

## **Executive Summary**

March 10th, 2015  
By Michael O'Connor

### **Artists United**

Artists United was formed in July, 2014 through a fundraiser on Alberta Street to establish a community-based solution for Last Thursday. This event attracts over 100,000 people to Alberta each year, is internationally recognized, and is a premier destination to experience Portland's unique creative culture. The objective of Artists United is to address all of the livability impacts Last Thursday has on the residents, build a balanced budget, fulfill the legal obligations with the City of Portland, and organize street vending and performances to exemplify our creative culture. Artists United's mission is to perpetuate the beautification, social fulfillment, and economic prosperity of our city's neighborhood system.

### **Event Coordination**

Last Thursday's season runs May through September from 6 pm - 9 pm inside of a fifteen block street closure on Alberta Street. Artists United will be coordinating waste management, sanitation, traffic control, security, public agencies, volunteers, vendors, and performances for each event.

### **Operations**

Artists United will sell event sponsorships and collect vending fees to cover the expenses of Last Thursday. The nonprofit will adhere to public agency recommendations, maintain stakeholder committees, manage financial and legal responsibilities, recruit volunteers, and develop its online capabilities. Additionally, Artists United will conduct research on Last Thursday's economic and livability impacts.

### **Future Development**

Last Thursday has contributed to the prosperity of many local businesses and property owners by attracting thousands of people to Alberta Street each year. The event has grown steadily and could reach a maximum capacity soon. To maintain a safe capacity, Artists United will develop an expansion strategy to displace population growth.

## **Management**

Founder and Executive Director Michael O'Connor brings significant community organizing and event production experience to this position. In February of 2010, he was a founding member of Friends of Last Thursday (FoLT). In 2012, Michael left FoLT to found Creative Collaborations, the nonprofit that was managing many community events including a four block monthly street fair in SE Portland called Hump Day. In the summer of 2014, Michael O'Connor stepped back into the negotiations over Last Thursday and founded Artist United to represent stakeholder interests. For the past five years Michael has immersed himself in Portland's creative culture, been continuously engaged with the city government, and is committed towards improving the quality of living in our neighborhoods.

## **Financials**

The financial strategy of Artists United is to emphasize the economic development potential of continuous community events in neighborhood business districts. By balancing the financial responsibilities for Last Thursday among the stakeholders through sponsorships and fees, the nonprofit can sustain the event in a socially and environmentally responsible way. Through economic and social research, Artists United can assess the economic value and social benefits of regular community events in a given area. The City of Portland's expenses for Last Thursday have ranged from \$118,057 in 2010, to \$73,047 in 2013. The Alberta Street Fair is the most comparable event, which sold over \$25,000 in sponsorships in 2014. Artists United projected first year revenue, between sponsorships and fees, is \$100,000.

## **Measuring Impacts**

Artists United will be conducting regular online surveys for the residential population, the vending and performance community, and local businesses. The nonprofit will collect information about the economic and livability impacts of Last Thursday. This information will be collected through quality assurance protocols that will verify the data's authenticity. The data is then presented to the stakeholder committees to be interpreted for Artists United's administrative and event production strategy.

## **Committees**

Artists United will develop and maintain stakeholder committees that will analyze the nonprofit's impact data and shape the strategy for Last Thursday and future events. There are committees for businesses, residents, public safety, and vendors. In addition to stakeholder committees, an executive committee will write Artists United's operational strategy for stakeholder committee approval.

## **Stakeholder Committees**

To ensure that the strategy for Artists United is maintaining the interests of all the stakeholders involved with Last Thursday, we will develop committees for the Alberta Business District, the neighborhood associations and residents, the street vending and performance community, and our government agencies. In addition to the stakeholder committees, there will be an executive committee that puts all stakeholder interests together into a single strategy that can be approved by the stakeholder committees.

The Business Committee will formulate the strategy for sponsorships and the creative vision for Last Thursday. Artists United will be conducting an economic impact analysis and the business committee will assist in interpreting economic data. Our goal will be to design Last Thursday's layout to best suit the local businesses.

The Vending Committee will formulate the strategy for the vending fees and the creative vision for Last Thursday. Artists United will be collecting economic data from the vendors and the committee will assist in interpreting the data. Our goal will be to design Last Thursday's layout to best suit the vendors and attendees.

The Residential Committee will formulate the strategy for addressing livability impacts and the creative vision for Last Thursday. Artists United will be measuring the social impacts that Last Thursday has on the residents and the committee will assist in interpreting the data. Our goal is to design Last Thursday's layout to best suit the residents and attendees.

