Cultural Delray Beach:

creative authentic intimate

"I don't know of any other place in Florida where you can park your car – or leave it at home – and walk to the beach, to 50 great restaurants, to galleries, parks, museums, historic districts and businesses."

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Executive Summary:

Throughout its history, Delray Beach has demonstrated a creative nature and special assets – sense of place, human scale, intimacy, civic ambition and a can-do spirit. This plan calls for Delray Beach to embrace and magnify these civic attributes and harness them to forge a powerful competitive advantage that sets the city apart nationally as creative, authentic and intimate.

From research, interviews and analysis, the following key context for this plan was formed:

- Delray Beach lacks a "big picture" for its cultural future and an institutional keeper of the vision.
- Delray Beach must compete on its own terms, because to do otherwise homogenizes its experiences. Its niche is as a place of creative, authentic and intimate cultural experiences.
- Delray Beach needs more rationality and transparency in cultural funding.
- Funding for cultural groups needs to tie back to priorities and goals set by the City of Delray Beach and to hard measures of accountability.
- It is in the entire city's interest for Old School Square to reach its full potential and balance the emphasis on revenue-producing events with the need for greater diversity and relevance for the entire community.
- A silo mentality among cultural groups and the absence of a connecting vision means that one plus one doesn't equal three.
- Delray Beach is woefully under-marketed, particularly online, the critical medium for members of the creative economy. There must be an emphasis on improved, professional looking, appealing marketing at the primary points of con tact for city information.
- The concept of Delray Beach as a "learning city" positions the city in an intriguing way on a national basis.

Recommendations were then developed within four frameworks:

1. Building the Cultural Infrastructure
2. Public Funding and Support
3. Creating a Learning Community
4. Telling and Selling the Delray Beach Story

The centerpiece of this plan is creation of the Delray Beach Creative City Collaborative (CCC) as the umbrella organization for culture. City government shoulders the funding responsibility for the city's cultural organizations and events – through direct funding or in-kind services. The primary function of the CCC is to strategically target culture as a competitive advantage and increase funding to enlarge the cultural scene, trigger innovation and creativity strategies, fund existing cultural groups and champion new initiatives to claim Delray Beach's unique niche.

In addition, the CCC plays a crucial role in the funding process for cultural organizations. It will establish a transparent process for evaluating requests for funding from city government and the CRA by cultural groups, for issuing recommendations to city officials for funding levels and for evaluating performance standards. We recommend a startup budget of $150,000, with half of the funding coming from city government and half from private sources, and a staff of two persons – an executive director who will direct the CCC and a coordinator who will have dual responsibilities to the CCC and city government regarding cultural events. If it is determined that this public/private partnership is not practical at this time, the City of Delray Beach should form the Creative City Collaborative as a public body responsible for executing the recommendations of this plan.

Delray Beach has a unique niche that it can stake out in the cultural landscape of Southern Florida, but in addition, it is a niche that is so unique that it can produce a national reputation for the community as a place where culture is distinctively creative, authentic and intimate.

Among the key recommendations of this plan are:
• Mayor's Awards for Creativity to honor cultural leaders and celebrate cultural achievements
• Pursuit of an artists' co-op and tax-free arts and cultural district to build Delray Beach's critical cultural mass and be a magnet for artists to work and live
• Animating and programming Old School Square to make sure that it is known for its diversity, vibrancy and activity, both internally and externally
• Development of a national African-American festival recognized as a premier event of its kind and for a single-minded focus on producing this annual event
• Emphasis by the new public art board on higher impact,

compelling projects
- Delray Beach Arts Cabana which positions the city on the leading edge of exploding new creativity by becoming a hub of participatory creativity where workshops, lessons, classes, discussions and exhibitions in a range of artistic disciplines enliven the city and make it a destination for people pursu ing their art and developing their creative expressions; it also responds to Palm Beach County's need for "live/work" space for artists
- Delray Beach Narration Project which is rooted in the city's oral traditions and community participation to create a "wall-less museum" where citizens are curators of the city's story which can be heard at "story stations" across Delray Beach
- Marketing Resource Center where resources are available to support the professional marketing of Delray Beach's image with special emphasis on the "village by the sea" brand

Coletta & Company
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Index

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creative authentic intimate

Introduction

Delray Beach has always been a city of its own creation, a city that has depended on home-grown and organic ideas, a city where a vein of creativity has led it to pursue its own identity and control its own destiny. If this were not the case, it would never have made the astonishing journey from a downtown of boarded up buildings and auto repair shops in the late 1980's to the bustling, charming downtown of today.

It is a long way from Delray Beach's earliest days when William Linton and David Swinton led a group of Michigan transplants to pull the first plows that turned the land inside out for year-round crops and to lay the seeds for a new community. It was 1894, and in that era, the diversity that was to become a hallmark of Delray Beach was also planted in the city's soil when African-American and Japanese farmers migrated to the area.

In 1901, the area was named Delray Beach -- "of the king" -- and by the 1920's, it was a booming tourist destination and a popular writer's colony; by the 1930's, the likes of authors Edna St. Vincent Millay, Zora Neal Hurston and Theodore Pratt as well as cartoonist Fontaine Fox and political cartoonist Walter Enright were among visitors and permanent residents. It was an unpretentious and genuine culture, and its accessibility became a trademark of the city's persona that remains today.

Twenty years ago, the city faltered. Delray Beach was devastated by a deserved reputation as a drug and crime haven. Its economy floundered. Its downtown deteriorated. It watched as the region boomed, but in 1988, when threatened with the demolition of its downtown, its people summoned up their creative energy to speak with one voice and begin to reinvent the city into the "village by the sea."

Armed with a mission that it developed then and which guides the city today – "to create a renaissance that enhances the unique cultural, historical and natural resources which make this an attractive community to a diverse and balanced population"– Delray Beach took its first determined steps toward the future. Few cities have as capably articulated their own dreams for themselves and

kept on task, and the inclusion of culture as part of the founding dream makes Delray Beach especially unique.

The progress made by Delray Beach is a model for cities of its size. Such turnarounds frequently take decades and decades. The fruits of this 17-year journey in Delray Beach are obvious to any visitor. Buildings that were eyesores are now sophisticated restaurants and charming boutiques. The historic areas predicted for doom are bustling and vibrant, invigorated by the prevalent belief among its citizens that they can shape the future today. City government pioneered a number of breakthrough programs that won it a national reputation for public involvement and innovation. The racial divide that threatened progress inspired a conversation noted for its honesty and openness, and it remains a civic priority. Culture became a strength that made direct contributions to Delray Beach's economy, but more importantly, to the character of the city itself.

We say all this to make a central point: the people of Delray Beach have proven capable at the most difficult work of city-building and place-making, and now turning their full attention to cultural development, they can shape and exploit Delray Beach's creative assets and become nationally known as a center of the creative economy.

Today, a positive quality of life is the expectation of every citizen of Delray Beach, and in order to leverage its cultural potential, mobilize its cultural organizations and expand its strategic cultural assets, the City of Delray Beach commissioned Coletta & Company to develop a vision of the future that stakes out the city's distinctive competitive cultural advantages not only to produce tangible benefits – economic impact – but equally important intangible benefits – sense of community, bridges between the races, shared pride and experiences, confidence in the future and national recognition.

Throughout its life, Delray Beach has demonstrated a creative nature and an inventive, can-do spirit. This plan calls for Delray Beach to embrace and magnify this civic attitude and harness it as a powerful competitive advantage for the city in creative, authentic and intimate ways.

Cultural Delray Beach:
creative authentic intimate

Delray Beach Culture

DELRAY BEACH IS AN OASIS IN A SEA OF CULTURAL RICHES THAT
RIVALS ANY SUPER-REGION IN THE UNITED STATES:

1.   Within a 30-minute drive, there are 1,600 restaurants, 38 golf
       courses, six museums, seven zoos or gardens, innumerable
       festivals and various performing arts centers and
       performance venues – from rustic outdoor amphitheatres to
       highly sophisticated performance halls.

2.   More than 700 cultural organizations operate in Palm Beach
       County alone, the county with the highest growth rate – 31%
       -- from 1990 to 2000 in the South Florida metropolitan area.

3.   The super-region that contains Delray Beach offers an array
       of attractions, events and activities that boggle the mind.
       The culinary scene is nationally trend-setting, the pop
       culture scene is dynamic and magnetic and traditional
       culture is represented in every imaginable permutation.

4.   The sixth largest super-region in the U.S. (and third most
       densely populated behind New York City and Los Angeles)
       is characterized by rapid growth that overwhelmed many
       cities, altering their basic character, obliterating their
       authenticity and producing homogeneity of experience.

Within this banquet of cultural activity is Delray Beach, faced with a
unique chance to stake out a successful future built on its creative,
authentic and intimate potential to use culture as a competitive
edge to define the "village by the sea." Statistically (U.S. Bureau of
Census, 2000), the following portrays Delray Beach within the
context of Palm Beach County:

	DELRAY BEACH	P.B. COUNTY.
White population	66.5%	79.1%
Black population	26.6%	13.8%
Hispanic population	7.0%	12.4%
HS Graduate or Higher	81.0%	83.6%
College Degree	29.3%	27.7%

Per Capita Income	$29,350	$28,801
Median Family Income	$51,195	$53,701
Poverty rate (families)	8.2%	6.9%
Median Commute	22.4 mins.	25.7 min.
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Homes	$127,700	$135,200
Under 14 Years of Age	15.4%	18%
20-44 Age Bracket	31.6%	32%
Over 65 years of age	25.9%	23%
Land Area	15.39 sq. mis.	2,023 sq.mis
Additional Season Pop.	7,628	123,725
Median Age	43.8	41.8
Speak non-English at Home (5 years and older)	25.5%	21.7%
Vacant Housing	15.5%	14.8%
Owner-occupied housing	69.7%	74.4%
Married – own house	49.5%	58.2%
Female-headed household	26.6%	23.1%
Median Mortgage	$1,141	$1,189
Median Rent	$704	$648
Crime Index Reduction (1990 vs. 2000)	-42.7%	-36.3%

The numbers reflect many of the characteristics that make Delray Beach unique to the region - African-American and Haitian contributions to the city's heritage, a higher percentage of college-educated residents, a more mature population, an older built environment, improved safety, more affordable homes and households reflecting today's changing lifestyles.

