

## **Summary of Comments**

### **Received from the Public at the Industrial and Fine Arts Center Community Workshop Held Wednesday, October 29, 2008**

The City of Fort Bragg welcomed a receptive audience of over 50 people in Town Hall on Wednesday, October 29, for the first Fort Bragg Industrial and Fine Arts Center Community Workshop. Participants included woodworkers, glassblowers, sculptors, weavers, musicians and performing artists, literary artists, and fine artists as well as interested community members, City Council members, and Planning Commissioners.

- Community Development Director Marie Jones provided a brief PowerPoint presentation which explored key elements of successful art centers based on her research of five industrial art centers.
- Workshop participants then divided into small groups of five to ten people and worked together to answer questions and provide insight into what the community envisions for an Industrial Arts Center in Fort Bragg. Six small groups consisting of approximately eight people per group worked to answer the following six questions:
  - 1) List five industrial art centers that might serve as a model for Fort Bragg.
  - 2) List key components of these art centers that have made them successful.
  - 3) What community needs could be met by an industrial art center in Fort Bragg?
  - 4) What should be the programmatic focus of an industrial arts center in Fort Bragg? Consider types of art, the appropriateness of classes, studios, events, gallery space, live-work, and other foci.
  - 5) What specific amenities/tools/space/configuration would you like to see in an industrial arts center in Fort Bragg?
  - 6) Do you have any specific suggestions or ideas about how to set up and operate the facility? The City would like to contact people who are interested in being in a focus group and on a Board of Directors, for example. All suggestions are welcome.

- Each small group presented highlights from their discussions to the entire audience. The feedback from the small groups was captivating and informative as participants explained their groups' vision for an Industrial Arts Center in Fort Bragg.

The summary below outlines the key points of discussion from the event.

### **Overall Vision for an Industrial Arts Center**

The City of Fort Bragg envisions a successful industrial art center bringing new life to the industrial and fine arts community on the North Coast by providing an affordable venue for industrial artists to create and sell fine woodworking pieces, textiles, tools, instruments, ceramics, and fine art on the North Coast. As a signature destination, the Industrial and Fine Arts Center could attract more art tourists to the area and specifically showcase the woodworking heritage of Fort Bragg.

### **Additional Art Center Case Studies to Explore**

Participants acknowledged varying degrees of familiarity with the following regional industrial art centers: the Alameda Naval Air Station privately run woodworking cooperative, Shipyard Art Center at Hunter's Point, Fort Mason in San Francisco, the Cannery in San Jose, Sitka Center on the Oregon coast, Headlands Art Center in Sausalito, and Sunset in Carmel (including the performing art center). Art centers from as far away as Italy were also identified, including: Snow Hill Studios in Smithville, Tennessee, Idyllwild Art Center, Anderson Ranch, Pennland School of Crafts, Haystack Maine, John C. Campbell, Peters Valley, Seivers School, Coupeville, Van Briggle in Colorado, Chicago Fulton/Carroll, Point B NYC, Eleventh Street in Philadelphia, Olympic Plaza in Los Angeles, the Recording Studio Cooperative in San Diego, Granville Island, B.C., Mass Mocha, and North Adams, Massachusetts, as well as the Pietrasanta in Italy. Although some elements from the art centers may be pertinent to Fort Bragg, the consensus of the group was that the feasibility study should include case studies of successful industrial art centers and other art centers established in smaller remote and coastal tourist towns like Fort Bragg.

### **Key Components of Successful Art Centers that should be Considered for Inclusion in the City's Feasibility Study**

- The need for a solid business model with good organization
- Financially solvent
- Visionary leadership
- Emphasis on marketing, excellent public relations, community involvement and support
- A regular maintenance staff

- Provide affordable space for artists
- Provide a hands-on space for art tourists with an invitation to participate
- Provide youth programs
- Emphasis on local artists, emerging craftsmen, and the area's Native American historical roots in art and culture
- Provide an exhibition space for quality art and products that people want
- Explore the possibility of a broader residency program with mentorships and apprenticeships

### **Key Facility Elements Identified for a Successful Industrial Arts Center in Fort Bragg**

- Interesting architecture
- Large event / performance space
- Showroom / gallery space
- Window frontage to attract visitors
- Instructional space
- Specialized, state-of-the-art and large equipment for use by on-site artists, particularly bridge cranes, forges, fork lifts, welders, industrial sinks, and spray booths
- Drive-thru doors 20 feet tall
- Appropriate electrical configuration, including 220/480 3 phase power
- Use of green building methods and materials
- Retail gallery that sells the artists' work
- Café with fine food

### **Community Needs that Could be Met by an Industrial Arts Center in Fort Bragg**

- Inexpensive studio space and artist work space
- Instructional space
- Space for industrial production (i.e., fine woodworking)
- Jobs and economic revenue for the area
- A central location for attractions (art/events/entertainment)
- Merchant-artist connections (adopt an artist was discussed)
- Retail shopping
- Art export tied with food import)
- A sense of community pride and town identity
- A place for all ages to gather
- Vocational training
- A fun tourist draw with vitality
- Apprenticeships
- A place to showcase green technology and support a more sustainable construction industry

