



City Hall, 215 Sycamore St.
Muscatine, IA 52761-3840
(563) 264-1550
Fax (563) 264-0750

DEPARTMENT: Art Center

ACTIVITY: Art Center Operations

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please limit text and utilize bullets when possible. **Bold items that require special attention.** Note any significant changes to revenue. Do not list individual line item changes unless there is a significant change in amount. **Please limit memo to less than 3 pages.**

REVISED ESTIMATE FOR CURRENT FISCAL YEAR (2025/2026)

Items of Concerns for Current Fiscal Year:

- The Muscatine Art Center has completed a significant leadership transition in collections management. The long-tenured Curator/Registrar retired in September 2025, followed by the retirement of the Assistant Registrar in November 2025. With support from a grant awarded by the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust, the Art Center successfully completed the migration of more than 20,000 collection records from its legacy database to a cloud-based collections management system. Grant funding also supported project-related expenses including barcoding, database transfer costs, and equipment purchases. A public-facing collections portal is expected to be partially functional by the end of calendar year 2025. While the core technical objectives of the grant have been met, the staffing transitions required to sustain and expand this work remain an ongoing challenge.
- Since the 2022/23 budgeting process began in fall 2021, Art Center staff has consistently communicated the operational risks associated with multiple upcoming retirements. Between September 2025 and November 2025, two full-time professional staff members retired, resulting in a substantial loss of institutional knowledge. A third key staff member, the Administrative Specialist, is expected to retire in late summer 2026. In total, these departures represent the loss of approximately 95 years of experience within a very small organization comprised of only four full-time staff positions. Replacing this depth of experience while maintaining service levels presents ongoing challenges related to training capacity, workload distribution, and continuity of operations.

"I remember Muscatine for its sunsets. I have never seen any on either side of the ocean that equaled them" — Mark Twain

- The recent and upcoming retirements have created financial pressures related to required payouts for accrued vacation and health savings benefits. The Art Center's operating budget is not structured to absorb these one-time costs. While grant funding made it possible to address part of the Registrar transition, there are no comparable external funding opportunities available to offset costs associated with other staff transitions, including the anticipated retirement of the Administrative Specialist.
- Goals related to expanded marketing efforts and increased grant activity continue to be difficult to achieve due to staffing limitations. These goals were originally dependent upon the addition of a part-time marketing director, a position that remains unfunded. Marketing responsibilities are currently distributed among four full-time staff members, limiting the time available for core job duties as well as for identifying, applying for, and managing additional grant opportunities. Without dedicated marketing capacity, the Art Center faces missed opportunities for earned and contributed revenue growth.
- At current staffing levels, employees continue to struggle to take earned vacation time without impacting daily operations. While some staff are attempting to reduce accrued leave balances, this often results in the facility operating with minimum staffing. Under these conditions, remaining employees are unable to leave the building to attend meetings, present offsite programs, take lunch breaks, or complete necessary offsite business such as banking, supply purchases, or administrative errands. These constraints affect staff morale, operational efficiency, and the Art Center's ability to fully engage with community partners.
- The Muscatine Art Center Board of Trustees had been engaged in organizational rebranding with de Novo Marketing and had selected an architectural firm in consultation with Lord Cultural Resources. These efforts were funded by the Muscatine Art Center Support Foundation, which had also committed funds for the development of architectural plans related to a potential building addition. City Council ultimately chose not to authorize the agreement with the selected architect. As a result, all work related to the building addition and organizational rebranding has been fully paused. In response, the Board of Trustees plans to engage a firm to conduct a feasibility study to reassess project scope, funding capacity, and long-term planning options. This work is anticipated to begin in April 2026.

Significant Line Item Increases/Decreases for Revised Estimate:

- The exact insurance amounts and payment amounts from the Friends and the Support Foundation for 2026 and 2027 are either not yet known or have not been shared with the department.

Is Revised Estimate for Activity the same as Approved Budget? If not, explain why:

- The revised estimate is the same as the approved budget.

FY 2026/2027 BUDGET REQUEST

Items of Concern for Fiscal Year 2026/2027 (changes in service levels, revenue, etc. that impact budget):

- Covering costs associated with retirements and onboarding new employees is the most critical concern.