Delray Beach accounts for a smaller percentage of Palm Beach County's population than 25 years ago. In 1980, 6 percent of all permanent county residents lived in Delray Beach. It is 4.9 percent now. (The seasonal population of Palm Beach County that lives in Delray Beach is 6.2 percent of Palm Beach County's total.)

Statistics alone do not capture the distinctive differences that set apart Delray Beach and position its cultural development so strategically – its human scale, investments in quality of life, a historic and unspoiled downtown, and a heritage of citizen involvement.

Meanwhile, Delray Beach's slower pace of growth gives it the opportunity to define its own future unlike other cities overrun with

development and without a clear vision for the future. That is why it is encouraging that the city government and the CRA have taken strong steps to guide growth and establish design standards as development steps up.

It is an environment that attracts and appeals to artists, craftspeople and other workers in the creative economy. The Palm Beach County Cultural Council Artist Directory lists 644 artists; 56 live in Delray Beach. In other words, Delray Beach has 4.9 percent of Palm Beach County's population, but it has a disproportionate share of artists -- 8.7 percent. This attests in a direct way to the gravitational pull that the city has on people whose art includes painting, printmaking, illustration, sculpture, music composition and performance, glass, ceramics, jewelry, film and video, puppetry, photography, poetry and writing. It is a reservoir of creativity that can be tapped to define the village sensibility that is central to Delray Beach's character.

Goals in this year's Delray Beach budget objectives with direct cultural implications are:

Expanded Neighborhoods –
•   Making a unique downtown which is interesting, culturally diverse and quaint
•   Pedestrian-friendly businesses on West Atlantic
Quality Neighborhoods Where People Want To Live –
•   Quality infill development consistent with our neighborhood character
•   Neighbors taking responsibility for their neighborhoods, for each other
•   Expanded beautification citywide to neighborhoods
Expanded Diversified Economy –
•   Planned strategy to attract targeted businesses
•   Support local-owned businesses, including helping businesses to grow in Central Atlantic area
•   Reputation: attracting the "creative class"
Community Unity –
•   Citizens feeling included in creating an inclusive community
•   Citizens working together to solve problems
•   Recognition: multi-cultural community
•   Positive, two-way communications between city and our stakeholders
•   Continued dialog between the community and the city

In other words, it is clear that Delray Beach recognizes the potential

"Cultural developing in Delray moves in fits and starts."

of its own culture to shape a progressive and distinctive future. It is a fact recognized by all of the people interviewed and surveyed for this plan – from civic leaders to men and women on the street. Every person expressed a shared commitment to expanding and enhancing Delray Beach's culture, and all said they want to build a future that is unique and distinctive. Based on our interviews and surveys, this is a principle on which all Delray Beach citizens have unanimity. Culture is already part of the civic thinking on strategies for the future and this shared determination gives this plan its best chance to be realized. This is not to say that every citizen of Delray Beach agreed on tactics or next steps, but the fact that every one is eager for the journey is an important, positive force for Delray Beach.

Cultural development has moved in "fits and starts," to quote one observer of the Delray Beach scene. There have clearly been some missteps and failures, but these have most often resulted from risk-taking, which is a virtue for a city, not a vice. These are important learning experiences for the city as the recommendations of this plan are pursued, but what are fundamentally needed are a sustained, structured process; transparent funding processes; a distinctive cultural niche and better marketing.

Like all cities, Delray Beach has pockets of distrust, disillusionment, concerns about fair play and even confusion among people who are instrumental to the success of this plan. The good news is that all are passionate about their city and its ambitions, as evidenced in Delray Beach's level of citizen involvement and input. Even those who feel bruised are eager to embark on plans to make Delray Beach the most creative city that it can be.

It is impressive to see how much is being done right in Delray Beach – nationally ranked public schools, an innovative program of civic engagement that has garnered national praise, two All-America City Awards, controlled growth and an emphasis on preservation and placemaking. However, a number of the people interviewed are unaware of the strides that have been made in Delray Beach and its national reputation for progressive policies and innovative programs. There is even less awareness of the fact that Delray Beach backs up its talk about culture with a major financial commitment to it. In the most recent fiscal year, the amount of city funds dedicated to culture, festivals and special events was $1,042,055, a critical, praiseworthy investment for a city of Delray Beach's size.

Only a few mid-sized cities are working on so many fronts to leap

frog their city forward. The realities of the global economy tell us that cities content to keep pace with their rivals have already sealed their future. Culture offers Delray Beach the opportunity for dramatic progress by exploiting its assets – authenticity, intimacy, human scale and civic ambition. These are core assets that many cities can only dream of, especially those cities that have been forever made different through the loss of their essential characters by the rapid growth of Florida's Gold Coast.

The change that has taken place in Delray Beach from the mid-1980's until the present is a national best practice in place-making. Chiefly responsible for this turnaround was a simple premise that continues today – the belief that every citizen has the right to have a voice in city decision-making. It directly connects to the feeling of intimacy and authenticity that exists in Delray Beach.

Cultural Delray Beach:
creative authentic intimate

Eight Principles to Guide Cultural Development:

Delray Beach must develop its unique niche in a world that is increasingly more competitive and complex. Culture is in a time of great change. A cultural plan is an organized public and private effort to generate and coordinate cultural activities that can enrich Delray Beach's quality of life and increase the excitement and enjoyment of living there. Ideally, it involves integrating the arts, cultural facilities and events with all aspects of community and economic development, planning and design, tourism and community promotion.

Delray Beach possesses resources that can be capitalized on for this cultural plan. Elected and appointed leaders have been untiring advocates for culture, but they need a more strategic focus for their work, the kind of focus that comes from a formalized, structured community program of work. In Delray Beach, there are a number of people with cultural experience on the national stage, and their unique skills must be fused into a plan. There are local cultural leaders who understand the city from the grassroots, and their knowledge must be harnessed. It is through a shared plan of work and mutual goals that Delray Beach can stake out its unique cultural place that sets it apart from what is offered in the super-region.

Looking ahead, there are eight principles that we identified for Delray Beach that should guide its work as a creative, authentic and intimate city:

Principle #1
Consumers are being pulled in a multitude of directions by convenient opportunities for entertainment that are increasing exponentially. More and more, people want what they want when they want it and where they are. Arts and cultural events are normally place-specific, and because of it, it is hard to compete with entertainment that can be downloaded, podcast and Tivo'ed. New ways are needed to connect people with culture where they are and to tap into a growing interest by people in being participants, rather than mere observers, of culture.

Principle #2

Delray Beach is a small island in a sea of cultural bounty. It won't stake out its place by having a range of average activities, but by identifying a distinctive niche and producing peak experiences that resonate with its village by the sea image.

Principle #3

Cities can use original, attention-getting ideas to call attention to their cultures – the cow sculpture project in Chicago; the samba lessons taught to every citizen in Lyon, France, that culminated on a day when the entire city danced in the street; people writing a novel in a store window in New York City; guitars given to every 13-year-old in a Brazilian city; after school poetry classes in city parks in a West Coast city. These are the kinds of things that contribute to a palpable sense of community, produce a positive energy that infuses the city and its image and tap into the participatory, interactive trends of today.

Principle #4

There are ways for cities to encourage culture beyond public subsidies and grants. There are tax benefits for artists' studios, zoning for arts districts, experimentation and innovation districts, sales tax waivers on local art, public space for artists and more. Artists are often looking for help in finding a place where the creative process can take place, help that can be more important than direct funding.

Principle #5

Creative enterprises of all types are seeing the ground shift underneath them. There is the need for reinvention because audiences seem to be declining across the board for many cultural anchors, including movies, theater, live classical music and dance. Industries like music are clinging to old models, and in time, they will yield to forces unleashed by technology and consumer expectations. Mass culture is dominated more and more by commercialization that tends toward generic, derivative products. Authenticity and intimacy are ways to stake out distinctive territory for Delray Beach.

Principle #6

Walker Percy said the problem with culture is that we must wrest meaning from experiences that inevitably come to us prepackaged and disconnected from our own assumptions and expectations. Ways that connect more viscerally and more personally to the

village by the sea and interact with citizens and visitors can build a binding narrative for Delray Beach, jolt the imagination and raise expectations.

Principle #7
In the U.S. about 44 percent of whites, 28 percent of African-American and Haitian and 23 percent of Hispanics attended an arts/culture event in the past 12 months. Education and income are the strongest indicators of cultural support. More college graduates – 64 percent – attended than high school graduates – 25 percent - and the higher the earnings, the greater the attendance at cultural events. While these groups are lucrative target markets, cities must make extra efforts to make culture accessible and meaningful to all citizens.

Principle #8
Festivals and special events are proven ways to animate and punctuate the life of cities, and Delray Beach is making major investments in this area. These kinds of events offer unexpected surprises to residents and visitors alike. They also speak to the values of the community and to the symbolic importance of events as rituals of hope and meaning for the city.

Key Insights

In the course of our research, interviews and surveys, the following key insights about Delray Beach were developed, and they informed the recommendations of this plan:

• Delray Beach lacks a "big picture" of its cultural future and an institutional keeper of the vision. There is the need for a shared narrative and vision.
• Delray Beach must compete on its own terms and based on its unique assets. The city is surrounded by cultural anchors of all kinds, especially performing arts centers. To compete on these same terms homogenizes the city's unique experiences and positions the city as "more of the same." Delray Beach's unique niche is as a place of creative, authentic and intimate cultural experiences.
• There is a need for more rationality and transparency in cultural funding. The present funding process raises suspicions by some and engenders ill will. Rather than city leaders being praised for a commitment to culture, elected

"We need to make sure that village isn't a stale concept, but is vibrant and exciting."

and appointed leaders' motivations are questioned and agendas projected onto them, contributing to a gulf between some groups and undercutting the full governmental and civic benefits of public funding.

- Funding to cultural groups needs to tie back to priorities and goals set by the City of Delray Beach, but it is difficult for the public sector to perform this role in a political context. Every city has charming "vanity projects" proposed by well-meaning and involved citizens, but often they do not reflect the overall civic priorities of a place. Hard measures of accountability are often difficult to inject into funding, because measurements are unquantifiable for the intrinsic and personal value of the arts and culture; however, for example, if Delray Beach sets a goal to attract young professionals, to contribute to diversity of programming or to reward cultural collaboration, funding should be tied directly to these desired outcomes. In addition, emphasis must be given to capacity-building, fund-raising and board development of the cultural organizations.

