We’ve got culture! Metro Denver ranks as one of the nation’s healthiest regions – with opportunities to exercise our bodies, hearts, and minds. How many people does it take to stretch from the Denver Art Museum to The Lumino? 14 million, the annual attendance at local cultural activities. Culture lets metro Denver residents exercise their hearts... 39,000 individuals volunteered 1.7 million hours to cultural organizations. And their creativity... 792,000 people enrolled in cultural classes.

Is everything bigger in Texas? Not culture! Cultural spending ripples out to fuel business. Cultural spending ripples out to fuel business. What do a hotel, an accountant, a restaurant, and a general contractor have in common? They all get money from culture! Each $1 in cultural spending creates $1.32 for other businesses. Cultural spending has a multiplying effect, creating spending across the business sector.

And culture keeps on connecting... Building on $387 million in investment through the Scientific & Cultural Facilities District tax, the cultural sector returned $387 million in new money to our local economy, an impressive 10:1 return on investment. The SCFD is a user-approved taxing district comprised of the seven metro counties (Adams, Arapahoe, Douglas, Broomfield, Denver, Jefferson, and Weld counties). The sales tax of 0.1%, one penny on every ten dollars, generates over $380 million annually, distributed to more than 300 cultural organizations.

How do we know culture drives our economy? A particularly important part of the Total Economic Activity is what economists call “economic impact.” How much money spent in metro Denver by visitors and comparative coming from outside the region. This extra spending coming into our community plays a key role in creating new jobs, making businesses more prosperous, and reducing our tax burden.

Can you take our picture? 2.4 million tourists visit culture annually - one for every resident of metro Denver. Visitors from outside metro Denver generate $334 million in new money for our economy.

The 2004 Economic Activity Study of Metro Denver: Culture and the economy calculated data from over 300 non-profits funded through the Scientific & Cultural Facilities District tax. Including their attendance, outreach activities, operating expenses, capital expenditures, audience spending, employment, and tax contributions. Cultural spending was generated by combining the operating and capital expenditures of these organizations, with the dollars spent directly by visitors when they attended culture events.

Indirect Economic Activity is determined by any multiplier effect of the direct expenditures. The multipliers are derived from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and customized to the metro Denver area by Deloitte Consulting with input from the Department of Local Affairs, Division of Local Government Services. By applying the multipliers, we calculate the economic activity stimulated in our local economy by the spending of visitors and visitors’ economic activity. Just as with any organization or business, the operating and capital spending of cultural organizations ripples out into the community when they purchase office supplies, rent space, pay for accounting and marketing services, and hire contractors to build or renovate facilities. Audiences also spend additional money when they attend cultural events; paying for gas and parking, shopping at local retailers, dining out, and staying overnight at hotels. It’s not just the babysitter!

Total Economic Activity combines both direct and indirect economic activity to provide a composite picture of the local contribution of cultural organizations to the local economy. Cultural expenditures make up the economic vitality of the metro Denver area.

10:1 ROI
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