Significant Line Item Increases/Decreases proposed for FY 2026/2027 (include justification for increases)

- Additional part-time staff hours should be added in the 2026/27 budget to take into account the 14 boat stops planned in 2026.

Is Budget Request the same as the Revised Estimate for the Previous Fiscal Year? If not, explain why:

- The budget request and the revised estimate for the previous year are close to the same. The fine arts insurance amounts are not known at this time.

FY 2026/2027 CAPITAL OUTLAY REQUESTS

Capital Outlay Requests (item and cost) for FY 2026/2027 (item and cost)

- In the prior fiscal year, it was anticipated that the cost of a potential building addition and related improvements would be known by December 2025, following the engagement of an architectural firm. While an architect was selected in consultation with Lord Cultural Resources, City Council ultimately chose not to authorize the agreement. As a result, cost estimates, design development, and preparation of materials for potential funders could not proceed. All work related to the building addition and organizational rebranding has been fully paused.

Please note whether capital requests were included in Form 11 in the previous year.

CITY OF MUSCATINE
DETAILED EXPENDITURE CLASSIFICATION
FORM 2

FUNCTION: CULTURE & RECREATION		DEPARTMENT: ART CENTER						ACTIVITY: ART CENTER OPERATIONS			
ACCT NO.	ACCOUNT CLASSIFICATION	ACTUAL FISCAL YEAR 2023/2024	ACTUAL FISCAL YEAR 2024/2025	BUDGET FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026	FIRST 3 MOS FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026	LAST 9 MOS FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026	ESTIMATE FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026	CITY ADMIN ESTIMATE FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026	BUDGET FISCAL YEAR 2026/2027	CITY ADMIN REVISION FISCAL YEAR 2026/2027	APPROVED BUDGET 2026/2027
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F1)	(F2)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(I)	(J)
PERSONAL SERVICES											
41XXX	REGULAR SALARIES & WAGES	\$275,343	\$311,482	\$309,600	\$92,637	\$223,180	315,817	\$315,800	\$309,650	\$309,700	
42XXX	PART TIME SALARIES & WAGES	32,242	33,310	39,600	7,537	31,690	39,227	39,300	41,050	41,000	
43XXX	OVERTIME SALARIES & WAGES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
44XXX	OTHER SALARIES & WAGES	2,665	2,652	1,500	508	1,235	1,743	1,700	1,600	1,600	
45XXX	PENSION & RETIREMENT	52,206	58,587	58,900	15,866	43,768	59,634	59,600	60,200	60,200	
46XXX	INSURANCE	46,560	45,255	91,400	23,985	34,706	58,691	58,700	57,800	57,800	
SUBTOTAL		\$409,016	\$451,286	\$501,000	\$140,533	\$334,579	\$475,112	\$475,100	\$470,300	\$470,300	\$0
COMMODITIES											
51XXX	OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$1,630	\$1,831	\$2,000	\$280	\$1,620	\$1,900	\$1,900	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0
52XXX	OPERATING SUPPLIES	5,883	4,404	7,000	1,078	6,022	7,100	7,100	4,800	4,800	0
53XXX	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE SUPPLIES	0	46	300	187	113	300	300	300	300	0
SUBTOTAL		\$7,513	\$6,281	\$9,300	\$1,545	\$7,755	\$9,300	\$9,300	\$7,100	\$7,100	\$0
CONTRACTUAL SERVICES											
61XXX	PROFESSIONAL FEES	\$6,078	\$21,773	\$7,800	\$4,750	\$10,150	\$14,900	\$14,900	\$8,500	\$8,500	\$0
62XXX	TECHNICAL SERVICES	1,007	1,324	4,100	212	788	1,000	1,000	1,300	1,300	0
63XXX	RENTALS	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	100	100	0
64XXX	TRAVEL AND EDUCATION	1,230	4,504	4,500	276	2,924	3,200	3,200	3,200	3,200	0
65XXX	COMMUNICATIONS & UTILITIES	3,003	2,999	5,500	500	3,900	4,400	4,400	4,400	4,400	0
66XXX	INSURANCE	11,500	17,100	19,500	18,720	780	19,500	19,500	22,500	22,500	0
67XXX	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE SERVICES	40	384	200	0	200	200	200	200	200	0
68XXX	AID TO AGENCIES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
69XXX	MISCELLANEOUS	8,064	2,309	3,000	516	2,584	3,100	3,100	2,200	2,200	0
SUBTOTAL		\$30,922	\$50,393	\$44,600	\$24,974	\$21,426	\$46,400	\$46,400	\$42,400	\$42,400	\$0
CAPITAL OUTLAY											
71XXX	LAND	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
72XXX	BUILDINGS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
73XXX	IMPROVEMENTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
74XXX	EQUIPMENT	8,491	4,644	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUBTOTAL		\$8,491	\$4,644	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9XXXX	TRANSFERS	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		\$455,942	\$512,604	\$554,900	\$167,052	\$363,760	\$530,812	\$530,800	\$519,800	\$519,800	\$0