- The invisible walls that separate the perceived "white areas" and the perceived "black" areas are a drag on the progress that is being made in Delray Beach and the confidence needed to achieve this plan.

- Old School Square is the cultural anchor for Delray Beach, and it is in the entire city's interest for it to reach its full potential. The city has made important investments in Old School Square, as reflected in the most recent fiscal year when 60 percent of the total amount spent by city government for culture, festivals and special events went to the facility. The size of these expenditures make it incumbent upon Old School Square to be fully representative of the city's population and to fully address the public policy goals for culture in Delray Beach. The city is addressing the need for Old School Square to have a sense of arrival and a strong sense of place. There is the need to find the careful balance between the center's focus on revenue-producing events and the need for greater diversity and relevance for the entire community. It is a priority for Old School Square to be all that it can be, because of its central geographic location and iconic role in the life of the city.

- A silo mentality is prevalent in Delray Beach among cultural groups and organizers, and in the absence of a connective fabric in the community, one plus one never equals three in terms of momentum, impact and progress.

- Delray Beach is woefully under-marketed. Its resonance is no indication of its reality, especially online, the critical medium of information-gathering for members of the creative economy. There needs to be an emphasis on improved, professional-looking, appealing marketing at the primary points of contact for city information. There has to be more relationship between the Delray Beach that we see in person and the one reflected online.
- Delray Beach's schools are nationally recognized, but the perceptions of many citizens have not caught up with the reality. The concept of Delray Beach as a "learning city" offers intriguing possibilities for uniquely positioning it on a national basis.
- The following strengths and weaknesses were identified in our interviews and in our research:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Presence of artists/craftspeople and active cultural organizations	Lack of a structure to pursue aspirational plans and to fund them
Tradition of citizen involvement	Lack of shared purpose
Survivors' pride	Silo thinking among cultural groups
Flexibility/risk-taking of CRA	Lack of transparency in public funding for culture
Public commitment to culture	Inconsistent quality in events and festivals
Authentic downtown with architectural integrity	Need for renewing the imagination in events
Old School Square physical presence and cultural potential	Lack of animation and diverse programming at Old School Square
Capacity to find strength in apparent weakness	Lack of strong tradition of collaboration between cultural organizations

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Strategic thinking, goal-setting and risk-taking in the public sector	Perceptions of lack of concern about potential moves of Women in Visual Arts, Photographic Center and Museum of Fashion and Lifestyle History
Strong, appealing "café society"	Need to better market cuisine and culture
Widespread passion about city's future	Inadequate training, capacity-building and marketing skills for cultural groups
Appealing human scale	Inadequate marketing, particularly online
Long-term focus, rather than short-term political one	Need for clearly stated funding priorities and accountability based upon them
Political and civic leadership and openness to new ideas	Lack of incentives to make the city the location of choice for artists
New 1 ½ percent public arts program	Low impact of existing public art
Multi-cultural diversity	Over-reliance on public sector funding and support
Strong support for culture and festivals and enthusiasm found in cultural organizations	Need for cross-organizational thinking among cultural groups
Best public beach in region and most charming downtown	Lack of cohesive, coordinated marketing and communications
City policies requiring nonprofits funding	Need for measurable accountability that responds to city priorities

The Recommendations

Based on these assumptions, insights, principles and strengths and weaknesses, recommendations were developed within four broad areas that can lead the city to carving out its niche as a participatory and intimate village by the sea:

1) **Building the Cultural Infrastructure**
2) **Public Funding and Support**
3) **Creating a Learning Community**
4) **Telling and Selling the Delray Beach Story**

Building the Cultural Infrastructure

• **Create the Delray Beach Creative City Collaborative**

The city government of Delray Beach has for some time shouldered an inordinate amount of the funding responsibility for the city's cultural organizations and events – either through direct funding or in-kind services. In the most recent fiscal year, this amount surpassed $1 million.

At present arts and culture organizations communicate a perceived sense of entitlement to city support and seem to lack an understanding of the importance of organizational development for their groups to achieve their potential. Coupled with this, city government has done a poor job of calling for accountability on the part of the groups it has supported.

This is not to say that funding levels should be decreased, but it seems clear that the return on the sizable public investment in culture is not what it should be. More emphasis should be placed on all cultural organizations' funding being linked to discernible, measurable public policy objectives. Also, more emphasis should be placed on both accountability and capacity building within organizations so that they can become more self-sustaining, create stronger board involvement and public support and develop new revenues that can fund innovative, new initiatives.

Now, there is a sense that the city has an obligation to fund someone's special project and personal dream, and changes are needed on both sides of the table. City government must clearly set out its priorities and serve notice that funds will follow them directly. At the same time, groups must take charge of their own destinies

and become more realistic about their organizational development.

Cultural development is a three-legged stool, requiring public, private and institutional sectors. And yet, the City of Delray Beach fills this role without the community-based cultural agency that is needed for real progress. Lacking in Delray Beach is a fundamental part of its infrastructure – a private/public partnership to act as the nonprofit umbrella cultural organization for directing the city's strategic cultural vision, for making evaluations on funding recommendations for the community and for attracting more funds for cultural initiatives.

We recommend creation of The Delray Beach Creative City Collaborative (CCC) to become the public/private partnership needed in Delray Beach. We recommend that Mayor Jeff Perlman launch a process to gauge private and institutional support for the new group and to convene a committee to develop plans for the new cultural agency. The meeting should include, but not be limited to, the City of Delray Beach, Greater Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce, Delray Beach Joint Venture, Delray Merchants Association, Delray Beach Community Redevelopment Agency, Hispano-Latino Cultural Alliance, EPOCH, Old School Square and two members of the former Delray Beach Cultural Alliance selected by alliance members. The committee's purpose is to exercise due diligence and begin organizational development. If there is the private support that is required for the success of the CCC, the committee is to write a mission statement for the new organization; to handle its incorporation as a private, nonprofit organization; to establish its operational structure and to appoint its founding board of directors.

If there is not the level of commitment needed from the private sector, the City of Delray Beach should create the CCC and execute the recommendations of this report with a new public board appointed for this purpose.

The Delray Beach Creative City Collaborative becomes the city's leader for culture. It brings an independence and an unyielding focus that are missing now in the civic infrastructure. It becomes the focal point for public involvement and for greater private sector engagement. It reviews all requests for public funding for culture in light of city priorities and makes funding recommendations to city government, it evaluates and recommends requests for city in-kind services for cultural events, it raises money for culture and supports

cultural organizations' capacity-building, and it is responsible, in partnership with the City of Delray Beach, for carrying out the recommendations of this report.

The CCC is a fundamental building block for Delray Beach's cultural development. There are about 4,000 local arts agencies in the U.S., and they are the backbone of cities' cultural infrastructure. The operations of each is unique to the city that it serves; however, all are rooted in the purpose of strengthening existing cultural organizations, expanding cultural offerings, making the arts accessible to all members of the community and serving the diverse culture found in the community. According to Americans for the Arts, about 60 percent of arts agencies provide financial support; about 65 percent manage cultural facilities such as gallery space and incubators; most offer services for artists such as workshops, technical help and advocacy; and about 90 percent collaborate with groups to achieve cultural strategies. Government funding accounts for about one-third of the funding of arts agencies; 22 percent receive hotel/motel funding; 17 percent receive funds from percent-for-art ordinances, and 10 percent are funded through property taxes.

With the establishment of the CCC, Delray Beach brings together the public, private and institutional leadership that becomes "keeper of the vision" and gives clout to an organization that can inspire the city and strategically target resources to achieve Delray Beach's cultural goals. In particular, organizational silo thinking in Delray Beach is a barrier to synergy, inter-organization innovation, development of collaborations, shared planning and visioning. The CCC becomes a vehicle to vault these obstacles.

The Delray Beach Creative City Collaborative becomes the official consensus-building organization for Delray Beach on important issues affecting the city's cultural future. It is common ground where all parts of the city can join hands to work together for a shared future. It is the official umbrella organization for culture sanctioned by the City of Delray Beach.

Some of the key issues to be considered by the CCC are:

1) **Grants-making**
   A primary function of the CCC is both to strategically target culture and increase funding. City funding must be complemented with privately raised funds that can enlarge the cultural scene, trigger innovation and creativity

> "Delray Beach's culture is varied and full, but uncoordinated. And it seems to lack venues to showcase emerging, alternative arts. Would like to see great live jazz, good theatre and new arts. Would also like having more access to information about activities."

"The process of applying for and getting funds from the city is confusing and feels guarded, inconsistent and suspicious. We're lumped in with social service groups, and frankly, we can't compete with them for dollars."

strategies, fund existing cultural groups and champion new initiatives to claim Delray Beach's unique niche.

The mechanics of the grants-making process are to be set by the CCC; however, guiding principles that should be cornerstones for its work are:

Accountability.
Measurements that assess effectiveness and impact are fundamental to the success of the CCC. They need to be clearly stated and easily understood. They ensure that performance standards support priorities set for Delray Beach. Fundamental to the CCC are policies that ensure even-handedness and fairness, but also, the best use of funding for culture.

Transparency.
Openness of the grants-making process addresses existing confusion and suspicion of the public grants process. Detailed information about the criteria for the grants, the names of the committee members and explanations of the grants decisions result in a public process understood and supported by the community.

Stewardship.
As steward of community resources, the CCC must take a long view of its role, setting strong financial safeguards and policies that protect its investments. It also infuses the ethos of stewardship into cultural activities.

Engagement.
The success of the CCC relates directly to the level of commitment and participation by its board in the critical organizational phase, which will set the foundation for the agency's future. Some organizations require board members to sign pledges that set out specific responsibilities for fund-raising and board involvement

Partnerships.
Challenges facing cities are becoming increasingly more complex and resources are harder to raise. Partnerships and collaborations create new ideas and energy that attract new funding.

Diversity.
The board must be reflective of the city that it serves.

