



Dear Fellow Community Members:

Fort Collins is an amazing place for arts, culture and quality of life. Our creative community contributes to this vibrancy we all enjoy, and it enriches our lives individually and communally. Creatives are an essential part of our local workforce, often working multiple non-arts jobs in addition to maintaining their creative professions. As our city grows, it is important to ensure that this creative community can continue to thrive.

Affordable housing is a challenge that most communities face, including creative ones. In the most recent years after emergence from the Great Recession, Fort Collins housing affordability has become a much broader topic of concern for the community. Factors contributing to local housing affordability challenges include continued population influx to Northern Colorado, construction and trades labor shortages, diminishing surplus of development land in municipal limits, and state-wide construction defects legislation that all but eliminated construction of new entry-level priced residential condominium units.

Creative communities throughout the country are working to find innovative solutions to housing affordability. The State of Colorado recently brought together public and private partners to launch *Space to Create*, a statewide initiative to build affordable housing for creative workers. Artspace, a nonprofit real estate developer, is helping Colorado to meet its goal of financially sustainable workforce housing for Colorado's creative workers.

In June of 2016, the City of Fort Collins, Downtown Development Authority, and Bohemian Foundation engaged Artspace to assess the feasibility of an affordable housing development. Artspace began with a Preliminary Feasibility Visit. These visits are multi-day engagements with community members, from creative workers to civic, business and nonprofit leaders. Artspace conducts small and large focus groups and site visits to important cultural assets and neighborhoods. The goal of an Artspace Preliminary Feasibility Visit is to determine whether there is significant community interest in the issue of affordable housing and possible solutions. In Fort Collins, hundreds of community members conveyed a strong message to Artspace that affordable housing was a pressing concern.

Artspace then recommended a second phase of engagement, a more formal survey of the market for a development in Fort Collins. Artspace launched in April of 2017 an Arts Market Study. The objective of the study was to survey a broad group of creative workers and organizations to measure the demand for affordable housing. Artspace launched the survey in April and collected over 600 responses from individuals and organizations. The results from the Arts Market Study are presented by Artspace in the Recommendations Summary and full Technical Report.

We are pleased to share these results with you and ask that you use your knowledge of Fort Collins and our creative community to interpret these findings.

Sincerely,

Josh Birks, City of Fort Collins
Matt Robenalt, Downtown Development Authority
Cheryl Zimlich, Bohemian Foundation