

## Gallup, GallupArts receive \$300K 'Our Town' grant

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent  
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The city of Gallup, in partnership with GallupArts, received a \$150,000 'Our Town' grant last month from the National Endowment for the Arts. The grant was matched by \$150,000 in contributions from local government, institutions and organizations, officials said.

The \$300,000 grant total will fund a creative placemaking project in downtown Gallup. It will support a community-based, collaborative design process to re-imagine Coal Avenue as a signature "event street and commercial hub," GallupArts officials said.

Starting in early 2018, grant-funded public programs will engage artists, neighbors and business owners with arts organizations, community planners, consultants and city governments to capitalize on downtown Gallup's creative assets.

The grant ties into Gallup's Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan and Cultural Master Plan and will result in the creation of architectural and engineering plans that will make the actual construction of an event street on Coal Avenue a shovel-ready fundable project, Rose Eason, executive director at GallupArts, said.

Gallup is one of 89 cities across the United States to receive an Our Town grant. GallupArts is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving Gallup and McKinley County. It is also Gallup's state-recognized local arts council. As the primary arts presenter in northwest New Mexico, GallupArts' mission is to foster creativity, culture, commerce and quality of life in Gallup and McKinley County through the arts.

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“This award is the culmination of many hours of work by dedicated individuals in our community,” Mayor Jackie McKinney said. “After years of planning and dreaming, we now have the funding avenue to enhance fantastic arts and artists from around our area.”

Eason said a Coal Avenue “street event” has tremendous potential to stimulate redevelopment and transform downtown into a community-oriented arts and cultural hub and energize Gallup’s creative economy,” Eason said. “gallupArts could not be more enthusiastic about partnering with the city and community to create a new vision of downtown.”

gallupArts operates around a two-pronged approach: The organization works to grow the region’s arts-based economy by creating opportunities for artists to show and sell their works. It also provides thousands of people opportunities to engage with the arts through community-based programs, Eason said.

Created by Congress in 1965, the NEA is an independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts.

***By Bernie Dotson***

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