Form 12
FY 2026/2027 Budget
Department-Prioritized Budget Reductions if Necessary

Reductions Needed Based on Form 2 Department Budget Request for 2026/2027				
	If 1%	If 3%	If 5%	
Amount of Reduction Needed Based on Form 2 Amounts (Personal Services + Commodities + Contractual) x %	\$ 5,198	\$ 15,594	\$ 25,990	
Detail of Potential Reductions:				
Account	Description			
Personal Services Accounts:				
42-xxx	Part-Time Wages	5,000	14,000	
Commodities Accounts:				
51xxx	Office Supplies	500	800	1,000
52xxx	Operating Supplies	900	1,500	2,300
53xxx	Repair & Maintenance Supplies	200	300	300
Contractual Services Accounts:				
61xxx	Professional Fees	1,600	3,000	3,000
62xxx	Technical Services	200	900	900
64xxx	Travel and Education	1,086	2,200	2,200
65xxx	Communication & Utilities	500	1,000	1,000
67xxx	Repair & Maintenance	100	200	200
69xxx	Miscellaneous	100	658	1,030
Total Department-Prioritized Budget Reductions	\$ 5,186	\$ 15,558	\$ 25,930	
Difference Over (Under) Targeted Amount	\$ (12)	\$ (36)	\$ (60)	

**CITY OF MUSCATINE
2026/2027 BUDGET**

**GOALS & OBJECTIVES
For 2025/2026**

DEPARTMENT:	ACTIVITY:
Art Center	Art Center Operations

OBJECTIVES TO BE ACCOMPLISHED IN 2025/2026:

- * To implement the Employee Succession Plan by recruiting, training, and coaching new team members while working with retiring staff to ensure the successful transfer of information and know how. **(Strategic Plan – Excellent Customer Service, Vibrant Community)**
- * To develop a new vision for the Muscatine Art Center by reimagining the facilities, grounds, programs, experiences, and institutional identity/brand. **(Strategic Plan – Excellent Customer Service, Vibrant Community, and Reliable Public Infrastructure)**
- * To mark the organization's 60th anniversary in 2025 with a range of programs and events, strategic partnerships, and special additions to the collection. **(Strategic Plan – Excellent Customer Service, Vibrant Community)**
- * To manage and complete all components pertaining to the collections project funded by the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust. **(Strategic Plan – Excellent Customer Service, Vibrant Community)**
- * To evaluate potential federal, regional, and state grant sources for suitability based on the Muscatine Art Center's long-term needs. **(Strategic Plan – Excellent Customer Service, Vibrant Community)**

STATUS REPORT ON 2025/2026 OBJECTIVES:

- * To implement the Employee Succession Plan by recruiting, training, and coaching new team members while working with retiring staff to ensure the successful transfer of information and know how. **(Strategic Plan – Excellent Customer Service, Vibrant Community)**

The Art Center successfully implemented its Employee Succession Plan by recruiting, onboarding, and training new staff members ahead of the retirement of long-tenured employees. Outgoing staff worked closely with incoming team members to transfer essential institutional knowledge, update procedures, and maintain continuity of operations. This coordinated transition ensured stable service delivery during a year of significant staffing change.