2)   **Marketing and communications**
Delray Beach's brand identity is weak and does no justice to the city's reality. There is little emphasis on Delray Beach as the best base from which visitors can sample the cultural and

recreational riches of the region. This is a missed opportunity because cultural tourism is one of the fastest-growing segments of the tourism economy, and Delray Beach does little to promote this aspect of its character.

The city's brand as "the village by the sea" needs strengthening, particularly on the World Wide Web. The city offers much more than is now portrayed on websites and in publications. The "village by the sea" image evokes mental images of art galleries, bistros and intimate gathering places.

In other words, elevating and investing in culture are central to fulfilling this image of a charming seaside village, one that is creative, authentic and intimate.

The Delray Beach Creative City Collaborative should ensure that the "village by the sea" image is the dominant theme for its website and a encourage it as the thread for all websites; pursue cross-promotional and umbrella marketing opportunities; and develop innovative strategies for establishing a stronger position in the marketplace.* Today, creating "buzz" generates positive interest and impressions of a city, and this is done by focusing on nontraditional, as well as traditional, marketing and communications strategies.

Additionally, the CCC's own professionally designed website should highlight cultural events and host a master calendar of arts and culture events in the city. This web site itself should be heavily marketed during its first year to build awareness.

See the section "Telling and Selling the Delray Beach Story" for a detailed analysis of current marketing for the city.

Suggested strategies for strengthening marketing include:

Offer a Marketing Resource Center
While individual cultural organizations and events have their own identities and brands to uphold, the CCC should offer marketing resources (templates, examples, lists of professional graphic designers offering discounted services to non-profits, shared direct-mail database, etc.) to those who want it. This will support the overall goal of professionally

marketing its image with complementary marketing of the institutions and events that contribute to the cultural landscape. Special emphasis should be placed on enhancing and expanding the "village by the sea" brand.

"Mayor's Awards for Creativity"
To support creativity as a civic asset and to celebrate its role in the life of Delray Beach, the CCC should consider a program to present creativity awards each year – for culture organizations, for individuals, for youth, for artists, etc. – that honor and spotlight the impact of creativity in Delray Beach and the contributions made by creative people and cultural organizations.

3)   **Artist-centered strategies for cultural development**
The CCC should evaluate and explore the feasibility of strategies for establishing Delray Beach as an artist-friendly city and as the preferred location for artists' residences, studios and galleries. Strategies to be considered include:

Artists' Co-op
Artists' associations have been effective in galvanizing resources, developing innovative programs, operating arts venues and sponsoring arts events. Co-ops also organize and conduct classes and exhibits, give lectures and set up youth art camps.

Best Practice: Arts Prescott Gallery and Van Gogh's Ear

Location: Prescott, Arizona

Two galleries owned and operated by artists' co-ops, Arts Prescott Gallery and Van Gogh's Ear, were instrumental to the redevelopment of the "Whiskey Row" area of downtown Prescott, Arizona.

Arts Prescott Gallery was founded in 1994 by a group of artists dedicated to opening a quality environment for selling their work. Van Gogh's Ear is a newer artist-owned cooperative gallery, but it too emphasizes a warm, professional space for the display of artworks. Forty artists are members of its cooperative.

The two artists' co-ops not only operate gallery space, but they unleash a force for culture that has been key to Prescott's phenomenal emergence as an arts town.

Another model of a successful artists' co-op is in Berkley Springs, West Virginia, where it operates the Ice House Arts Center.

www.artsprescott.com   www.whiskey.row.us/vangogh/vangogh.html   www.macicehouse.org

Tax-free arts and cultural district
The CCC should pursue state legislation that creates tax incentives for artists to live and work in specified areas of Delray Beach in support of Florida's economic development, revitalization, tourism and cultural development goals. Model legislation exempts any art created within the district from sales tax as long as it is sold within the district and exempts all sales of locally created, one-of-a-kind art sold from galleries in the district.

Best Practice: Rhode Island Tax-Free Arts Districts

Locations: Providence, Pawtucket, Westerly, Woonsocket, Tiverton, Newport, Warwick and Warren, Rhode Island

The Rhode Island General Assembly passed legislation in 1998 that created tax incentives for artists to live and work in specific "districts." In setting up the districts, the legislature said "the development of an active artistic community, including 'artists in residence,' would promote economic development, revitalization, tourism, employment opportunities and encourage business development by providing alternative commercial enterprises."

Specifically, the legislation grants three kinds of incentives:

- artists who live and work in the district are exempted from paying state sales tax on any work created within the district

- artists who live and work in the district are exempted from personal income tax for any income from the sale of work created within the district

- gallery spaces within the district are exempt from state sales tax for all one-of-a-kind artwork sold in them, whether they are created in the district or not

Each city sets out the specific area within its borders that will be its tax-free arts district.

www.arts.ri.gov/artsdistricts.htm

4) **Capacity-building for cultural organizations**
The cultural community in Delray Beach is often seen and seems to see itself as a special interest group. There is a perceived dependency on public largesse rather than on its

own capacity to raise nonpublic funds and to control its own destiny not as a constituent but as a leader. Suggested strategies include:

Organizational development
Fortunately, in Delray Beach, the Nonprofit Academy exists to address the organizational development needs of its nonprofits, and the CCC should work with the Academy to evaluate additional needs that may exist for cultural organizations – such as marketing, establishing a strategic vision and plan, branding and earned income – and to respond with special training classes on these issues.

Capacity-building for cultural organizations is a priority for Delray Beach, because it deepens the effectiveness of existing organizations to succeed and to play a larger role in the economic health of the city.

Business Resource Bank
A bank of resources should be created with members of the business community serving as advisers to cultural groups in specialized areas such as marketing, purchasing, financial management and budgeting. This kind of volunteer expertise can create increased professionalism in the organizations and build working relationships that cross traditional boundaries.

5)   **Animation and programming**

Old School Square
The board of Old School Square and the City of Delray Beach are wisely considering ways to improve the sense of arrival for the centerpiece of the city's cultural scene; however, immediate plans are needed to animate the site because, too often, it lacks vibrancy and is a "dead zone" in downtown. With this in mind, attention to a sense of place should center on high-quality architectural solutions and people-driven designs that enliven and animate Old School Square. Poor design or drab public architecture will further complicate the problems in animating the site.

Best practices for animation strategies include sidewalk art shows, children's events, outdoor musicians and outdoor concerts, but nothing works as quickly and reliably as the

"We need culturally rich events for the entire city."

addition of umbrellaed tables and chairs that become an inviting destination. Old School Square achieves its potential when it generates as much activity externally as internally.

As the designated "cultural center" for Delray Beach, as city property and as the recipient of the preponderance of the city's cultural funding, OSS has the greatest obligation and must meet a higher standard as a primary engine for cultural enrichment and cultural growth in Delray Beach. In this regard, its present programming needs to be strengthened to generate greater creative energy or culture. It must seek ways to better reflect the diversity, ethnicities and cultures of Delray Beach. It must seek a mix to programming that invigorates the city with its imagination and inventivenessthat is more in keeping with the village by the sea image, and positions Old School Square as a dynamic place churning with creativity that becomes a competitive advantage for the city.

Best Practices: Rialto Theatre, Loveland , Colorado; Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, Burlington, Vermont; Germantown Performing Arts Center, Germantown, Tennessee

The Rialto Theater in Loveland, Colorado, is a 1919 vaudeville palace restored to its former beauty. It seats 450 people in a venue used for everything -- touring children's theatre, plays by the local theatre company, a classic movies series, film festivals, touring music acts and classical music concerts.

Recent events are eclectic -- an entertaining appearance by U.S. Poet Laureate Billy Collins; a tribute to Stephen Sondheim's musical theater classics; a Celtic harp concert by Galway, Ireland, and Glasgow, Scotland musicians; The Improv Rodeo; French films; Ball in the House, an a capella pop/R&B group; and Loudon Wainwright III, the humorous and engaging singer/actor. It is a mix that sends the message that the city is a vibrant place known for its creative spark and quality. In addition, it attracts "creative class" members to the community.
The Flynn Center for the Performing Arts in Burlington, Vermont, is housed in an art deco vaudeville house opened in 1930 and restored in 1980 to become a performing arts center. Its stated mission was to "connect our community with the arts." Today, more than 150,000 people attend events at the Center, whose main stage seats 1,453 people and whose MSA population is only 170,000.

The Flynn is noteworthy for the range of its performances, including theater, movies, jazz concerts, dance performances, comedy acts and special events. This year's calendar includes A Comedy Series: Stand Up, Sit Down & Laugh; the Flying Karmazov Brothers' Life: A Guide for the Perplexed; plays like Cyrano and Death and the Ploughman; a series called "An Evening of Music and Film"; a new improvisational movement by its artist-in-residence, dancer Susan Sgorbati; a performance by the American Ballet Theatre and Martha Graham Dance Company; Latin jazz; Wynton Marsalis; Joao Bosco and Musicians; An Evening with Betty Buckley; and Powerhouse Blues and Gospel with Taj Mahal and Mavis Staples.

In a surburb of Memphis, the 11-year-old, 825-seat Germantown Performing Arts Center is characterized by diverse creative offerings, from edgy music and dance ensembles to classical music concerts to touring singers. This year's schedule features its Peanut, Butter and Jam program, introducing students to a variety of musical styles from woodwinds to a rockabilly band; folk singer Arlo Guthrie; a tribute to Johnny Cash through music and dance; violinists Itzhak Perlman and Midori; Oscar-winning songwriter Randy Newman; Spanish Harlem Orchestra; the nontraditional dance troupe Philobus; country folk singer Nanci Griffith; the satirical group Capital Steps, opera singer Kallen Esperian; and a chamber orchestra series.

www.ci.loveland.co.us/rialto.htm   www.flynncenter.org   www.gpacweb.com

"The city has not captured the real strength of the African-American community."

National African-American Festival

The Essence Festival and Tom Joyner's Sky Shows are models for a yearly festival in Delray Beach known for its intimacy and for its national quality. A key lesson from festivals of this scale in other cities teaches that the best business model is for its sponsoring group to have the single purpose of organizing this annual festival, to have a single-minded focus on achieving national impact and to spotlight indigenous American music.

The festival becomes a bridge between the races of Delray Beach, and it has a unique opportunity to increase visitors to the city by staging an annual event recognized as a premier event of its kind.

