in the arts sector for future management and administrative roles.

4. Create Peer-to-Peer Learning Opportunities

- **Action Step 1:** Establish a peer-to-peer learning network or small group cohorts where individuals or organizations with similar goals or challenges can share experiences and best practices.

- **Action Step 2:** Foster an environment where participants feel comfortable sharing successes and failures, encouraging collective problem-solving and knowledge exchange.
 - **Action Step 3:** Implement informal meetups or “coffee hours” to provide opportunities for one-on-one interactions and more profound connections among arts professionals.
5. **Measure the Impact of Networking and Development Efforts**
- **Action Step 1:** Develop key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate the effectiveness of networking events and professional development programs (e.g., participant satisfaction, number of collaborations formed, skills gained).
 - **Action Step 2:** Collect feedback from attendees at events and training sessions to improve future offerings and ensure they meet the arts community's needs.
 - **Action Step 3:** Track long-term outcomes of networking and development initiatives, such as new partnerships, increased funding, or the success of collaborative projects, to demonstrate the value of these efforts.
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Expected Outcomes:

- Enhanced collaboration and partnership-building within Phoenix’s arts and culture sector.
- Increased access to professional development opportunities for artists and organizations of all sizes and backgrounds.
- A stronger, more interconnected arts community where individuals and organizations have the tools and resources to succeed.
- Improved representation of diverse voices and communities in arts leadership and programming.

This goal will create a more unified and empowered arts community in Phoenix through strategic communications, networking, and professional development initiatives.

Goal 4: Position Phoenix as an arts destination to promote economic development and uplift neighborhood and cultural identity.

Objectives & Action Steps:

- 1. Develop a Strategic Marketing Campaign for Phoenix as an Arts Destination**
 - **Action Step 1:** Collaborate with tourism agencies, local businesses, and cultural organizations to create a unified message and strategic outreach plan targeting national and international audiences.
 - **Action Step 2:** With partners, create a branding campaign highlighting Phoenix's diverse arts scene, unique cultural offerings, and vibrant creative community.
 - **Action Step 3:** Develop high-quality promotional materials for websites, brochures, videos, and social media campaigns to showcase Phoenix as a cultural hub, highlighting local artists, galleries, performance venues, festivals, and community-based cultural activities.
- 2. Increase Arts and Culture Tourism through Events and Festivals**
 - **Action Step 1:** Expand and promote major arts festivals, cultural celebrations, and events, such as art walks, film festivals, music festivals, theater performances, and temporary public art, to attract visitors and generate local economic impact.
 - **Action Step 2:** Ensure funding for festivals recognized nationally and internationally, attracting tourists and enhancing Phoenix's reputation as a vibrant arts destination.
 - **Action Step 3:** Work with local hotels, restaurants, and other businesses to develop tourism packages that include arts experiences, such as VIP access to performances, gallery tours, or artist meet-and-greets.
- 3. Strengthen Arts and Culture Infrastructure to Support Growth**
 - **Action Step 1:** Advocate for developing new arts venues, cultural centers, galleries, performance spaces, and temporary public art opportunities, especially in underdeveloped or emerging neighborhoods, to create an accessible arts infrastructure through public and private funds.
 - **Action Step 2:** Invest in renovating or repurposing existing spaces to serve as arts hubs or incubators for local artists and arts organizations, ensuring a sustainable and thriving arts ecosystem.
 - **Action Step 4:** Ensure that all arts spaces, cultural facilities, and venues are accessible to people from diverse backgrounds and communities, fostering inclusivity in arts participation and cultural representation.
- 4. Integrate Arts into Urban Planning and Development**
 - **Action Step 1:** Continue to work to integrate permanent public art and creative design elements into the city's architecture, infrastructure, and public spaces.

- **Action Step 2:** Create arts districts or cultural corridors within Phoenix, where local artists, galleries, theaters, and arts-related businesses are concentrated, promoting a vibrant creative economy.
 - **Action Step 3:** Foster neighborhood-based cultural identity by supporting grassroots initiatives and local cultural celebrations highlighting Phoenix's diverse communities' unique histories and traditions.
- 5. Enhance Partnerships with Business and Industry for Economic Development**
- **Action Step 1:** Develop initiatives to integrate arts and culture into local workforce development, including training programs, internships, and apprenticeships in the arts, to create job opportunities for residents.
 - **Action Step 2:** Promote the economic benefits of the arts (e.g., job creation, tourism spending, community revitalization) to local and state government officials, business leaders, and investors to secure funding and support.
 - **Action Step 3:** Work with local chambers of commerce, tourism boards, and economic development offices to include the arts as a key pillar of Phoenix's economic development strategy.
- 6. Support and Elevate Cultural Identity Through Arts Programs**
- **Action Step 1:** Foster and support projects and initiatives that highlight and celebrate the cultural heritage of Phoenix's diverse communities, ensuring that arts programming reflects the city's multifaceted identity.
 - **Action Step 2:** Collaborate with local Indigenous, Hispanic, African American, and immigrant communities to create art programs and events that amplify their cultural narratives and artistic contributions.
 - **Action Step 3:** Encourage and support the development of local artists whose work reflects Phoenix's unique culture, history, and landscapes.
- 7. Measure the Economic Impact of the Arts in Phoenix**
- **Action Step 1:** Continue conducting studies on the economic impact of the arts in Phoenix, including job creation, tourism spending, and business development related to the arts sector, as well as other field research.
 - **Action Step 2:** Use data from these studies to advocate for increased public investment in the arts and demonstrate the value of the arts to local businesses, policymakers, and the community.
 - **Action Step 3:** Track the growth of arts-related businesses, tourism revenue, and community engagement over time to assess the effectiveness of strategies and initiatives.