- * To develop a new vision for the Muscatine Art Center by reimagining the facilities, grounds, programs, experiences, and institutional identity/brand. **(Strategic Plan – Excellent Customer Service, Vibrant Community, and Reliable Public Infrastructure)**

This goal was not fully met during the fiscal year because the City Council did not authorize work with an architectural firm, a prerequisite for determining accurate project scope, capital needs, and eligibility for major federal or state grants. Without architectural planning or cost estimates, staff could not responsibly assess or pursue large-scale funding opportunities tied to facility improvements. Once authorization is granted and planning resumes, staff will re-engage with appropriate grant programs to

align long-term needs with available funding sources.

To mark the organization's 60th anniversary in 2025 with a range of programs and events, strategic partnerships, and special additions to the collection. (**Strategic Plan – Excellent Customer Service, Vibrant Community**)

The Art Center commemorated its 60th anniversary with a series of special exhibitions, family events, and community programs. Strategic partnerships and celebratory activities expanded visibility and brought new audiences into the building. Additions to the collection and anniversary-themed installations further honored the organization's history while strengthening its role in the community.

- * To manage and complete all components pertaining to the collections project funded by the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust. (**Strategic Plan – Excellent Customer Service, Vibrant Community**)

Staff completed the critical first phase of the Collections Management Project by migrating more than 20,000 records to PastPerfect Web Edition, advancing object-by-object review and tiering, initiating barcoding, and preparing over 1,200 records for online access. The team addressed complex data challenges and coordinated with multiple vendors to ensure the project remained on track. This work significantly strengthened preservation standards and future public accessibility of the permanent collection.

- * To evaluate potential federal, regional, and state grant sources for suitability based on the Muscatine Art Center's long-term needs. (**Strategic Plan – Excellent Customer Service, Vibrant Community**)

This goal was not fully met during the fiscal year because the City Council did not authorize work with an architectural firm, a prerequisite for determining accurate project scope, capital needs, and eligibility for major federal or state grants. Without architectural planning or cost estimates, staff could not responsibly assess or pursue large-scale funding opportunities tied to facility improvements. Once authorization is granted and planning resumes, staff will re-engage with appropriate grant programs to align long-term needs with available funding sources.

NARRATIVE ON RECENT DEPARTMENT/ACTIVITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

The year 2025 marked a milestone for the Muscatine Art Center as it celebrated its 60th anniversary with a renewed focus on exhibitions, education, and community engagement.

Exhibitions

The Muscatine Art Center presented a strong slate of exhibitions during 2025/26, continuing its emphasis on showcasing the permanent collection and locally relevant themes. Exhibitions included *Muscatine History Revisited*, *Midwest Icons: Grant Wood, John Steuart Curry, and Thomas Hart Benton*, *Tribute: Muscatine Still Lifes, Portraits from the Permanent Collection*, and *Randy Richmond: A Photographer's Perspective*. These exhibitions align with institutional goals to emphasize local history, Regionalism, and community-focused storytelling and are among the estimated 19 displays anticipated to be on view in 2025/26. Opening in March 2026 is *Muscatine and the Civil War* which will be on view for more than one year.

Programs & Public Engagement

Program participation remained strong, supported by a wide range of offerings for early childhood, youth, families, and adults. The Art Center delivered 187 classes in 2024/25 and expects 190 classes in 2025/26, including Mini Masters, bilingual early childhood classes, artist-led youth workshops, clay and mixed-media sessions, homeschool programming, and hands-on studio activities. Family events include Day of the Dead Celebration, Heartfelt & Handmade Family Festival & Market, CATurday, Watermelon

Day, the Annual Ice Cream Social, and Noon Year's Eve. Outreach and partnerships continued with SPARK, Muscatine Community School District, Muscatine Early Learning Center, Muscatine County Conservation, and multiple youth-serving organizations, contributing to 97 group tours and programs in 2024/25 and 100 estimated for 2025/26. Attendance totaled 15,912 in 2024/25 and is projected to reach 16,500 in 2025/26. Public communication remained active with 165 City Calendar posts, 2,917 Facebook posts, and 59 media stories in 2024/25, with slightly reduced but stable levels estimated for 2025/26.

