



LAGUNA PLEIN AIR PAINTERS ASSOCIATION

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

**Adopted  
June 10, 2010**

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## Summary

The Laguna Plein Air Painters Association (LPAPA) faces crucial opportunities and challenges as it enters its 15<sup>th</sup> year.

With its connection to an internationally renowned artistic base and history in Laguna Beach, its well-established events program, the heritage of early and contemporary California landscape painters, LPAPA continues to be well-positioned to serve the interests and needs of landscape painters throughout the USA and internationally.

Given that a vibrant artistic genre is inspired by and expresses cultural and social conditions of its time, landscape painting, through LPAPA, has a distinctive opportunity to enhance and to strengthen its cultural relevance and commercial vitality by drawing connections and awareness between landscape painting and the pressing social and political issues such as sustainability and climate change.

At the same time, LPAPA, like many non-profit organizations, faces challenges to its continuing effectiveness and relevance from changing social, economic and financial conditions, evolving media and communications.

Among the challenges that must be addressed by LPAPA for success and growth are:

1. Better defining the mission and reach of the organization

2. Increasing its visibility and relevance to the artistic and larger community both for present and maturing generations, including a permanent exhibition center
3. Delivering improved added value to the membership
4. Building a stronger financial base for long-term viability and service capacity

This Strategic Plan sets out four priorities, defined objectives and feasible and measureable implementing actions that, when adopted and actively carried out, will effectively address the opportunities and challenges facing the organization. A timetable is also provided for the actions as both a guide and a means of measuring success.

## II. Strengths and Challenges

### Strengths

- Established LPAPA events
- Connection to Laguna's cultural heritage and natural landscape community
- Reputation for quality
- Capable staff and Board Members
- Attractive website and brochure materials

### Challenges

- Relevance and Membership
- Retain artistic/aesthetic relevance and quality
- Retain member loyalty and interest
- Procure a permanent exhibition/administrative venue
- Develop up-scale clientele market and exhibition program (e.g., Pacific Club)
- Attract new members/followers
- Strengthen alliances and interaction with related organizations
- Enhance international status and visibility
- Involve members of younger generation
- Finances/Added Value
- Increase value-added services to members
- Enhance administrative and oversight capacity of the organization
- Increase financial base and visibility
- Attract new donors and substantive donations

## III. Four Strategic Priorities

### Priority 1: Clarify Mission Statement

Approved Revision (May 2010):

*"Laguna Plein Air Painters Association (LPAPA) builds upon and promotes the renowned landscape painting heritage of Laguna Beach. LPAPA serves its members regionally, nationally and internationally through events, programs and education."*

*LPAPA enhances the visibility and livelihoods of its artists through the prestigious Plein Air Invitational and other programs. LPAPA provides professional development and business management education to its members. LPAPA enhances its mission through alliances with complementary arts organizations and provides mentoring and scholarships to emerging artists.”*

Actions/Timing:

- Mission statement agreed to by Board, May 2010
- Place on website, May 2010
- Formally adopt by Board , June 2010

Priority 2: Enhance donor base and increase financial strength

Presently, LPAPA marginally survives on revenues from membership fees (reportedly significantly lower than similar organizations) and nominal returns from its events. It also must compete with other arts organizations both for relevance and for funding. These sources of funds are inadequate for the organization to reach its full potential.

In order for the organization to surmount difficult economic times and to enhance its capability, a robust, practical fund-raising program for both operations and an endowment is needed, along with the capability to implement it.

Implementation of this priority will allow the acquisition of a critically needed exhibition and administrative center; allow for a full-time, well-paid

coordinator/administrator, and later, compensation for the president, to allow for greater time and effort commitment to the organization.

The Board of Directors should establish a detailed implementation plan and timetable for this priority, including development of a master list of promising individuals and organizations known to the Board and, through outreach, to the larger membership.

Given the difficulty of accomplishing this priority in the foreseeable future, the Board, building upon the fund-raising and event planning experience of several of its members, should identify and adopt feasible best practices to assure its success. One approach would be to establish a specific fund-raising program for purchase or long-term lease of a permanent venue for "The LPAPA Exhibition Center". The Board should decide whether fee acquisition or long-term lease of a venue is preferable before beginning the fund-raising.

Fundraising sources to consider include:

- Consideration of strategically-considered member fee increase
- Identification of corporate sponsorship opportunities/sources
- Active outreach to local patron sources
- Grants
- Charitable donations of real estate
- 2011 fundraising gala

Suggested objectives for this effort are: \$200,000 operating reserve fund to be raised within two years, a LPAPA Exhibition Center Fund of at least \$1,000,000 (if fee purchase is the selected approach) to be raised in

full or in phased benchmarks to be determined, as soon as possible, and a first-stage, permanent endowment of \$2,500,000 within five years.

The Board should develop a detailed outreach program and master list of prospects to accomplish this priority in June 2010 and begin its implementation immediately.

### Priority 3: Acquire Interim and/or Permanent Exhibition and Administrative Venue

The implementation of this priority is part of and dependent upon the successful completion of The LPAPA Exhibition Center funding component of Priority 2, including the acquisition of grants to defray the costs of acquiring a portable exhibition and display system. Short-term fund-raising (such as a gala in 2011) to create the operating fund will allow for rental of quality exhibition space in a visible location, if permanent space cannot be acquired in the short-term. The space should be in a visible location and of configuration and quality that reflects well on LPAPA and properly serves its members.