Black citizens in Delray Beach expressed the feeling that they are shortchanged in current offerings, and in highlighting the city's debt to black heritage (blacks petitioned for the city's first school and formed the city's first civic association at the turn of the 20th century), there is an opportunity to develop a festival with more impact and national significance.

6)   **Starting up the Creative City Collaborative**

We recommend a startup budget of $150,000 for the CCC, half of the funding from City of Delray Beach and half from private sources. If the CCC is to be a fully functioning, highly optimized organization, it must have active involvement and support from the private sector, and this begins with the funding of the organization at its inception.

If there is not this demonstration of commitment from the private sector to cultural development, we recommend that the City of Delray Beach take these recommendations and keep the responsibility for cultural development within city government, executing them through a public board.

The budget covers the salaries of two staff members – an executive director and a special events coordinator. Personnel costs are estimated at about $90,000 and the remaining $60,000 funds office operations and professional consulting help that may be needed. The skills set of the executive director should include experience in fundraising, because there is untapped potential for new financial

support, but also, this expertise, which should include grants experience, is useful in helping cultural organizations learn how to raise funds to expand their financial bases. Other qualifications for the position should include strategic planning and marketing.

The selection of the executive director is critical to the CCC setting a strong foundation for the future, by driving toward strategic goals, in pursuing the plan of work set by the board of the organization and in directing the city public art program.

With the coordinator job, the intent is to create a link between the CCC and city government. There is an existing need within the public sector for more help in coordinating and evaluating special events. There will be a need within the CCC for support for the executive director. We believe that the CCC and city government should jointly establish the job descriptions for this position, so that it can serve both groups' needs.

Clearly, the people of South Florida are aware that on almost any weekend, there is a festival in Delray Beach; however, the events are developing a "hit or miss" reputation. Working with the City of Delray Beach, the special events coordinator will help and support city government in using city services as incentives to upgrade festivals so they have greater consistency in quality and reflect and contribute positively to Delray Beach's economic growth and national positioning.

The coordinator will receive requests from city services for festivals and special events to determine they meet standards and address a cultural priority will serve as the link with city government and will set up policies that define the quality standards that ensure that Delray Beach is known not only as a city of festivals, but quality festivals.

City government has done an admirable job of supporting and responding to the growing number of activities seeking help. This coordinator supports city officials by serving as the first stop where festival organizers can receive information on permits and public regulations, and the coordinator evaluates requests for city services and makes recommendations to the city manager and staff and conducts a post-event evaluation to determine if it achieves

"Delray Beach is becoming known as a city of festivals, but the quality is hit and miss. We've got to have the consistency that assures people that when they go to Delray, they will find events that are well-run, unique and fun."

the impact and positive results it outlined when seeking support. City officials are busy each day conducting the vital, fundamental work of government, and the special events coordinator elevates the level of attention given to these key decisions which reflect directly on Delray Beach's reputation as a village by the sea and city government's investments in this brand.

Public Funding and Support

1) **Grant funding process**
The present process by City of Delray Beach to fund cultural organizations produces distrust by some groups because of a perceived lack of transparency. Now, city administrators receive grant requests, evaluate organizations internally and submit their recommendations to the City Commission for final approval. Cultural organizations almost unanimously complain about the process, which seems cloaked in mystery to them, especially as to who makes the recommendations and what criteria are used.

To bring transparency to funding decisions, The Delray Beach Creative City Collaborative should be charged with the responsibility for screening requests and recommending funding levels. There is now a level of duplication and confusion with both city government and a city agency, the CRA, receiving and granting funding requests from cultural organizations. All cultural funding requests for city and CRA funding would be submitted to the CCC for review and recommendations would be forwarded to the city manager for his consideration and presentation to the City Commission for final approval.

2) **Start-up funding for the CCC**
As mentioned previously, the public sector funds half of the $150,000 annual budget of the CCC. This requires a slight increase in city funding for culture, but the special events coordinator is needed to help city officials in the coordination and evaluation of festivals and special events. Now, these functions are performed by city leaders, and there is an existing need for staff support. Rather than create a new city position, we recommend that Delray Beach's funding covers the cost of the special events coordinator's position as part of its investment in the CCC. Subtracting the

cost of a new city position that is needed if the CCC's special events coordinator did not absorb these duties, new funding by Delray Beach for the CCC is approximately $20,000.

3) **$1 a month for culture**
    The City of Delray Beach should create a program to allow the city's 22,000 utility customers to contribute $1 a month to local cultural development. This is maximum funding of $264,000 a year, and assuming a participation rate of 20 percent, it creates $52,800 in new funding.

4) **Public art program**
    Delray Beach's new public art ordinance sets aside one and a half percent of the cost of city capital projects, excluding some related to utilities and optional for projects less than $200,000, to fund public art. With this new funding, special attention should be given to public art that has greater impact and more presence. Previous public art projects tended to be too modest and low impact, and as a result, they lacked the impact needed to position Delray Beach as a culturally active, attractive and ambitious city. Rather than treating public art as an ornament, the new program must make a strong statement in a visible, compelling way.

    For example, when Loveland, Colorado, became the first city in its state to adopt an Art in Public Places ordinance, it made its impact by setting an emphasis on bronze sculptures. The sculptures have come to symbolize the city's bold self-image and its proud self-confidence. They are significant, they are prominent and they are dominant. The emphasis on sculpture gave birth to an annual Sculpture in the Park Competition that attracts sculptors from across the U.S. and to creation of a Sculpture Garden where many of the city's sculptures are spotlighted. Loveland also purchases two-dimensional, high-quality art for its public buildings. Today, the city's art collection is valued at more than $5 million with more than 80 percent donated by organizations or individuals.

    In this same way, the public art program in Delray Beach should develop a strong vision of what it wants to achieve, what statement it wants to make about the city and then hire the professional help to get it done. The work of the public art program should be closely coordinated with the CCC to

maximize the impact of the public art program, to help prepare requests for proposals from artists and to evaluate artists' proposals in the context of overall cultural development.

Too often, public art programs underachieve because they don't sufficiently involve the public that will encounter the art, they don't sufficiently involve architects and artists and they don't take sufficient risks with the art. These are pitfalls that Delray Beach should be especially alert to avoid.

Best Practice: Regional Arts & Culture Council Public Art Program

Location: Portland, Oregon

The model public art program works with the public and private sectors to integrate art into all aspects of the community and reflect a range of artistic disciplines. The program includes a permanent art collection of hundreds of works that are displayed in the city and county's buildings. In addition, there is permanent artwork installed in a variety of indoor and outdoor locations throughout the community.

The public art program publishes a walking tour map and has a public art gallery in downtown Portland, where visitors get a comprehensive overview of the region's public art and its impact. Other topics in the exhibit address art in the landscape, art in the neighborhood, art in transit, architectural integration and design team opportunities, and the Visual Chronicles of Portland.

The Regional Arts & Culture Council is an unusual model of public art funding, because it was originally part of city government but was split off to become a public/private partnership. It not only manages public art for public entities but private agencies as well.

Kent, Washington, meanwhile, pools funds from various capital projects until they can be used to commission a larger project that has impact for the city. Because funding is not tied specifically to each construction project, greater latitude is given to investing in public art that is more significant and noteworthy.

www.racc.org/publicart

5) **City Hall Art Program**
If Delray Beach is to be serious about its reputation as an arts haven, the art on the walls of city hall must reflect that aspiration. We recommend a professional art purchase or loan program for City Hall to set the standard.

6) **Citywide concert series**
The concerts series sponsored and organized by a department of city government is well-received and well-organized and should be expanded to other locations within Delray Beach, particularly the grounds of Old School Square. There

are a number of programs that can act as models for these concerts, such as the Wednesday night concert series held on the grounds of the Newport, Rhode Island, Arts Museum.

7) **Capital investment priorities**
There are a number of proposals that have been proposed for Delray Beach – ranging from small-scale programs to a $30 million performing arts center – but regardless of the projects, the ultimate determinant for funding is whether Delray Beach is investing in its own distinctiveness.

The dearth of difference is the greatest threat to cities with cultural aspirations today. Duplicating facilities – including performing arts centers -- and cultural events that exist in nearby cities does nothing to further Delray Beach's distinctive future as creative, authentic and intimate. As for the proposal to build a 1,500-1,700-seat performing arts center, the overriding questions are:
o   If Delray Beach is to spend $30 million on culture, is this the best possible use of these funds?
o   Does this investment enhance the city's uniqueness?

The answer to both questions is no. Within the context of a creative, authentic and intimate Delray Beach, we see no compelling justification for the construction of the proposed performing arts center. It merely adds a facility that already exists in surrounding cities, and in this way, it standardizes the Delray Beach experience. It does nothing to promote the city's authenticity and its distinctly different approach to culture.

"We've spent the money to get the tennis courts and the golf courses that we wanted. Now, we need to spend what it takes to get the culture that we want."

More to the point, if Delray Beach is to invest funds of this magnitude, it should be on projects that position it as a "learning community," a concept covered in the next section of this report. There are unverified reports that a nationally prominent music school is considering Delray Beach for a branch facility, and if these prove true, the proposal for a performing arts center deserves to be revisited, because the presence of a national music school of this caliber answers the criteria for Delray Beach to be distinctive and invest in nationally prominent initiatives.

Creating a Learning Community

Delray Beach's cultural future is anchored in its place as a "learning community."

It seems only natural. Three Delray Beach schools have been recognized in the past 12 months as the nation's best. As part of the fourth largest school district in Florida and the ninth largest in the U.S., Delray Beach's schools have strong arts education assets, and building on the theme of learning, the city should carve out its niche as a "learning community."

Rather than be a place where culture is watched, Delray Beach is the place where culture is experiential, personal and intimate. It is a learning community that provides life-long, formal and non-formal, learning by individuals and groups. It is a learning community that connects to the realities of the knowledge-based economy and the creative class, and positions Delray Beach as nationally known for its participatory culture.

1)   **Delray Beach Arts Cabana**
"Amateur culture" is exploding in the form of blogs, podcasts and digital photographs. People are engaging personally in culture purely for the love of creating – millions of people are blogging, and thousands of others are remixing their own songs, making their own digital films and generally partici pating in the creative process, rather than observing it as passive consumers.