Collections & Preservation

Supported by funding from the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust, the Muscatine Art Center completed the critical first phase of its multi-year Collections Management Project—an effort that strengthens both behind-the-scenes stewardship and future public access. In 2025, staff migrated more than 20,000 records from Mimsy to PastPerfect Web Edition, advanced a comprehensive object-by-object tiering review, initiated systematic barcoding, and prepared 1,200+ records for future online publication. The project required addressing complex data extraction challenges, legacy record inconsistencies, and technical issues between PastPerfect Online and the website, all of which were resolved through workflow adjustments, vendor coordination, and timeline refinement. These improvements significantly enhance data accuracy, long-term preservation conditions, and readiness for launching a public collections portal, ensuring improved accessibility to Muscatine's cultural heritage.

Staffing & Succession Planning

The year marked a significant transition under the Employee Succession Plan, with the retirement of longtime Registrar/Curator Virginia Cooper and Assistant Registrar Patricia Carver, both of whom contributed nearly four decades of service. The Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust grant supported a planned six-month overlap between Virginia Cooper and the incoming Registrar/Curator Katy Loos who was able to devote her attention to the Collections Management Project once a new Education Coordinator was hired in February 2025. In November, Beth Van Zandt joined the staff as Assistant Registrar after a 27-year career at the Muscatine Journal and extensive volunteer work photographing and cataloging objects. In December, the Art Center hired Annette Hovland as Education Coordinator. She brings nearly 20 years of teaching experience in Muscatine schools, expertise in early childhood literacy and curriculum development, and prior service as a Mini Masters instructor. These staffing changes, combined with strengthened workflows and new collections infrastructure, position the organization for continued stability and capacity in 2026/27.

FORM 1A
CITY OF MUSCATINE
2026/2027 BUDGET
GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL STATEMENT:

(Only complete if different from 2025/2026)

OBJECTIVES TO BE ACCOMPLISHED IN 2026/2027:

To advance the next phase of the Collections Management Project, including continued barcoding, object-level review, and the launch of the online public collections portal, ensuring greater transparency and accessibility to the permanent collection.

(Strategic Plan – Excellent Customer Service, Vibrant Community)

To support new staff development and maintain institutional continuity by providing training, coaching, and cross-department collaboration opportunities for recently hired employees while reinforcing internal workflows and updated procedures.

(Strategic Plan – Excellent Customer Service)

To expand educational offerings and community partnerships by increasing the number of classes, outreach programs, and collaborations with schools and youth-serving organizations, responding to rising demand for early childhood, family, and teen programming.

(Strategic Plan – Vibrant Community)

To enhance visitor experience and public engagement by strengthening marketing, improving interpretive materials, and implementing rebranding recommendations as they relate to exhibitions, programs, and communications.

(Strategic Plan – Excellent Customer Service, Vibrant Community)

To develop a new Institutional Plan to replace the current plan expiring in 2026, establishing updated mission-driven priorities, measurable SMART goals, and a multi-year framework that guides exhibitions, programs, collections care, staffing, and facility improvements.

(Strategic Plan – Excellent Customer Service, Vibrant Community, Reliable Public Infrastructure)

To pursue additional grant opportunities that support exhibitions, education, collections care, and capital improvements while maintaining timely reporting and compliance for current awards.

(Strategic Plan – Fiscal Responsibility)

FORM 1B
CITY OF MUSCATINE
2026/2027 BUDGET
PERFORMANCE MEASURES

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Fiscal Year Basis	Actual 2022/2023	Actual 2023/2024	Actual 2024/2025	Estimated 2025/2026	Estimated 2026/2027
Attendance	18,419	14,442	15,912	16,500	17,000
Number of Classes Offered	179	172	187	190	200
Art Center Events Hosted	16	23	22	22	25
Exhibitions	17	18	20	19	18
Group Tours and Programs	83	80	97	100	100
City Calendar Website Posts	104	140	165	150	150
Facebook Posts	2,873	2,698	2,917	2,750	2,750
Newspaper Stories - Muscatine Journal, Quad City Times, etc.	138	92	59	48	50

FORM 1C