

NEW MEXICO *True* ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

June 8, 2018
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The New Mexico Arts Commission Endorses New Start-Up Arts & Cultural Districts

Santa Fe, N.M. - The New Mexico Arts Commission has endorsed three new Start-Up Arts & Cultural District programs: Carlsbad, Corrales, and Farmington. The program creates positive economic impact to districts that identify arts and history, artists, arts entrepreneurs, creative industries, and cultural facilities, as key assets of their community revitalization efforts.

"The Arts & Cultural Districts Program is critical in supporting innovative industries and creative entrepreneurs, artists, and cultural facilities based in our downtowns," said Matthew Geisel, Cabinet Secretary New Mexico Economic Development Department. "Through Governor Susana Martinez's support, the MainStreet Program is able to continue catalyzing economic growth in our communities."

"The Arts Commission is pleased to endorse Carlsbad, Corrales, and Farmington as new Start-Up Arts & Cultural Districts to promote arts and culture, which helps to revitalize New Mexico communities, and serves to cultivate these important economic and tourism drivers," said Arts Commission Chair Sherry Davis of Santa Fe.

State-Authorized Arts & Cultural Districts receive incentives such as assistance with developing cultural plans and enhanced historic tax credits for the rehabilitation of historic structures within the district. The first two pilot districts were authorized in 2008, with additional communities added in 2014. With today's announcement, New Mexico now boasts a network of 11 Arts & Cultural Districts. The Arts & Cultural Districts Program is a joint effort of several state agencies and private entities including the Economic Development Department, New Mexico MainStreet, Department of Cultural Affairs divisions: New Mexico Arts and Historic Preservation, and the McCune Charitable Foundation.

The Carlsbad Arts & Cultural District has applied as an artisan/arts district and is home to private and cooperative galleries, businesses that provide hands-on training for artists including quilt-making and sewing and painting, as well as the City of Carlsbad Halagueno Arts Park (outdoor performance space and sculpture park), and the Carlsbad Museum. The area will also serve as an entertainment district with several live music venues including Lucky Bull Restaurant and Tap Room, Yellow Brix Restaurant, and Milton's Brewery. The vision for the district includes plans for the rehabilitation of the Cavern Theater to serve as venue for film and simulcasts of live performances. Local Entrepreneurs have plans

to repurpose the old Odd Fellows Hall into a coffee house, bistro and event space.

The Corrales Arts & Cultural District is a proposed artisan district that aligns with the existing Corrales Business District and Corrales Road Scenic Byway. The district is linked directly to a Cultural Compound that includes the historic San Ysidro Church and Casa San Ysidro Museum. The district features 25 local organizations and businesses that support and/or conduct arts events, Corrales is featured in the New Mexico Collector's Guide, presents an annual Fine Arts and Crafts show, as well as the Music in Corrales concert series. The village hosts the Corrales Arts and Studio Tour that includes 135 artists. Other major arts events include Art in the Park, Makers' Market, an Art Fair during Harvest Fest, and the seasonal Holiday Art Fest. The vision for the district is anchored in the unique rural/agricultural heritage of the village that draws visitors and tourists to the area.

The Farmington Arts & Cultural District is a proposed artisan district that overlaps with the Farmington Historic Downtown Commercial District and is located in an area the Navajos named "Totah," meaning, "Three Waters," where the Animas, San Juan, and La Plata rivers converge to the south and west of the district. The district focuses mainly on Main Street and Broadway, with more than 100 commercial buildings with storefronts oriented to the street and continuous shared side walls. The downtown district contains an eclectic mix of galleries, one-of-a-kind shared side walls, locally-owned retail stores, restaurants, and salons, and includes Red Apple Transit Stops. A city park is located at the "Heart" of the district, along with the E3 Children's Museum, Farmington Civic Center, and the Navajo Art and Culture Museum. In total, the district's 100+ plus properties represent a coherent record of the development of a regional marketing center for the San Juan agricultural valley dating from 1906 through 1956. Architectural styles and building typologies trace the path and pattern of market center development from railroad-era growth, 1906-1923, to the oil and gas economic boom of the 1950s. The corridor formed by these structures, jammed tight along both sides of the sidewalk defines the street wall.

In addition, the Arts Commission has approved the expansion of Los Alamos Creative District's boundaries to include the Real Deal Theater and the Los Alamos Nature Center, recognizing the community's efforts to include these important cultural facilities as part of their overall Creative District.

"It is gratifying to add three new Start-up Arts & Cultural Districts," said Department of Cultural Affairs Secretary Veronica N. Gonzales. "These districts celebrate New Mexico's rich artistic and cultural traditions and foster growth."

[New Mexico MainStreet](#), a program of the New Mexico Economic Development Department, works throughout the state to help affiliated local organizations create an economically viable business environment while preserving cultural and historic resources. New Mexico MainStreet currently serves 28 affiliated MainStreet Districts, 11 Arts & Cultural Districts, more than 20 Frontier Community projects, and eight Historic Theater Initiatives.

For more information about the New Mexico Arts & Cultural District Program, contact Rich Williams, State Coordinator, (505) 827-0168 or rich.williams@state.nm.us.

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