



Dear Friends:

Optimistic Future for North Port Art Center

The North Port Art Center must vacate the two buildings it has used for its arts programs for 17 years at Sam Shapos Way by September 1, 2025. The City of North Port will demolish the “old” buildings, making way for a “new beginning”.

City Commission

In a conversation with City Commissioners at their commission meeting on October 22, 2024, NPAC Board President Gale West outlined three ways the City Commission could support the NPAC as it enters a new and exciting transition to creating an art center to meet the needs of a growing North Port community.

- Opportunity to temporarily use the Scout House Monday-Friday from 10am to 3pm for its Home School Arts program and some Adult arts classes during the day (beginning in October 2025).
- Opportunity to return to the same “footprint” the NPAC has occupied for 17 years with a 2-story destination facility and improved parking space. (This larger building would address many of the ideas the NPAC has in its 2023 Strategic Plan which included public access to meeting spaces for businesses and other nonprofit organizations.)
- Opportunity to have the green space across from the NPAC building designated as “additional parking for the NPAC”. (This space is currently being used as overflow parking by students and visitors to the art center; however, more effective utilization of this space could be achieved if this space was designated as “additional parking for the NPAC”.)

Although the Commissioners did not immediately grant these “opportunities” to the NPAC, they did direct the City staff to “work with the NPAC”.

“I’m encouraged by our conversation with the City”, said West. “Most of the commissioners have had personal experiences themselves or through their

children attending arts programs at the NPAC. The positive economic impact of arts in a community is well documented. The positive ‘personal’ impact of the arts on individuals is more difficult to document, yet that is more important to the health and well being of any community.”

Time & Temporary Space

It will take time to build a new NPAC. During the transition, the NPAC is committed to continuing to provide arts programs to youth, adults and Veterans, in addition to celebrating the works of local artists. If the City agrees, the NPAC plans to utilize the Scout House during the weekdays for the Home School Arts programs and Adult Day art classes. This building is primarily for Scouts and the NPAC would ensure that its usage of the building would not adversely affect that purpose.

For After School and Adult Evening classes, as well as weekend paint parties, workshops and the Veterans Arts program, the NPAC is seeking to collaborate with the Sarasota County School system as well as other locations to provide area residents and visitors with a friendly, comfortable location to enjoy arts education.

To ensure that local artists and poets are celebrated during the transition, in the absence of our Gallery space, the NPAC will be reaching out to local businesses to showcase Art In Public Places and invite the public to visit the businesses during Gallery Receptions to “meet the artist” and view a variety of artistic masterpieces.

Money & Community Investment

It will take money to build a new destination art center to meet the needs of the North Port community. The NPAC will be reaching out to the community by launching a “grass roots” community fundraiser providing area residents with an opportunity to make an ongoing contribution to support the transition and future building of a new art center. The NPAC will continue to connect with the business community, area foundations and philanthropists to support the creation of a new art center in North Port.

The NPAC is a small art center compared to art centers in surrounding communities. It has a BIG heart that has catered to the needs of the local demographics, frequently, offering free youth classes that were occasionally sponsored by individuals and businesses in the community,

and infrequently by grants. The Board has evolved over the years and is aware that some of these generous “free” programs must be funded, because the NPAC does have expenses for each class.

Commitment

The NPAC is committed to continuing its legacy as a friendly, caring partner in this community. The Board, the staff, the volunteers, the local artists and the art instructors will continue to devote time, talent and personal financial support to ensure that the North Port community receives excellent arts education programs for youth, adults, seniors and Veterans.

Please join us as we continue to “make a difference” for thousands of residents in this dynamic community.

**How To Donate: Check, Credit Card or Online at
<https://www.northportartcenter.org/ways-to-support.html>**

Questions and Comments

If you have any questions about the future of the North Port Art Center or have questions about other ways you can support the NPAC, please communicate with the NPAC via mail, 5950 Sam Shapos Way, North Port, Florida 34287, or via email, npac@npartcenter.org.

**Focused on the Future,
Gale West, NPAC Board President**