As a result, creativity is something that is accessible to every person, but the real boom is to come. We are on the cusp of a cultural revolution, and Delray Beach can become ground zero for this kind of personal, participatory culture by developing a special space where people can learn, develop and stretch their creativity. This place is Delray Beach Arts Cabana.

We recommend its creation as the physical realization of Delray Beach's niche as the place where culture is about a dialogue, not a monologue; a conversation, not a lecture; participating, not observing; engagement, rather than detachment.

For example, rather than being the place where Mahler's

"If I could add one thing to the cultural menu of Delray Beach, it would be more interactive arts and culture activities, more art classes of various mediums and styles – drawing, painting, ceramics, photography. Maybe they exist, but they are not well-publicized."

Symphony #12 is performed, Delray Beach is the place where the guest conductor or soloist comes to be part of "Intimate Conversations on Creativity," where the painter shares techniques, where the dancer talks about her inspiration to dance or the sculptor has a conversation about the creation process. It becomes the place where people learn and experience culture firsthand.

"Village by the sea means a sense of community, a smallness, an authenticity, a laid back feeling."

To create a distinctive place known nationally as a cultural center, a place like the Sundy House, a 1902 National Register of Historic Places structure within walking distance of the historic downtown, could serve as the location for the Art Cabana or space could be built on the footprint of the Old School Square property. The building itself should not be used, because the Cabana needs to be known for an environment of unique ambience and creativity. Inspiration for the Delray Beach Art Cabana comes from Anderson Ranch Arts Center of Snowmass Village, Colorado, which 40 years ago began when a group of Roaring Fork Valley artists cleared out the barns for studios, set up a gallery and began informal workshops. Over the years, programs have expanded and facilities have been built, making Anderson Ranch one of the most popular and unique art facilities of its kind in the world.

Delray Beach has the same opportunity, with the chance to create an artistic magnet that positions Delray Beach on the leading edge of the coming wave of new creativity. Each season, artists of all kinds would come to Delray Beach Arts Cabana to enjoy the beautiful surroundings, to recharge their spirits and explore their creativity. They engage in unique, hands-on learning, presentations, exhibitions and discussions in a broad range of disciplines. Delray Beach becomes the scene for exciting opportunities to create and imagine, to invent and experiment.

Artists-in-residence would stay at the Art Cabana, and using the new generation of modular construction, space can be created at an affordable price and in an architectural style befitting such a use. The Delray Beach Arts Cabana offers residencies for artists to engage in their art and engage others in their creative processes. There are workshops taught by the artists-in-resident; there are provocative, lively discussions about cultural trends and personal art, and there

are opportunities of all kinds for participants to work on their art, exhibit and get critique.

Attention should also be paid to culinary creativity through programs for chefs and cooks who would use the Cabana as a place for experimenting and creating new cuisine. Plans should also include making it the site for "live/work" space for artists. Palm Beach County has a documented and growing need for this space, and in meeting this need, Delray Beach creates a powerful synergy that will infuse all of Delray Beach. The Palm Beach County Cultural Council has already set development of "live/work" space as a priority in its new strategic plan, and Delray Beach needs to take the lead in responding. Working with the Palm Beach County Cultural Council, the city has a financial partner that can contribute to the success of this project.

Best Practice: Anderson Ranch Arts Center

Place: Snowmass Village, Colorado

Anderson Ranch is a totally distinctive cultural community dedicated to creativity and personal growth through the making and understanding of the visual arts. Artists at all levels of proficiency stream into the ranch each summer to develop and stretch their creative muscles. More than 130 workshops for more than 1,200 participants are held, allowing prominent artists and novices to learn from talented professionals who come and share their knowledge in art history and critical studies, ceramics, digital imaging, furniture and woodworking, painting and drawing, photography, printmaking, sculpture, field expeditions and children's courses each year. Workshops begin after Memorial Day and continue until the end of September. Each has a designated skill level and the artists conducting the session, in advance of the summer sessions, describe their concepts for their workshops, the topics to be covered, the techniques of each session and a profile of their credentials. Waiting lists are common so early registration is critical.

The average workshop lasts five days, but some continue for about two weeks. The average tuition for the workshops is about $1,000. Anderson Ranch handles arrangements for housing. There are rooms in a dorm on-site that are rented for $500 to $725 per week, but also, there are off-site apartments and condos for $650 to $1,295 weekly. Meals are served on-site, with a full meal plan (five breakfasts, lunches and dinners) for $180.

Scholarships are based on the potential of artistic development and are reviewed by a jury.

In addition to earned income, Anderson Ranch Arts Center is supported by members of a national council and a number of fund-raising events, including a recognition dinner and art auctions.

The arts ranch developed when some historic buildings were saved from development with an eye toward an artistic use. The first programs were held in 1966, and the ranch was incorporated in 1973. Over the years, the programs and facilities have expanded to create the current footprint 10 miles west of Aspen.

www.andersonranch.org

2)   **The Delray Beach Narration Project**
Story-telling is a treasured regional tradition. It connects directly with the folklore traditions of African-Americans, Haitians and other ethnic groups who maintained their culture and family history through strong oral traditions.

At present, places in Delray Beach that were designed to be the warehouses of Delray Beach's history and culture struggle with attendance, fundraising and impact, which is, in part, likely the result of the cultural shifts that are taking place across the country. However, the history of Delray Beach should play an elevated role in its cultural development because it is so much a part of what distinguishes Delray Beach in the region. As a result, we recommend a high-impact, nationally-recognized public project that builds on the idea of community participation, authenticity, creativity and intimacy.

It is a project that takes the concept of a museum and turns it inside out. Using mobile technology, the city becomes the museum and the curators are its citizens. Already, the Spady Museum and Delray Beach Historic Society have collected a number of recorded stories, and they can become a cornerstone of this project.

The Narration Project collects local stories from citizens, culminating with an event, perhaps a picnic and story-telling celebration at Old School Square. The stories will be recorded, and with a small investment in technology and signage, they will be available for future generations to hear. In effect, the project produces an archive of narratives that define Delray Beach's identity by connecting the stories with the community.

Several ways exist for making these stories available for the retelling and rehearing. The Narration Project can take advantage of the ubiquitous iPods, particularly among young professionals, to offer podcasts of the Delray Ray stories. Another method is to post signs with telephone numbers that people can dial on their cellphones to hear a special story connected to a specific site, a special neighborhood and a special event in the life of the city and its people. Additionally, these "story stations" present opportunities for artist participation in their designs.

This project is a distinctive way to create a distinctive narrative for Delray Beach, a tapestry of stories that become an oral museum, stories told by Delray Beach citizens themselves. It is a cost-effective way to build community spirit and pride and becomes a permanent collection of stories without the overhead of a building and with little investment in technology.

At its heart, story-telling is one of the most creative, authentic and intimate acts. The Delray Beach Narration Project engages everyone in the city to tell their stories and create a collective narrative for the city. In this way, it breaks down barriers and builds narrative bridges that unite the people of Delray Beach.

Telling and Selling the Delray Beach Story

With the recommendations of this plan, Delray Beach's future as a creative community begins to come into focus. Its story, combining the past, the present and the future, can serve as the benchmark and a source for aspiration for everything the city does.

But developing a compelling narrative that showcases Delray Beach's unique culture is only half the battle. The other half is sharing that story with the city's residents, visitors and the rest of the world.

Starting now, everything that represents the city – websites, brochures, flyers – should be aligned with the story of Delray Beach as a creative village by the sea.

At present much of the marketing of the city via websites, brochures, flyers, etc., has a homemade or made-in-house feel to them. Coletta & Company strongly recommends investing in improvements in graphic design and branding and using the newly created CCC as a tool to ensure that the city's brand – creative, authentic, intimate – is professional, consistent and coherent.

This section is a detailed analysis of key information portals that the typical person might look to when researching Delray Beach and its cultural offerings. This is based on our professional evaluations and experience.

Our analysis is based on the axis of Resonance vs. Reality, which

examines what one would expect to find based on impressions of the city that come from indirect contact with it (searching the web, brochures, personal stereotypes, etc.), and what one finds to be the real Delray Beach as experienced firsthand. The goal is to both align the city's resonance with its reality and to augment the resonance to reflect the aspirations of the city for the future.

RESONANCE	REALITY
Touristy, kitschy	Authentic city with definite sense of place and active and engaged citizenry
Only attraction is the beach, and there's nothing special about it	Uniquely beautiful beach plus an equally beautiful city/downtown built to human scale to go with it
Unsophisticated	Highly sophisticated with bustling nightlife and exciting, multi-cultural restaurants
White	Diverse population contributing to civic and cultural life in Delray Beach

As part of the Delray Beach Creative City Cultural Plan, Coletta & Company reviewed key websites in Delray Beach to gauge initial impressions of the city and compare them to the city's reality on a number of fronts:

- Graphic Design
- Usability/ease of navigation
- Consistent branding
- Displays of:
  - ethnic and cultural diversity
  - vibrant cultural scene
  - street life
  - cuisine and night life
  - people enjoying the city
  - sense of place
  - good urban design
  - neighborhoods

A Word about Design

Design matters, especially when it comes to marketing materials and websites. Cities in general seem to be behind the design curve – especially when it comes to websites – and Delray Beach is no exception.

Delray Beach is a vibrant, contemporary city, and the websites and marketing materials representing it should be as up-to-date as the city itself. The city's character – creative, authentic and intimate – as expressed by its downtown streetscape, active nightlife, popular festivals, and, most importantly, the people of Delray Beach, should be woven into all communication pieces for the city and key city-related organizations.

At first glance, many of Delray Beach's communication pieces do not adhere to basic graphic design principles including simplicity and cleanliness, readability and use of dynamic graphics and photos. Each of these elements should work together to tell the Delray Beach story with consistency.

Delray Beach on the World Wide Web

According to the Travel Industry Association of America, nearly 30 percent of adult Americans used the Internet to get travel and destination information in 2003-2004. And that number continues to grow. So for many, a city's first impressions are made on the World Wide Web.

In fact, a study released in January 2006 and published in the journal Behaviour and Information Technology found that the brain makes decisions about a web site in just one-twentieth of a second. The study also suggests that first impressions have a lasting impact, i.e., that the impressions color how one views the elements of the site including copy.

