

Eddie,

It was my pleasure to join you on February 16 to discuss how to integrate the civic and design community further into the Cultural Plan.

Founded in 1978, the Urban Design Forum is a membership organization that gathers architects, planners, and developers to debate critical issues facing the city, from housing and transportation to access to open space. We also regularly partner with organizations outside of New York to foster greater cultural exchange, as well as arts organizations like Times Square Arts, with whom we partnered to lead this year's heart design competition.

As an urban design organization with a small staff of two full- and two part-time staff, I would offer the following as recommendations:

- 1) **Fund Urban Design Pilot Projects:** DCLA should work with community organizations, artist groups, business improvement districts,, and other partners to create urban design projects that strengthen local identities, perhaps in conjunction with the Mayor's rezoning efforts.
- 2) **Create a Legacy Organizations Program:** Akin to a similar program offered by Small Business Services, DCLA could offer funding and technical assistance to invigorate historic organizations with strategic planning, marketing, Board rotation, and other services.
- 3) **Build a Venue Sharing Database** – Small organizations without brick-and-mortar venues could benefit from knowledge and resource sharing about available spaces to host cultural programs.
- 4) **Create a Pop-up / Community Facilities Program:** Work with developers to offer short-term leases to cultural organizations at discounted rates.
- 5) **Enhance Design Incubators:** As a resident of NYDesigns, we benefit from the discounted rents offered by the Economic Development Corporation in partnership with LaGuardia Community College. However, there are no technical assistance or consulting services offered to cultural organizations. Partner with incubators like NYDesigns to build capacity of organizations in all five boroughs.
- 6) **Flash Grants:** Offer small and near-immediate grants to cultural organizations so that they can more effectively respond to political and social events.

I look forward to continuing our discussions as you work to develop the Cultural Plan. If we can help in any other way, please let me know.

Best regards,