- A place where artists can network, work together, socialize, and obtain co-op/quantity discounts on materials
- Rehearsal space
- Showroom space
- A place for collective marketing

### **Programmatic Focus of an Industrial Arts Center**

In terms of describing the programmatic focus of an industrial arts center in Fort Bragg, workshop participants described something that would complement the Mendocino Art Center as well as the College of the Redwoods' Fine Woodworking Program in the following ways:

- Think beyond fine arts
- Define industrial
- Specify the trade
- Emphasize the idea of a business incubation program
- Provide appropriate studio space for industrial art, fine woodworking, metal work (welding, cast, machine, fabrication), sculpture-stone, ceramics, textiles, painting and sculpture, print making, theater arts, literary, music, print making, paper making, digital media and computer graphics, advanced design, CAD, animation, and film
- Gallery/retail area separate from the artist/work space
- Events venue (catalyst for strengthening annual events which draw people to the coast)
- Educational classes for vocational training
- Competitions among various arts
- Potential for an artists' in residence program (with two types of residencies – long & short term)
- Area to accommodate the performing arts, including acoustic music
- Recognize and build on the concept "draw from region"
- Provide sellable products and develop a production line unique to the area
- Outdoor sculpture garden with an ocean view
- Community calendar of events

### **Specific Industrial Arts Center Amenities, Tools, and Space Configuration Elements**

- Alternative design/architecture
- Flexible spaces (some smaller/larger – some visible/ some not)
- Dedicated buildings for certain media and art specific spaces with a range of set ups (wood, paint, sculpture)
- Emphasis on Fort Bragg's history and shipping heritage as it relates to industrial art while incorporating tourists and partnering with merchants
- Entrance with a gallery, retail, and common space

- Restoration of the selected site's native vegetation and trees along with a garden/outdoor space and a deck
- Classrooms
- Event space
- Food service/ café as well as a gathering space with a group kitchen
- Industrial capabilities including bridge cranes, welders, forge, and a forklift
- 220/480 3 phase power
- Spray booths
- Appropriate ventilation
- Industrial sinks and shop sinks
- Hazardous waste storage and on-site mycoremediation
- Electronic/micro/computer arts clean rooms model studio
- Music and lighting throughout
- Drive-thru doors 20' tall
- Clean/solar/efficient building and energy techniques including reclaimed water and solar heat
- Kilns and kiln dry local wood
- Space for the performing arts
- Spaces for shared equipment
- Big light tables
- Computers
- Printing press
- Bathrooms
- Bookstore and show room
- Music recording space
- Nocturnal light
- Tools for named types of art
- A demonstration area as well as an area for equipment and storage

### **Elements from the Small Group Conceptual Bubble Diagrams**

- Class rooms
- Event space adjacent to food service area
- Work spaces/ studios separated in the middle by a public gallery
- Art specific spaces for wood, metal, paint, sculpture, ceramic, glass, textiles, and visceral arts/fine print/text/ fiber arts
- Flexible spaces (some smaller/ some larger, some more visible)
- Dedicated buildings for specific uses
- Retail/gallery /common space with information at the entrance
- Feature gallery
- Garden/ outdoor space
- Vegetation restoration
- Incorporate Fort Bragg history as related to industrial art
- Incorporate tourists partnering with merchants

- Emphasize the shipping partnership
- Symbiotic industrial & fine art combination
- Music
- Design/computer tech
- Film/performance
- Area with shared tools for woodworkers in the middle, encircled by studios
- Extension to the metal workers and casting with another separate area for shared industrial tools
- Extension to a large exhibit space
- Extension to another area with shared tools for ceramics encircled by studios
- Another extension from the exhibit space to an area with shared tools for weavers encircled by studios
- Theater encircled by studios and classrooms – rehearsal space, set/ props mentoring, costume creation/ mentoring
- Theater needs no outside lighting/ windows
- One audience attracts the other audience (fine art and industrial art)
- Entrance to studios from the outside/ studios facing windows/ exterior and separate entrances to the studios on the interior
- Café
- Sculpture garden (art, plants, people, spirals)
- Theater/ performing arts area

Other suggestions provided by workshop participants included: the potential for a worker/ owner co-op; incorporation of trains for transport; history as related to art; the selection of a benevolent dictator (no Board of Directors) and some believe that appointing a board representing each art medium is a good solution; build LEED certified buildings; be inclusive – make sure we don't compete with existing businesses; include participation of all perceived "threats" in the planning process; and incorporate coastal elements. One suggested name for the Fort Bragg Industrial Art Center that was mentioned during the workshop was the Pacific International Art Center. Inspiring comments from participants included "believe in the possibility" and "let's make it real!"

As part of the feasibility study, the City asked interested community members to complete an artist survey that was distributed at the workshop and that has been circulating via email and is still available on the City's website for those wishing to make comments – [http://city.fortbragg.com/pdf/artist\\_survey.pdf](http://city.fortbragg.com/pdf/artist_survey.pdf). The survey results will provide valuable information about the current state of workshop and studio space in the area, as well as peoples' interest in participating in an industrial art center. Next steps for City staff include the formation of an Industrial Arts Center Task Force as well as the completion of the draft feasibility study, which will be completed by City staff over the course of the next few months.