The Web can be a powerful tool – one that shares your city's story, its personality, its culture and its soul. But only if used correctly.

Gone are the days of blinking and animated text and graphics and word-laden pages. Today's great websites say it fast with signature looks using bold graphics, great photos and fewer, but more powerful words.

City websites by their very nature should be filled with helpful

information for citizens. But the massive amounts of information often translate into columns and columns of words and links that are overwhelming, unattractive and difficult to navigate. This does not have to be the case.

Delray Beach's key websites (mydelraybeach.com; downtowndelraybeach.com; delrayconnect.com; delrayaffair.com; oldschool.org and, to a lesser degree, delraycra.org) lack a professional look that reflects the sophistication and spirit of Delray Beach.

Below are websites from other cities across the country that serve similar purposes as the sites listed above using design as an effective tool for clear and professional communication:

- http://www.portlandmaine.com/ - Bold use of colors and graphics, and lively photos showing people actively engaged in the city and its events with great candid photos of people in action, not posed. Very informative and easy to navigate.

- http://www.albanytomorrow.com/ -Bold graphics, simple look, great photos and limited, but informative text on each page. On pages where more text is needed, it is organized in a way that makes it easy to see where one section ends and another begins.

- http://www.ci.lynchburg.va.us/ - City website designed for simplicity and ease of navigation. Main page uses bold photos and easy-to-manage drop down menus to take visitors to the sections they need.

- http://www.lynchburgchamber.org/life - Great chamber website with many photos depicting the street scene, cultural offerings and city life. Though some pages are copy-heavy, it is not too overwhelming.

- http://www.sarasotafl.org/ - This site for Sarasota is edgy and hip with interesting use of fonts and graphics. There are some wonderful photos; however, they should be more diversified for each page.

- http://www.marfatx.com/ - Bold, signature look with easy to navigate menus. Interesting use of photos.

- http://www.sfarts.com/ - Beautifully designed and easy to navigate online arts event calendar and arts news site for San Francisco.

- http://www.santafe.org/ - Check out the culture map on this site.

- http://www.spoletousa.org/ - Amazing festival website with unmistakable look, communicating the essence of the organization with bold graphics and photos.

- http://www.ybca.org/b_ybca.html - Beautiful site for Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco. Simple, yet bold and edgy design with lots of information on upcoming performances and exhibitions.

- http://www.deltabluesmuseum.org/ - Wonderful museum site that uses graphics to clearly tell the story and express the feel of the organization.

- http://www.theartcentre.org/ - Dynamic and attractive homepage for community arts center in West Virginia with great use of photos.

- http://www.morikami.org/ - Delray Beach's own Morikami Center is a great example of an effective cultural institution website.

- http://www.sundyhouse.com – Delray Beach's Sundy House web site is top-notch, using the most up-to-date web technology and design methods. Great example of dynamic design and easy navigation for any kind of site.

Individual Site Evaluations

City of Delray Beach website
http://www.mydelraybeach.com

Overview:

The City of Delray Beach's website is cluttered, difficult to navigate and lacks dynamic images and graphics that tell the Delray Beach story. The homepage has more information than one can easily digest, and entering further into the site, it is easy to get lost. We

recommend a complete overhaul of this site keeping simplicity and improved professional design in mind. We encourage the use of great photos that focus on the assets of Delray Beach – walkable downtown, street scene, arts and culture offerings, active citizenry, beach. – and that reflect creativity, authenticity and intimacy, as the centerpiece for the design. We also recommend that information be organized in menus that are logical and easy to follow and back out of. Not all information has to go on the home page, but menus should guide one to any information he or she may need from that page.

1)   Does the graphic look of the site reflect a professional, contemporary look?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: The design of the site is very dated, and appears to have been built off of a template. The design should be professionally redone to update it with bold graphics and photos.

2)   Is the site well-organized and easy to navigate?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: Too much information is crammed on the homepage and entering further into the site, it is a maze that is hard to navigate. The site should put emphasis on clean, well-organized drop down menus.

3)   Does the site portray Delray Beach as a "village by the sea"?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: What makes Delray Beach a "village by the sea" is its creative, intimate and authentic feel as reflected in its walkable downtown, its restaurants, its neighborhoods, its people and its artists and activities. Very little of this is shown on the site. As part of the redesign, the city should use professional photos of action in Delray Beach, not posed party pictures. Show people walking on the streets, dining, working, creating, shopping, etc.

4)   Does the material on the site demonstrate ethnic/cultural diversity in the community?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: Very few photos are used at all on this site. Those that are used as part of the design of the site do not seem to show people, but rather pictures of signs, patio tables and beach chairs without people in them. Photos should reflect the diverse population of the city. The goal of the site is to be an accurate portrayal of the city and its people.

5)   Does the material show an active, contemporary cultural scene?

X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt

Notes: Once again, the website fails to show much about the city at all, at least visually.

6)   Does it show people enjoying the city?

X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt

Notes: Same as above.

7)   If the name of the city were taken off of the material, would you know where you were? Is there a unique sense of place demonstrated in the materials?

X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt

Notes: Unfortunately, for a city with such a distinct sense of place in reality, it is not at all reflected on this website. The few photos that are used to show the beach, for instance, appear generic

8)   Does the material show an active urban lifestyle (focus on urban design, pedestrian traffic, busy city streets)?

X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt

Notes: Same as above.

9)   Are unique neighborhoods highlighted and promoted?

X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt

Notes: Though the city has a national reputation for active neighborhood organizations, this is not depicted on its website.

10)   Is the arts/culture/music/bar/nightlife scene of the city shown?

X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt

Notes: The rotating images on the front page did show some sort of concert at Old School Square, but the photo was distant and less than dynamic.

11)   Does the city portray a dated or new image of itself?

ë Very Dated   X Dated   ë Somewhat New   ë New and Very Hip

Notes: Going back to design issues, Delray Beach's website is years behind the design curve and should be updated to a more contemporary look.

Downtown Delray Beach/Joint Venture
http://www.downtowndelraybeach.com

Overview:

Downtown Delray Beach is fun and happening. Regionally it is known as "the place to be." The Downtown Delray Beach website should act as a compliment to the quickly spreading word-of-mouth reputation the city has garnered in recent years. As it is now, the website lacks this complementary feel. The homepage is made up of animated words and flashing graphics along with a version of the Village People's "YMCA" as its theme song – hardly a reflection of the real feel of Delray Beach which is not campy but authentic. Overall, the biggest problem with the site is its dated feel. A simple redesign could help to better portray the dynamic downtown that sets Delray Beach apart from other cities in the region. We also recommend that the site use more active, candid photos than photos of people posed at events. Delray is real, authentic and organic, and the images that tell its story should be too.

1)   Does the graphic look of the site reflect a professional, contemporary look?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: As noted above, the site feels very homemade and dated. Animation and flashing text were part of the early elements used on websites at the dawn of the internet age. The use of the YMCA parody is very kitschy and should be removed. Music is OK to use on sites, but it should be carefully chosen to go with the brand of the city, and is probably best left out.

2)   Is the site well-organized and easy to navigate?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: One has to scroll down to the bottom of the home page to find any kind of menu. Once inside the site, it can get confusing to move around, and back out of pages.

3)   Does the site portray Delray Beach as a "village by the sea"?
ë Not at all   X Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: While the design of the site needs updating, and the overall feel of it does not give a village vibe, there are a few photos rotating on the home page that could be reused on an up-to-date website. However, these photos look to be of low quality and pixilated.

4)   Does the material on the site demonstrate ethnic/cultural diversity in the community?
ë Not at all   X Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: This website has a large number of photos on it that do show the diverse community, though a majority of them do reflect a

mostly white population. It's recommended that photos be placed on the site the better reflect the community.

5)   Does the material show an active, contemporary cultural scene?

ë Not at all   X Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: Most of the photos depicted on this site are of community events and less about the artistic and cultural scene. It would be helpful to see working artists creating or high quality photos of people enjoying the art galleries along Atlantic Avenue, for example.

6)   Does it show people enjoying the city and its culture?
ë Not at all   ë Somewhat   X Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: The website shows people enjoying the city, but as stated above, it is less about the day-to-day culture of Delray Beach than about special events.

7)   If the name of the city were taken off of the material, would you know where you were? Is there a unique sense of place demonstrated in the materials?
ë Not at all   X Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: Some images are of uniquely Delray Beach places.

8)   Does the material show an active urban lifestyle (focus on urban design, pedestrian traffic, busy city streets)?
ë Not at all   X Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: Again, the focus seems to be on special events and streets closed down for them rather than day-to-day life in Delray Beach.

9)   Are unique neighborhoods highlighted and promoted?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: Though the city has a national reputation for active neighborhood organizations, this is not depicted on its websites.

10)   Is the arts/culture/music/bar/nightlife scene of the city shown?
ë Not at all   X Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: Shows culture in terms of special events.

11)   Does the city portray a dated or new image of itself?
ë Very Dated   X Dated   ë Somewhat New   ë New and Very Hip
Notes: We recommend that this site get an updated look to give the city the updated image it deserves.

Delray CRA
http://www.delraycra.org

Overview:

The recent revamping of this website has brought it up-to-date graphically with a clean look that is easy to navigate and adheres to basic design principals. It is suggested, however, that the CRA site do more to reflect the people it serves with increased use of photographs that show both its completed projects and those in progress along with their impact and the people they affect.

1)   Does the graphic look of the site reflect a professional, contemporary look?
ë Not at all   ë Somewhat   X Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: While there is room for improvement, the CRA site has a sleek, professional, up-to-date look to it. It is clean and uncluttered.

2)   Is the site well-organized and easy to navigate?
ë Not at all   ë Somewhat   X Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: The menus are simple and easy to understand and are consistent on each page, making it easy to move around.

3)   Does the site portray Delray Beach as a "village by the sea"?
ë Not at all   X Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: The few photos used on the site do emphasize the walkable downtown and people, but more should be done to further promote the village atmosphere with more and different photos.

4)   Does the material demonstrate ethnic/cultural diversity in the community?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes:

5)   Does the material show an active, contemporary cultural scene?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes:

6)   Does it show people enjoying the city?
ë Not at all   X Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes:

7)   If the name of the city were taken off of the material, would

you know where you were? Is there a unique sense of place demonstrated in the materials?