The Public Safety Committee will formulate the strategy for addressing public safety concerns and livability impacts. This committee will consist of residents and representatives from government agencies. Artists United will be combining social impact data and city agency data for the committee to interpret. Our goal is to design Last Thursday's layout to best address the public safety concerns. There is a growing concern of Last Thursday reaching a maximum capacity, so an expansion strategy is a priority.

The Executive Committee is our Board of Directors. It will combine all stakeholder information and requests into a single strategy to be submitted to the stakeholder committees for approval. The Executive committee is comprised of a member from each stakeholder committee and Artists United Coordinators. The Executive committee will monitor the activity of Artists United to ensure the administration is executing the approved strategy.

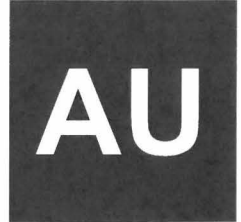
--- work in progress ---

# Artists United

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September 16th, 2015

**The City of Portland pledges to cover the expenses of police officer overtime deemed necessary for Last Thursday's 2016, if Artists United is able to acquire \$50,000 in event sponsorship contracts by April 29th, 2016, for Last Thursday's 2016 season.**

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Mayor of Portland, Charlie Hales

( / / )

Date

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Director of Artists United, Michael O'Connor

( / / )

Date

## AU Planning Outline

It is the mission of Artists United to improve the quality of living in neighborhoods through beautification projects and community events. Since the neighborhood is in a state of conflict over Last Thursday, and nothing we know of can stop it from happening, we will be coordinating the event according to a plan that's been approved of by its stakeholders.

In order to monitor the state of conflict and track progress towards a resolution, we have an approval process through a stakeholder committee system. The stakeholder committees are designed to ensure everyone who has something to gain or lose, will have an equal opportunity to make objections or additions to any plan.

We four sectors for planning:

- Financial Strategy
- Human Resources
- Community Development
- Data Management

These sectors will be developed by volunteer planning committees. Last Thursday is in our Community Development sector along with any other event or beautification project. Our stakeholder committee system is in the Data Management sector and all operations are dependent on our financial strategy and human resources.

Last Thursday's Production Plan has two sides; logistics and finances.

Our logistical plan includes our layout design, traffic control, security, sanitation, waste management, and volunteers positions. Most of the logistics for public safety was developed five years ago through Mayor Sam Adams office. We will adjust the layout as we get feedback from stakeholders.

The services for public safety are mandatory for an event permit and to resolve the conflict. On average, the expenses for each event is around \$25,000. In order to afford these services our main sources of revenue will be vending fees and event sponsorships, which is traditional for all major events.

What will make us unique is having vending spots available for reservation in addition to first-come-first-serve areas. Event sponsors are usually concerned with the marketing campaign, but our focus will be integrating them into a public relations strategy.

Once we can manage Last Thursday sustainably, we can focus our attention on other community development projects around the neighborhood.

## **The Dynamics of Last Thursday's Conflict**

**Dear Stakeholder,**

On Monday, August 3rd, I held a community forum about Last Thursday for residents, businesses, and event participants in partnership with the Alberta Abbey. It was an opportunity for every stakeholder involved to talk about the problems with the event. The purpose of this document is to help the people involved understand the challenges we face, and the best ideas we have to resolve our issues.

### **The Conflict**

Last Thursday on Alberta Street has been in a state of conflict for the past five years. Residents are in dispute over the event. Local businesses don't see eye to eye and hundreds of event participants come and go with mixed feelings. Our former mayor, Sam Adams, held a call to action in 2010; the Portland Bureau of Transportation, the police department, fire marshal, health department, and OLCC have been heavily involved since. Last Thursday **costs taxpayers around \$100,000 a year** to supply crucial services for the public's safety.

Millions of people know about Last Thursday and know that it's on Alberta Street. In its history, there has never been an organization managing the event, or advertising for people to come. **Tens of thousands of people are guaranteed to show up** each month over the summer. Events like Last Thursday have emerged in other cities throughout the country, but no event has grown this large without an organization. It is a social phenomenon and there is no one to blame.

The neighborhood residents and businesses are split between wanting to see the event go away, and having it stay and flourish. In order to **resolve the conflict over Last Thursday**, every stakeholder, **someone who has something to gain or lose**, would approve of Last Thursday's Plan and be satisfied with the results.

### **The Stakeholders**

Each stakeholder can be categorized in groups to better understand their needs; we have residents, businesses, event participants, and city government.