Expected Outcomes:

- Increased tourism and economic activity related to the arts and culture sector.
- Stronger recognition of Phoenix as a leading arts destination, attracting national and international visitors.

- Enhanced community pride and cultural identity, with arts and culture playing a central role in defining Phoenix’s image.
- A more vibrant and diversified local economy supported by arts-driven initiatives and creative industries.

This goal positions Phoenix as a dynamic and thriving arts destination, contributing to the city’s cultural, social, and economic revitalization.

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Goal 5: Advance the department's capacity through collaborations and modeling best practices to ensure stable and effective management.

Objectives & Action Steps:

1. Enhance Internal Capacity and Workforce Development

- **Action Step 1:** Conduct a thorough assessment of the department's current organizational structure, workflows, and staffing to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement.
- **Action Step 2:** Develop a professional development plan for staff, including training in leadership, project management, grant writing, financial oversight, and strategic planning.
- **Action Step 3:** Prioritize ongoing training in diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural competency to ensure that the department reflects and serves all communities effectively.

2. Foster Strategic Collaborations with Key Stakeholders

- **Action Step 1:** Identify potential collaborative partners, including other government agencies, local arts organizations, education and academic institutions, and private-sector entities that can strengthen the department's work.
- **Action Step 2:** Formalize partnerships through Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), operating and partnership agreements, or contracts that define roles, responsibilities, and shared goals.
- **Action Step 3:** Partner with other successful departments or cities that have demonstrated best practices in educational and arts and culture management to learn from their experiences and implement lessons learned.

3. Implement Best Practices in Program Management

- **Action Step 1:** Create standardized processes for grantmaking, event coordination, partnerships, and outreach that ensure efficiency, transparency, and fairness.
- **Action Step 2:** Establish clear performance metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) for all department programs and initiatives to track success, identify areas for improvement, and demonstrate impact.
- **Action Step 3:** Regularly review and update departmental policies and procedures to ensure they reflect industry standards and meet evolving community needs.

4. Strengthen Communication and Collaboration within the Department

- **Action Step 1:** Implement regular internal communication channels, such as weekly team meetings, monthly staff meetings, newsletters, or shared digital platforms, to ensure transparency, accountability, and ongoing collaboration.

- **Action Step 2:** Integrate divisional program planning into department-wide plans and foster a culture of feedback within the department by encouraging open dialogue about challenges, successes, and opportunities for improvement.
 - **Action Step 3:** Organize cross-departmental working groups or committees focused on specific initiatives (e.g., outreach, communications, programming) to encourage collaboration and diverse input, especially with field staff.
5. **Secure Stable and Sustainable Funding through Collaborations**
- **Action Step 1:** Diversify funding sources by pursuing a mix of public, private, philanthropic, and earned income opportunities and establish formal partnerships with funding bodies.
 - **Action Step 2:** Collaborate with other departments or agencies to apply for joint funding opportunities and grants that support shared goals and priorities.
 - **Action Step 3:** Create a dedicated grant-seeking and development team to identify new funding opportunities and manage relationships with funders.
6. **Enhance Programmatic and Organizational Evaluation**
- **Action Step 1:** Develop an evaluation framework including qualitative and quantitative methods to assess the effectiveness of programs, events, and partnerships.
 - **Action Step 2:** Regularly conduct internal and external evaluations of the department's initiatives to measure outcomes and identify areas for growth and improvement.
 - **Action Step 3:** Publish annual or biannual reports on the department's progress, including key performance indicators, financial health, and program outcomes, to build public trust and transparency.
7. **Promote Innovation and Adaptability within the Department**
- **Action Step 1:** Encourage staff to participate in professional networks, conferences, and workshops to stay informed about new trends, technologies, and methodologies in the arts and culture sector.
 - **Action Step 2:** Create opportunities for staff to experiment with innovative approaches, pilot new programs, and explore creative ways to overcome challenges.
 - **Action Step 3:** Establish a process for quickly adapting strategies in response to shifts in the arts sector, community priorities, or funding landscapes, allowing the department to remain flexible and forward-thinking.
8. **Model and Advocate for Effective Leadership Practices**
- **Action Step 1:** Foster a leadership culture that prioritizes transparency, accountability, and open communication, setting an example for division leaders.
 - **Action Step 2:** Provide leadership training and professional development opportunities for staff at all levels, ensuring that emerging leaders within the department are equipped with the skills to manage teams, navigate challenges, and drive innovation.
 - **Action Step 3:** Engage in community outreach to share best practices in educational and arts and culture management with other organizations, positioning the department as a model of effective leadership in the sector.