ë Not at all   X Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt

Notes: The site offers access to master plans and renderings of current projects that are distinctly Delray Beach.

8)   Does the material show an active urban lifestyle (focus on urban design, pedestrian traffic, busy city streets)?

ë Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt

Notes: n/a

9)   Are unique neighborhoods highlighted and promoted?

ë Not at all   X Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt

Notes: Through project descriptions, yes. But would like to see more.

10)   Is the arts/culture/music/bar/nightlife scene of the city shown?

ë Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt

Notes: n/a

11)   Does the material portray a dated or new image of the city or organization?

ë Very Dated   ë Dated   X Somewhat New   ë New and Very Hip

Notes: The contemporary design helps to give an up-to-date feel for the organization and city.

Delray Connect
http://www.delrayconnect.com

Overview:

It is the understanding of Coletta & Company that this site is no longer maintained, but could be maintained by the regrouped CCC. We recommend that a portal for information on local artists and arts events be created and regularly maintained. If this website is continued, major improvements should be made to it as it is cluttered and unfocused and is in need of a redesign. If it is not maintained, we recommend that it be taken off the web immediately. The San Francisco Arts website (http://www.sfarts.org) is a good model to look to.

Delray Affair
http://www.delrayaffair.com

Overview:

Delray Affair is touted by residents and visitors as "the festival" to go to each year in Delray Beach. The website tells another story. Once again, much of the issue goes back to the need for updated design that reflects this well-planned, highly popular festival of festivals in Palm Beach County.

1)   Does the graphic look of the site reflect a professional, contemporary look?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: Like the city's site, this one appears as though it may have been built from a template, and lacks organization and dynamic graphics.

2)   Is the site well-organized and easy to navigate?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: It's very hard to figure out how to navigate around the site.

3)   Does the site portray Delray Beach as a "village by the sea"?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: The site does not reflect the authenticity of the city or the festival. It seems more focused on the crowds than the activities of the festival or the participants in the festival.

4)   Does the material demonstrate ethnic/cultural diversity in the community?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes:

5)   Does the material show an active, contemporary cultural scene?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes:

6)   Does it show people enjoying the city?
ë Not at all   ë Somewhat   X Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: It shows some people enjoying the festival, but does not really give a feel for what the festival is about. Most of the pictures are of crowds or people posed for a photo and less about the actual activities that go on at the festivals.

7)   If the name of the city were taken off of the material, would you know where you were? Is there a unique sense of place demonstrated in the materials?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt

Notes:

8)   Does the material show an active urban lifestyle (focus on urban design, pedestrian traffic, busy city streets)?
ë Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: n/a

9)   Are unique neighborhoods highlighted and promoted?
ë Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: n/a

10)   Is the arts/culture/music/bar/nightlife scene of the city shown?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: Would be nice to see local artists' work at the festival.

11)   Does the material portray a dated or new image of the city or organization?
ë Very Dated   X Dated   ë Somewhat New   ë New and Very Hip
Notes: Going back to design issues, the website should be updated to a more contemporary look. See Spoleto Festival website at http://www.spoletousa.org.

Old School Square
http://www.oldschool.org

Overview:

Coletta & Company chose to review the Old School Square site because of the organization's prominent place as the recognized cultural center of Delray Beach by a majority of the people interviewed during the research phase. Because of this distinction, we reviewed the site to see if it reflects the goals of the city as outlined in our material survey. Overall, Coletta & Company felt that the website itself could use updating that better reflects the city and its culture.

1)   Does the graphic look of the site reflect a professional, contemporary look?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: While pretty well organized, graphically the site is not very dynamic. It would benefit from an updated look that makes better use of photographs and bolder, more eye-catching graphics.

2)   Is the site well-organized and easy to navigate?
ë Not at all   ë Somewhat   X Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: The menus are pretty well-organized.

3)   Does the site portray Delray Beach as a "village by the sea"?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: There is nothing about the site that says "village." It does not really even depict OSS's connection to the city right at its doorstep. It's very insular.

4)   Does the material demonstrate ethnic/cultural diversity in the community?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: Most of the photographs used on this site are mostly of the facilities rather than the activities that take place in the facilities. Those that do include people do not reflect the diversity of the city and shows mostly white participants. The programming also seems to be aimed at a "white" audience.

5)   Does the material show an active, contemporary cultural scene?
ë Not at all   X Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes:

6)   Does it show people enjoying the facilities?
ë Not at all   X Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: Would like to see more active participation reflected in the website with a more diverse audience. Dynamic publicity photos of recent and upcoming programming in the theater would help to show the activities that take place there and give it a more lively feel.

7)   If the name of the city were taken off of the material, would you know where you were? Is there a unique sense of place demonstrated in the materials?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: As noted earlier, the site lacks any evidence of its place in Delray Beach or a reflection of it as the "center" of culture for the city.

8)   Does the material show an active urban lifestyle (focus on urban design, pedestrian traffic, busy city streets)?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: Because OSS is in the heart of the city in the heart of downtown, it would be preferable that the grounds of OSS become a more active and lively place, especially when the doors are closed,

and materials promoting it should reflect that always on, spontaneous nature of the city's cultural center.

9)   Are unique neighborhoods highlighted and promoted?
X Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: While the goal of the site is not to promote neighborhoods, it would be nice to see something depicting OSS in its neighborhood, or a connection to its neighborhood – downtown Delray Beach.

10)   Is the arts/culture/music/bar/nightlife scene of the city shown?
ë Not at all   ë Somewhat   ë Yes   ë Without a doubt
Notes: It would be nice to see local artists' work highlighted and promoted on the site rather than all the focus being on the presentation of outside works and performances.

11)   Does the material portray a dated or new image of the city or organization?
ë Very Dated   X Dated   ë Somewhat New   ë New and Very Hip
Notes: Going back to design issues, the website should be updated to a more contemporary look. See http://www.theartcentre.org/ and http://www.ybca.org/b_ybca.html.

Conclusion

The good news is that Delray Beach's reality is much more appealing than the way in which it is depicted on the web. That situation can be remedied with a concentrated investment in place branding and marketing that will reinforce Delray's position as a creative village by the sea both internally and externally. The better news is that the city can use the web to reflect its aspirations for the future. In other words, use the web to tell the story of the Delray Beach that can be and ease it into reality.

What People Are Saying About Delray Beach:

"Miami is where you go to be seen, Delray Beach is where you go to just be."

"Delray Beach is really becoming known as a happening place. Word is definitely spreading around the region."

"The downtown, the restaurants and bars are great, but I wish there were more shows, more performances, more music, that sort of thing. What there is seems to be aimed at an older age group or for families."

"People in Delray Beach like to have a say in things. That's how it works around here. We're a major part of the decision-making process. We don't sit by and watch. We do."

"People who are moving here are coming from places where culture abounds, and I think they are going to start looking for something comparable in Delray Beach, or they'll go somewhere else nearby to find it."

"There's no place for artists to come together, no central point of contact where we can gather, share and create. I'd like to see something like that."

"Have you been to our beach? It's by far the most beautiful beach around here. It's gorgeous."

"There are artists in Delray Beach, but they're all sort of independent and under-the-radar. Not many people know about them."

"If I could add one thing to the cultural menu, it would be edgier, or higher quality art in all mediums."

"Delray Beach could include a broader range of artistic expression, or could be more contemporary."

"[Delray Beach's festivals are] crowded, fun and predictable."

"Ethnic groups seem to be separate with their "own" events and festivals."

"[Village by the sea] means a town with a close-knit community that has spirit and lots of wonderful cultural offerings."

"Lots of people come out for Art and Jazz on the Avenue, but the problem is there is no art and there is no jazz. It's more a place to have drinks and socialize."

"For the most part [Delray Beach's festivals] are mediocre, but this year's Delray Affair had some better quality art. Minority participation is almost non-existent."

"[Delray Beach's cultural scene] is not quite in its adolescence, but maybe early adulthood. There is a pretty good base of cultural activities and facilities, but plenty of room to grow and improve."

"I believe Delray is a culturally rich as any place in South Florida – but that's not saying much. We should set our sights higher and live it as much as we talk it."

"Delray seems to have more civic pride than many others, there is an emphasis on public art that you don't see much, and leader seems to go out of their way to embrace the many cultures of its citizens."

"I don't know of any other place in Florida where you can park your car – or leave it at home – and walk to the beach, to 50 great restaurants, to galleries, parks, museums, historic districts and businesses."

"Village by the sea means that Delray Beach is small with big things happening."

"Special events need to reach out to local artists and there needs to be more communication."

" Minority groups don't feel like they get the attention of so-called white events and activities such as Old School Square."

"There's a double standard for groups. Accountability standards are allowed to slide for some groups with political clout, particularly those in minority neighborhoods. There is a real need for benchmarking."

"The city is sending a bad message by letting the Photographic Centre, Women in the Arts and now the Fashion Museum leave Delray. We shouldn't let this happen without a fight, but nobody lifts a finger to keep them here, and we lose part of our assets."

"We need to bring a conference to Delray that showcases our city as a cultural tourism center. We need to market Delray for its culture and for its accessibility to the attractions in the region."

"Delray is walkable and charming, and we need to amplify those qualities, and not let development cover them up. There's already an erosion of black neighborhoods because of development and it needs to stop."

"Young professionals like me would rather live in Delray Beach than Boca or West Palm. Delray is real."

"Delray Beach is a series of little miracles that keep happening to help it along. They always materialize."

"When you experience something yourself, it becomes real to you."

"The development of Delray Beach makes it more important for local artists to have a voice and come together."

"The business community is very accepting and supporting of us. The Chamber is 100 percent behind us."

"There needs to be better dialogue and understanding between African-Americans and other people, and not just whites, but also Haitians."

"There are some city-sponsored activities with no white representation and some with no black representation. This is not good for Delray Beach."

"The lack of information is a big problem. There is no information about how decisions are made regarding the funding of various initiatives. That's a problem."

"People have interests that should transcend race and other differences. We need to find ways to bring people naturally together."

"We need a symbolic event that shows that we are making progress in bringing people together and showing that they care."

"I'm glad they have [festivals], but too many of the same vendors – food, arts, crafts – show up at all of them. There needs to be more variety. The smaller, more ethnic festivals are the best, but they are not well-attended."

Coletta & Company
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