



## **Cultural Assessment Self-Study Directions**

Every community in Colorado is a creative community! The purpose of this Cultural Assessment Self-Study is to help each community identify those assets that make it unique. A community's creative assets might be thought of as those elements that tell the stories of a place and how people interact with that place where they live and work. Through this process, a community can identify its cultural assets, explore how they help to tell the story of a place and its people, and create tools to help share that valuable information with others.

### **Section 1: Provide General Information about your Creative Community**

This section asks for basic information on your creative community and those people involved in the Cultural Assessment Self-Study.

### **Section 2: Identify your Creative Community's Assets and Create a Master List of Assets and Existing Information**

This section involves three tasks.

1. The first is to help you identify as many cultural assets in your community as possible. We have provided a list to get you started. There are many assets on the list that are commonly thought of and some that might not be so obvious. All help to tell your community's story. Make notes of any assets that exist in your community in the various categories.
2. The second is to help you identify what resources you already have that showcase the community's assets.
3. The third is to put the assets and information together in a virtual (or actual!) collage representing your community's creative assets. This will help you see what the complete picture is as it exists at this time.

### **Section 3: Assess your Creative Community's Assets**

This section will help you identify the strengths and weaknesses of your assets as well as the information about them. It also is designed to help determine if there are parts of the community's story that are not being told or could be told in different or better ways and if your community's assets are ready for visitors.

### **Section 4: Summarize the self-study findings and Create a Short Community Profile**

This section is designed to help you compile the information gathered in the first three sections. It does not need to be a lengthy document, but can provide a "blueprint" to work from as your community moves forward with its creative work!

# **Cultural Assessment Self-Study Form 2012**

## **Section 1: Provide General Information about your Creative Community**

### **Contact information for primary contact person for this self-study:**

Organization  
Name  
Address  
Email  
Phone  
Website

### **Creative community:**

Name  
Location

Provide a very brief description here of your creative community--tell the short version of the story (Is it a town or an area of town...a county...a region? What, in short, makes it a creative community? Lots of businesses? Historic downtown with museums? Artist's shops and co-ops? Galleries? ):

List the organizations, businesses, public agencies, and individuals (with their affiliations or areas of expertise) who are working most closely on this self study:

## Section 2: Identify your Creative Community's Assets and Create a Master List of Assets and Existing Information (Parts A, B, C)

Part A: For each of the three following categories, note any of the following types of assets in the community and what is known about them. For example: What are the hours of operation? Are they open to the public and ready for visitors? What part of the community's story do they tell?

### Identifying Arts and Culture Resources:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art Centers                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Musical Groups                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art Galleries                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Performing Arts Groups            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art Schools                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Art                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Artist's co-ops                       | <input type="checkbox"/> School Arts Programs and Classes  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clubs (painting, Audubon, fiber arts) | <input type="checkbox"/> Technical or Trade School Classes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cottage Industries                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater Groups                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Businesses                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                             |

### Noting Important Community Places and Activities:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Museums or Activities    | <input type="checkbox"/> Must see places  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Churches                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Festivals                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Places with Stories  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geographical features               | <input type="checkbox"/> Scenic and Historic Byways   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historians                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Science and Math Centers   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic Districts                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Surprises (a photo gallery in a coffee shop?<br>Bike shops with maps of cultural attractions?) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic places                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Theaters   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Venues   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Media (public radio and television) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Museums                             |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Must do activities                  |   |

### Exploring Community Cultural Heritage:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Locations (agritourism)                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Local legends   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Traditions  | <input type="checkbox"/> Migrant Councils  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Celebrations   | <input type="checkbox"/> Occupational traditions (for example:<br>saddle making and leather work,<br>blacksmithing, cowboying) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Groups of Importance (past<br>and present)           | <input type="checkbox"/> Specialty celebrations with a story   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic celebrations (Pow Wows,<br>Cinco de Mayo, Oktoberfest) | <input type="checkbox"/> Storytellers  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic organizations  | <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional Artists and Crafts people (for<br>example: quilt makers, wood<br>carvers)                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Families who have lived in the area<br>for generations        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immigrant Centers   |  |

Part B: Look for the following types of existing information that already exist in your community and help to tell the story of your creative community. (It might be helpful to physically collect these types of pieces and create a collage of information for your own use.)

- Activity guides
- Advertising
- Art work
- Audio tapes
- Biographies
- Books
- Brochures
- Business cards
- Business Histories
- Classroom curricula
- Crafts
- Flyers
- Information about community groups
- Information about community traditions
- Media coverage
- Pamphlets
- People
- Photographs
- Posters
- Programs catalogs
- Programs from events
- Promotion
- Rack Cards
- Stories
- Study guides
- Videos
- Visitor Guides
- Walking Tour Information--Brochures or Audio
- Website

Part C: Using the lists created above, create a Master List identifying assets and types of info available for them.

Asset/Type of Information Available:

EX: XYZ Arts Festival—dates, hours, flyer, website

EX: Regional History Museum—building open to public —days and hours, website, newsletter

### **Section 3: Assess your Creative Community's Assets (Parts A, B, C)**

Part A: What are the strongest aspects of your creative community (i.e. lots of creative businesses, outstanding natural assets, strong organizations)?

Part B: What is lacking in your creative community (i.e. are there parts of story not told by existing assets and information—a particular culture group that has played a part but is not represented; is it difficult for people to find information about local creative businesses?)

Part C: Are existing assets that do tell the story available, accessible and obvious? (hours, readiness for visitors, available to the public--physically or by other means such as websites, printed information, etc.)

## **Section 4: Summarize the self-study findings and Create a Short Community Profile**

Creating a Community Profile can help you see your community's needs and resources more clearly. It can also become the basis for cultural programming grounded in local culture. Your Community Profile might consist of the following:

- An introduction, describing your creative community. This can be a bit longer version of the description provided in Section 1 as well as including information from Section 3.
- A description of the place, including landscapes and neighborhoods.
- A brief summary of community history, including recent demographics, and information on any culture groups that are part of the story
- A description of the current economic and social conditions, as well as an understanding of the local political environment, and how these can support your creative community's efforts moving forward.
- An inventory of artists, local experts, cultural organizations, groups, and events based on the information compiled in Section 2

Thanks to Maine's Cultural Resources, Inc. Cultural Assessment tools "Sensing Place: A Guide to Community Culture, and Creative Communities Institute © for many of the ideas included in this cultural assessment.

1625 Broadway  
Suite 2700  
Denver, CO 80202  
t 303.892.3802  
f 303.892.3848  
[coloradocreativeindustries.org](http://coloradocreativeindustries.org)