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LOVELAND

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Loveland has an international reputation



As Loveland has grown from a town to a city, its reputation as an arts community has also grown and spread to include international recognition. Loveland is a community that’s known as “A Work of Art.”

“Loveland is known as a community rich with artists, galleries and public art displays,” explained Loveland Cultural Services Director Susan Ison. “Loveland’s ‘art town’ reputation is much more than just a label. It’s a major source of community pride and identity that contributes to the fine quality of life here,” said Ison.

The City’s Cultural Services Department (CS) does much to provide opportunities for all residents of Loveland – and visitors, too – to enjoy artistic and cultural experiences. The city of Loveland’s involvement with the arts also results in a significant benefit for the entire community.



Art benefits eyes, ears & wallet

Loveland’s public and nonprofit art and cultural endeavors are beneficial not only to the eyes and ears of the community but also to its annual economy, almost \$10 million worth.

The Cultural Services Department participated in a nationwide study to determine the economic impact of nonprofit arts and culture organizations and their audiences. The study, conducted by Americans for the Arts, determined that the U.S. economic total was \$166.2 billion – yes, that’s billion with a B.

Here in Loveland, visitors to the Museum/ Gallery and Rialto Theater were asked to provide spending information. That data, along with data from the City budget and elsewhere resulted in a snapshot of the culture-related economic impact in Loveland totaling \$9,817,726 during 2005.

The total included salaries for 284 full-time-equivalent jobs throughout Loveland, revenue to local and state government, event-related spending and other spending. It was especially interesting to note that more than half of Loveland arts and culture event attendees — 58 percent — were from out of town, therefore bringing additional revenue into Loveland.

And remember, this study only dealt with nonprofit organizations. Loveland is home to many very profitable galleries, showrooms, art supply houses, foundries and the artists themselves.

Loveland Sculpture Weekend August 10-12

Public art from foresight, generosity

Sometimes we take for granted the beauty that surrounds us. We’re accustomed to seeing a range of mountains just to our west, blue skies and bright sunshine almost daily, and all the art displayed throughout our town.

It’s no accident that art adorns our streets, parks, public spaces and public buildings. In 1985, Loveland became the first town in Colorado to adopt an Art in Public Places program.

Every major City construction project of \$50,000 or more includes one percent of the funding for the purchase of art for that project. Much more of Loveland’s public art comes from the generosity of organizations and individuals, especially the internationally known sculpture sale weekend every August. Proceeds from the weekend by the two local organizations



that host the events are donated back to the City for the purchase of public artwork in Loveland and for art programs for Loveland’s school district.

Today, the City’s art collection includes 269 individual pieces, valued at more than \$6 million, of which more than 80 percent of the value has been donated. Bronze sculpture is the main emphasis of the City’s art collection due to its easy accessibility outdoors, the great number of sculptors and the world-class foundries located in Loveland.

And there’s much more art in Loveland available to see, enjoy and purchase from many commercial galleries and artists’ showrooms throughout town.

The City’s art collection is under the direction of a volunteer citizens’ group, the Visual Arts Commission. This active, seven-member committee oversees the City’s art acquisitions, donations and site selection.

History and art at Museum/Gallery

Local history and international art can all be viewed and enjoyed with a single visit downtown to the Loveland Museum/Gallery.

Loveland’s cultural headquarters, the facility hosts exhibits, art classes, workshops, poetry readings, demonstrations and more under its roof. Outside the building, visitors can enjoy festivals, concerts, performances and other art-related gatherings.

The museum began under private ownership in a converted garage in 1938. With City ownership and operation, it has since evolved into both a museum and art gallery, now 28,000 sq. ft. in size. Plans for future expansion are already under way.

The museum displays are established for long-term residency while a changing variety of art gallery exhibits are offered throughout the year. Below is a list of some of the major exhibits for 2007:

- Museum:**
- Life on Main Street
 - Loveland’s Great Western Sugar Factory
 - Sweetheart Town, USA
 - Fireside Gallery
 - Big Thompson Water Project 3-D Map
- Galleries:**
- Zimbabwe Stone Sculptures
 - George Mendoza: Vision of the Soul
 - Thompson School District Art Show
 - Annual Governor’s Art Show
 - Hook, Hammer and Hang
 - Infinite Dimensions: Glass Art
 - Art Harvest: Images of the Farm
 - Berthoud’s Farming Heritage



Youngsters offered art interaction

Diversity, mentoring and community connection all describe the City’s cultural programs aimed specifically at youngsters.

“Our programs provide youth a springboard into involvement with the arts,” explained Youth Activities Coordinator Jenni Dobson of the Loveland Cultural Services Department. “We provide opportunities aimed at understanding and appreciating the arts rather than focusing on training toward a career in art. This enables us to offer a broader range of programs to a broader range of kids.”

The concept of diversity applies to both artistic media and ages served. The youth programs offer involvement with everything from drawing, painting, pastels and pottery to filmmaking, foreign cultures and rock ‘n’ roll. The age groups involved range from tots to teens.

The mentoring and community connection go hand-in-hand since most of the adults involved who provide instruction, education and support are professionals from Loveland’s wide-ranging arts communities. Young participants gain a unique perspective and great respect for these local artists and educators who share their skills and experience with the children.

With the addition of the youth activities coordinator position in 2001, the programming for and participation by Loveland youngsters in the arts has increased dramatically – as much as ten fold. Programs include:



Rialto is downtown’s heart

No brag, just fact: The Rialto Theater has regained its place as the heart and soul of downtown Loveland.

When it opened in 1920 with its wooden seats, an orchestra pit and vaudeville stage, it was hailed as “The finest theater north of Denver.” In its own special way, that description holds true today.

The Rialto hosts a wide variety of live performances – from nationally touring acts to local theater productions and choral groups. Independent and art house films are shown along with

classic movies and even silent movies with a live orchestra.

Many regional non-profit organizations hold their fund-raising benefits at the Rialto. And the theater also hosts graduations, business meetings and events, community events, and even weddings.

The Rialto has developed a strong partnership with the Thompson R2J school district. Students attend special performances, the Rialto sends visiting artists into the schools for residency activities and the theater also provides a thriving program of theater arts classes for students in grades K-12.

It has re-energized the area, bringing people downtown and spurring new businesses where theater-goers dine and shop. The Rialto is part of downtown’s character of culture, with publicly displayed sculpture, art galleries and studios, outdoor art fairs and, of course, the Museum/Gallery just a block away.

The stiff wooden seats are long gone. Renovated and reopened in 1996, the Rialto is busier than ever. Today, more than 300 events take place each year at the 450-seat theater, with more than 43,000 people filling those seats last year. If you’ve been to the Rialto, you’ve enjoyed yourself. If you haven’t, you have something to look forward to.

And it’s still getting better. The Rialto will soon have brand new seats...again.

