



CITY OF ALLENTOWN

No. 76

RESOLUTION

R – 2021

Introduced by the Administration on June 2, 2021

**RESOLUTION FOR THE ADOPTION AND SUPPORT OF THE CULTURAL COALITION OF
ALLENTOWN'S INCLUSION IN THE PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL ON THE ARTS
CREATIVE COMMUNITIES PILOT INITIATIVE**

Resolved by the Council of the City of Allentown, That

AT A MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALLENTOWN OF PENNSYLVANIA, HELD AT ALLENTOWN CITY HALL, ON JUNE 2, 2021,

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING ALLENTOWN'S INCLUSION IN THE PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL ON THE ARTS CREATIVE COMMUNITIES PILOT INITIATIVE PROPOSED BY THE CULTURAL COALITION OF ALLENTOWN.

Whereas, the CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALLENTOWN, does hereby find as follows:

Whereas, the arts help stimulate local economies, civic engagement, revitalization, and innovation; and

Whereas, the purpose of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts' (PCA) Creative Communities Pilot Initiative is to provide multi-year funding to community-driven, arts-based development projects that serve as catalysts for livability, economic development, and community connectedness.

Whereas, the Cultural Coalition of Allentown, as lead applicant, has successfully completed the application process and been selected as part of the Creative Communities Initiative, receiving up to \$12,500 for FY 20/21, up to \$25,000 for FY 21/22, 22/23, 23/24 and up to \$12,500 for FY 24/25.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Allentown supports the important work of the Cultural Coalition of Allentown organization's participation in the Creative Communities Pilot Initiative

LEGISLATIVE TEMPLATE

- **What Department or bureau is Bill originating from? Where did the initiative for the bill originate?**

Department of Community and Economic Development

- **Summary and Facts of the Bill**

Building from 5 years of community engagement, research and pilot programs in the center city region of Allentown, The Artist-Neighbor Growth & Opportunity Project (TANGO) is committed to providing artistic and cultural solutions to urban challenges including poverty, housing and quality of life in the city through a 4-pronged strategy over the next 4 years addressing: Affordable Quality Housing, Creative Economy & Entrepreneurship, Cultural Infrastructure and Community Building.

- **Purpose – Please include the following in your explanation:**
 - **What does the Bill do – what are the specific goals/tasks the bill seek to accomplish**
 - **What are the Benefits of doing this/Down-side of doing this**
 - **How does this Bill related to the City’s Vision/Mission/Priorities**

The purpose of the Creative Communities Initiative is to provide multi-year funding to community-driven, arts-based projects that serve as catalysts for livability, economic development, and community connectedness. Also called creative placemaking, the funded projects will have a demonstrated, positive impact on their respective communities.

Creative Communities Initiative Goals:

- Strengthen Pennsylvania communities through the arts.
- Promote PA’s communities as places people want to live, visit, work, and play.
- Support authentic, inclusive, and strong community partnerships.
- Ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Support local leadership and develop future leaders.
- Promote development and implementation of sustainable programs and projects.
- Invest in creative industries projects.
- Leverage additional sources of funding (local government, private sector, foundation).

- Cultivate innovative, community-driven projects.
- Promote the unique identities of PA's communities.
- Create and implement best practices for project evaluations.

By definition, The Artist-Neighbor Growth & Opportunity Project seeks to forge a solid relationship between artistic and creative economy elements, and the residents and students of the community. We plan for 4 main initiatives between the artists, arts institutions and the residents: Artists-as-Residents Program, Creative Economy Entrepreneurship & Development, Cultural Infrastructure and Community Building.

First, the ARTIST-AS-RESIDENTS program will continue the momentum from 5 years of successful results emanating from our original community-based strategic plan. We intend to recruit artists to benefit from access to low-income housing in exchange for their work in the schools, community centers and arts institutions. These initial artist pioneers will pave the way for artist-owned housing and live/work spaces in the future.

Second, our ongoing creative economy research identified a gap between the general population and people of color participating in the sector. TANGO will engage people of color with focused job skills and entrepreneurship training in the creative economy with vocational partners. Meanwhile, members of the community will benefit from professional development for artists and capacity building for organizations wishing to bring events and programs to the City.

Third, the cultural infrastructure component will engage the community by developing and activating current and new public spaces. The program calls for the potential development of lots into public spaces in the heart of the neighborhood and close to the thriving business district. Via partnerships with funders and the city, the areas can be converted into a green space with arts installation, murals and activation calendar.

Fourth, the community building tenet of the project incorporates elements of every initiative combined to celebrate the unique cultures of all residents, whether life long residents or recent immigrants, by embracing creativity through events, festivals and storytelling.

Support for the TANGO Program provides \$200,000 worth of investment into the city's arts, culture and creative economy to impact the progress of the city's ongoing development.

Through the acceptance of the TANGO Program by the PPA Council on the Arts, Allentown was selected as one of the top five communities in the Commonwealth out of 108 total communities and projects that were submitted by evaluation. With the City Council's unanimous approval, we will access \$200,000 in grants and matching funds to support this program and recognize Allentown statewide as one of the leaders in the creative economy and as a Creative Community in Pennsylvania.