Expected Outcomes:

- A more efficient, effective, and responsive arts department with a highly skilled workforce.
- Stronger and more productive collaborations with key stakeholders, leading to enhanced community engagement and resource sharing.
- Increased stability and sustainability for the department, with diversified funding and successful grant applications.
- Improved programmatic outcomes and impact, demonstrated through rigorous evaluation and data-driven decision-making.
- A department that models best practices in arts and culture management, inspiring other organizations and cities.

This goal will help ensure that the department operates efficiently, remains responsive to community needs, and continues to thrive as a leader in arts and culture management by focusing on collaboration, capacity building, and modeling best practices.

Goal 6: Ensure success for the department as it adds new programs, facilities, projects, and staff.

Objectives & Action Steps:

1. Conduct Thorough Planning for New Programs and Projects

- **Action Step 1:** Identify the community needs or gaps that the new initiatives are designed to address. Early in planning, engage stakeholders (artists, community members, schools, and local organizations) to ensure alignment with the city's priorities.
- **Action Step 2:** Conduct feasibility studies and risk assessments for new programs and facilities, analyzing their potential impact on the community and the department's capacity to manage them.
- **Action Step 3:** Ensure new projects and programs align with the agency's mission, vision, and strategic plan to maintain consistency and long-term sustainability.

2. Ensure Adequate Resources and Budgeting

- **Action Step 1:** Develop detailed financial plans for all new programs, projects, and facilities, ensuring they have sufficient funding, staff, and materials to be successful.
- **Action Step 2:** Explore diverse funding sources, including grants, partnerships, sponsorships, and earned income strategies, to support new initiatives.
- **Action Step 3:** Monitor and adjust budgets regularly to ensure financial sustainability and identify potential funding gaps early on.

3. Recruit, Train, and Support New Staff

- **Action Step 1:** Develop clear job descriptions and recruiting strategies for new positions, ensuring the department attracts diverse and qualified candidates.
- **Action Step 2:** Implement an onboarding process that helps new staff understand the department's mission, goals, and work culture. Provide clear expectations and support to ensure staff integrate effectively into the team.
- **Action Step 3:** Establish a peer-support system where new staff can receive guidance and advice from more experienced colleagues, fostering a collaborative and supportive work environment.

4. Monitor Progress and Assess Program Impact

- **Action Step 1:** Set up systems for tracking the progress of new programs, facilities, and projects, including clear milestones, timelines, and performance indicators to measure success.
- **Action Step 2:** Implement regular check-ins or reviews to ensure that new programs are on track and resources are used effectively.

- **Action Step 3:** Use data-driven methods to evaluate the impact of new initiatives, including gathering feedback from participants, staff, and stakeholders and using the findings to improve or adapt programs as needed.
 - 5. **Build Infrastructure to Support New Facilities**
 - **Action Step 1:** Ensure new facilities are strategically located to maximize accessibility and impact and equipped with the necessary technology, space, and resources to support programming.
 - **Action Step 2:** Plan for long-term maintenance and sustainability of new facilities by developing a facility management plan that includes budget projections for upkeep, staffing, and operational needs.
 - **Action Step 3:** Establish partnerships with the community to ensure that new facilities are designed with community input, are accessible, and fit the department's needs.
 - 6. **Promote Community Engagement and Public Awareness**
 - **Action Step 1:** Develop community engagement and marketing strategies to promote new programs and projects. Highlight how these initiatives serve the community and align with public interests.
 - **Action Step 2:** Engage local media outlets, community organizations, and influencers to spread the word about new initiatives and encourage participation.
 - **Action Step 4:** Use social media, websites, and email newsletters to maintain awareness and generate continued interest in new offerings, keeping the sector and community informed about updates and opportunities.
 - 7. **Ensure Sustainability and Long-Term Success**
 - **Action Step 1:** Develop long-term sustainability plans for new programs, projects, and facilities, including strategies for securing future funding, expanding impact, and maintaining momentum.
 - **Action Step 2:** Identify opportunities for program expansion or scaling based on early successes and build a long-term vision that evolves with the community's needs.
 - **Action Step 3:** Establish a long-term evaluation and feedback loop to continuously refine and adapt programs, ensuring they remain relevant and effective.
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Expected Outcomes:

- A seamless and effective integration of new programs, projects, and staff into the department's operations.
- Increased community participation and support for new initiatives.
- A fully supported and sustainable arts and culture ecosystem that fosters growth and long-term success.

- High staff satisfaction and retention due to comprehensive training, mentoring, and a supportive work environment.
- Strong financial health, diverse and sustainable funding streams for new projects and programs.

This goal ensures the department's new initiatives' successful implementation and long-term sustainability by focusing on thorough planning, strategic resource allocation, effective recruitment, and community engagement.

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