



# DUDAS INSPIRATION VENUE for the ARTS

708 East Main Street Richmond, Indiana 47374

12 August 2019

Richmond Redevelopment Commission  
c/o Beth Fields bfields@richmondindiana.gov  
Director of Infrastructure and Development  
50 North Fifth Street  
Richmond, Indiana 47374

Re: Addendum to May 29, 2019, Funding Application

Dear All:

We look forward to chatting with you on August 13, 2019, as you consider our funding application to support DIVA's proposed expansion project in Downtown Richmond. This addendum is designed to supplement but not duplicate any portion of the application packet that was delivered on or around May 29. Your binders already have plenty of information about the historically and architecturally significant building we seek to preserve, DIVA's overall mission, the expansion project specifics (including an itemized project estimate, construction blueprints, and artistic renderings), and how the project fits into the existing community development plans (and likely the one currently being assessed).

This addendum is designed to assure you that funding this project will provide the City of Richmond with a return on its investment. While we are not qualified to calculate anything precisely in terms of how many dollars in return Richmond is likely to see for every dollar invested in this project, we can at least provide you with some research and data we have accumulated which tends to show how such a venture benefits quality of place and economic development.

According to a study published by the National Endowment for the Arts in March of 2019, "the arts and cultural sector contributed \$804.2 billion or 4.3% to the nation's gross domestic product in 2016." Arts and culture play a significant role in the economic activity of the country. Between 1998 and 2016, the rate of consumer spending on performing arts admissions more than doubled to \$32.7 billion.

In 2017, Americans for the Arts released its fifth study on the Arts and Economic Prosperity. "When a community attracts cultural tourists, it harnesses significant economic rewards." With so many arts-related offerings, Richmond is well on its way to becoming a regional arts destination. According to this study, 82% of Americans believe that arts and culture are important to local business and the economy, and 87% of Americans believe that arts and culture are important to quality of life. On average, one-third of an arts event's audience comes from out of town and pay twice as much into the local economy as local attendees (see attached brochure).



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In January of 2019, the National Governors' Association (NGA) issued its Rural<sup>1</sup> Action Guide for Rural Prosperity through the Arts and Creative Sector. "The arts, culture, and creative sectors contribute to a productive business climate, a diversified economic base, a competitive workforce, a desirable quality of life, and an innovation habitat." The data increasingly emphasizes the power of the creative sector to drive prosperity in rural communities. According to this report, rural economies are in trouble, but the arts and cultural sectors are viewed as uniquely positioned to drive economic development. In terms of business development, the number of innovative or design-integrated businesses rises proportionately in the presence of performing arts organizations.

According to the Guide, "Community development strategies that integrate the arts and culture are better equipped to draw on and support existing community assets, preserve and enhance the authentic character of place, and ensure equitable outcomes for local stakeholders." It provides suggested strategies for creating an environment that is friendly to investment and innovation: (1) make targeted investments in cultural and creative institutions; (2) provide seed capital for arts and culture; and (3) subsidize spaces such as studios, nonprofit galleries, and theaters for practicing and presenting creative products.

DIVA wants to provide space for artists who do not have access to the resources necessary for producing and exhibiting art. After all, the NGA indicates, "Access to workspace and retail space is particularly important for artists and creative entrepreneurs; it is also the most cost-prohibitive aspect of creative endeavors. If the creative sector cannot afford the space to make and sell products and artistic productions, then it remains an underdeveloped sector of rural economies."

We hope this addendum helps provide additional information regarding how this investment is likely to return a significant long-term boost to economic development and quality of place.

Thank you once again for taking the time to consider our proposal.

Very sincerely yours,

Amy Noe Dudas

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<sup>1</sup> The Guide acknowledges that there is not a universal definition of "rural" and recognizes that agencies can and will define "rural" differently. Some consider anything *not* delineated as a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) as rural, and others use population. In general, a community with a population under 50,000 usually qualifies as "rural."