The **city government's** involvement has been necessary to keep people safe. There are too many people showing up to allow traffic to drive down Alberta Street. With such a volume of people, portable restrooms and waste receptacles are crucial for sanitation. We need private security and a police presence to ensure compliance with the law. The mayor's office doesn't believe they should be the ones managing this event and paying for these services.



Every **resident** opposed to the event, has specific reasons why they have a problem. One of the main issues is crowd mentality, rude people show up and leave garbage everywhere. They urinate in lawns, drink in public, are loud, obnoxious, and they don't tip. They are tourists from outside the neighborhood that don't have the same respect that the residents have for their home.

**Local businesses** have a variety of issues with the event. Some businesses generate more sales than they would on an average Thursday, others have a substantial drop in sales. Bars and restaurants are under extreme scrutiny by the health department, OLCC, and fire marshal. Tourists come off as rude and do not tip; employees have refused to work and several bars keep their doors locked.

**Event participants** are artists, musicians, performers, and other vendors. They have been under constant threat by the police department and the private security the City of Portland hires. Regardless of the duress they are under, hundreds of event participants show up every time. These vendors and performers want structure so they don't argue with each other on where they can set up. They also want to contribute towards the expenses of the event.

### **The Solution**

The **greatest challenge to addressing the issues** of Last Thursday is political stability. As long as residents, businesses, event participants, and the city government are in disagreement on how this event is managed, it is difficult raise funds for the expenses let alone make any changes to it.

When we can demonstrate that residents, businesses, event participants, and city government are in agreement on how to proceed, a vendor or event sponsor will feel secure their money is getting spent on what we need for people's safety.

**Crowd mentality** is our root issue for nuisance problems in the neighborhood. A strong presence with around 100 easily identifiable volunteers (bright t shirts) to coordinate and watchover the event, will have the largest influence. Most multi-day festivals throughout our region have a large amount of volunteer "rangers," which can double or triple the security team's ability to monitor events. Rangers get basic security training and sole duty is to observe and report to the security team.

In addition to having more advanced security protocols, **improving the aesthetic quality** of the event can also impact the crowds mentality. If things look clean and beautiful, people will automatically treat their environment with greater respect.

I designed a stakeholder committee system to ensure everyone gets an equal voice on decisions that will impact their life. This system is how we track progress of resolving the conflict.

I will be releasing the first production plan at the end of the week, then we start the approval process. The mayor said they will not provide any services in September, but we know **at least 10,000 people will show up**. We should do our best, as a community, to make sure September is clean and safe for everyone.

Respectfully,

Michael O'Connor

Founder & Director for Artists United

(503) 869-4923



## Parsons, Susan

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**From:** Parsons, Susan  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 12:18 PM  
**To:** 'Michael O'Connor'  
**Subject:** RE: September Testimony = September 16

Michael,

Thank you for your email. You are confirmed for a Council Meeting Communication on September 16<sup>th</sup>, at 9:30 a.m.

Here is further information for you on the Communications portion of the agenda:

- You will have three minutes to address the Council and may also submit written material (please provide seven copies).
- We start the meeting at 9:30 and Communications are the first item on the agenda.
- Please note communications allow the Council to hear issues that interest our citizens, but do not allow an opportunity for dialogue.
- The Council meeting takes place at City Hall, 1221 SW 4th Ave., 2nd Floor, Council Chambers.

Sue

Susan Parsons  
Assistant Council Clerk  
City of Portland

[susan.parsons@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:susan.parsons@portlandoregon.gov)  
503.823.4085

**From:** Michael O'Connor [mailto:colab42@gmail.com]

**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 12:13 PM

**To:** Parsons, Susan

**Subject:** September Testimony

Hi Sue,

I would like to schedule testimony for City Council. It is about Last Thursday on Alberta Street. We are planning on applying for an event permit for September 24th's event. The mayor's office has refused to communicate with us, which almost resulted in an injunction this month. Luckily we notified the City Attorney in the nick of time.

If Chad Stover didn't make threatening phone call to me when I was campaigning for endorsements before my last testimony, we wouldn't have such serious problems.

But this is it, if we can reach an agreement over September, the mayor will never have to deal with Last Thursday again.

Thanks.

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Michael O'Connor

(503) 869 4923

Request of Michael O'Connor to address Council regarding Last Thursday on  
Alberta St (Communication)

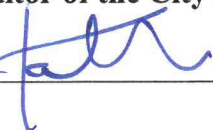
SEP 16 2015

PLACED ON FILE

SEP 11 2015

Filed \_\_\_\_\_

**MARY HULL CABALLERO**  
Auditor of the City of Portland

By  Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Saltzman		
4. Novick		
Hales		