#### Actions/Timing

- Define program for center
  - Type of location
  - Visibility/architectural character
  - Functions and functional relationships (including possible shared use, including interior and exterior aspects such as parking)
  - Size
  - Consider all zoning/entitlement/permit issues
- Means of acquisition

- Purchase (mortgage or cash purchase or combination)
- Long-term lease
- Donation
- Fund-raising
  - Identify estimated cost of acquisition
  - Cost of improvements/equipment
  - Recurring costs: Maintenance, taxes, insurance, staffing
  - Objectives for fund-raising (\$) and timing/phasing
  - Methods and sources of fund-raising
  - Gala planning to start in June 2010
- Target dates for implementation (To be determined by Board-Summer 2010)

#### Priority 4: Increase Visibility and Alliances

In order to reach a higher level of success and influence and to implement financial and member service priorities, LPAPA needs to greatly expand its visibility and connections with the larger artist and general public community.

Alliances with other arts and non-arts organizations, including government officials and agencies with complementary interests and expertise are vital to enhance the vitality of the organization and to demonstrate value-added service to the LPAPA membership.

#### Multi-Media Relationships

Building relationships with performing arts organizations and environmental/community groups could lead to exciting multi-media events where art, music, dance, drama, culinary arts and environmental issues could be showcased symbiotically, potentially drawing a larger audience and

providing improved visibility and hence commercial opportunities for our artists. Consideration must be given to assure that such events do not become too costly to be successful or dilute our core purposes.

These events could also involve the younger generation-children and emerging artists so that upcoming and future generations will be interested in and be able to participate in landscape painting.

#### Actions/Timing

- Determine best practices for multi-media events (June 2010)
- Identify target groups and develop outreach program and schedule (Summer 2010 or as soon as possible thereafter)
- Conduct outreach (2010-2011)

#### Strategic Alliances

Strategic alliances with other arts organizations should be formally developed on local, national and international scales. This would allow LPAPA and its affiliates to leverage each other's networks and capabilities, while retaining independent, but non-redundant missions and service.

LPAPA should develop a blueprint identifying strategic partners and the steps to solidify the alliances. LPAPA Board members and signature/artists members should all be solicited for their suggestions. The president and Board should conduct personal outreach to as many of these groups as time reasonably allows.

### Actions/Timing

- Initial Outreach to Irvine Museum-completed (GV) (First follow-up June 2010 after PAF Board ratifies program)
- Initial outreach to Pacific Art Foundation-completed (GV, JH)
- Laguna Art Museum(GV to Bolton Colburn)-Spring 2010
- Laguna Canyon Foundation(GV)-Summer 2010
- Laguna Canyon Conservancy(GV)-Summer 2010
- Laguna Greenbelt Authority (GV)-Fall 2010
- Laguna College of Art and Design (GV and RS)-May 20
- Festival of the Arts (?)- Fall 2010
- City of Laguna Beach/Arts Commission/City Council (GV, EP) –Summer 2010
- Other arts organizations, networks to be identified, including other landscape painter groups, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Smithsonian, etc. (TBD)

### Articles and Publications/Advertising

An early action item of the Strategic Plan would involve the preparation and publication of an initial 750-word op-ed article in Laguna newspapers by the president and possibly by other LPAPA offices/Board members. The article and subsequent pieces would explain LPAPA's role and services, its strategic objectives, and discuss the relevance of landscape painting in the context of sustainability, global warming and other social issues of the day. Such articles cost nothing to prepare and publish and can be even more effective than costly advertising. However, an advertising program to increase our visibility should be part of this priority.

LPAPA officers should attend public hearings to speak during public communications to announce upcoming events or simply to reinforce and communicate LPAPA's mission to elected and appointed officials. As many of these hearings are televised, such communications would reach a larger audience than simply those attending or presiding over the meeting. Similar outreach can occur with local Realtors, architects/landscape architects, schools, colleges, etc.

#### Actions/Timing

- GV to submit draft op-ed article for Board approval at June 2010 meeting
- Board to develop suggested follow-on topics (June 2010)
- Develop enhanced advertising program and budget (June 2010)

#### Website

LPAPA has an excellent, well-presented website. In order to enhance the implementation of this priority, the website should become somewhat more interactive, including utilization of media such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter to enhance member visibility, education and communication. These additions should be made as soon as possible.

#### Actions/Timing

- Review and refine webmaster scope of work, budget (June 2010)
- Develop program for easily implementable updates/upgrades to website (June 2010)
- Complete initial upgrades by July-August 2010
- Develop program to keep website current with events and emerging technologies (June 2010)

### Art-in-Public Places

The sculptural arts traditionally have the strongest foothold in highly visible art-in-public-places programs. There is a place for landscape painting as well. For example, landscape artists with capability in fresco media could be commissioned to create high quality murals in exterior and interior public places. Given the durability of the medium, these artworks would become a permanent part of the public realm and give the artists and the genre excellent, long-term exposure as well as enhancing community aesthetics. LPAPA should begin by promoting this opportunity in Laguna Beach and later to other communities.

### Actions/Timing

- Identify target opportunities and timetable, June 2010

### Events

LPAPA will continue to strengthen its core events and to bring the 2011 prospective program with PAF at the Pacific club to top-quality fruition, along with the 2011 fundraising gala indentified in Priority 2.

### Actions/Timing

- Ongoing

END.