
Western Heritage Arts Center

Preserving, Presenting and Promoting the Best of our American West

What our vision is:

To create a cultural arts center to interpret western history and heritage of both the native peoples of the area, as well as those who arrived later--and do so here in West Yellowstone, MT.

This living museum will be called the Western Heritage Arts Center, and will be a dynamic and inviting attraction on the edge of Yellowstone. We will develop an authentic Northern Plains Native American museum, a 19th century pioneer museum, a covered arena, various educational facilities and an arts center that features exhibit museums and performance areas that showcase the best of American cultures.

Built in such a way that has the authentic look and feel of traditional and historical environments, we intend to educate visitors regarding the historic interaction of cultures, and the evolution of western mythology. We wish to inspire visitors with the richness of our heritage using its art forms in order to improve the perception of western-euro and native cultures.

Three things make Western Heritage Arts Center unique, and a strong draw for tourism:

One: The Center will be built just a few blocks from Yellowstone Park's busiest entrance.

Two: The close proximity of its components to each other reinforces our vision of positive co-mingling of the historical cultures (European and native Americans).

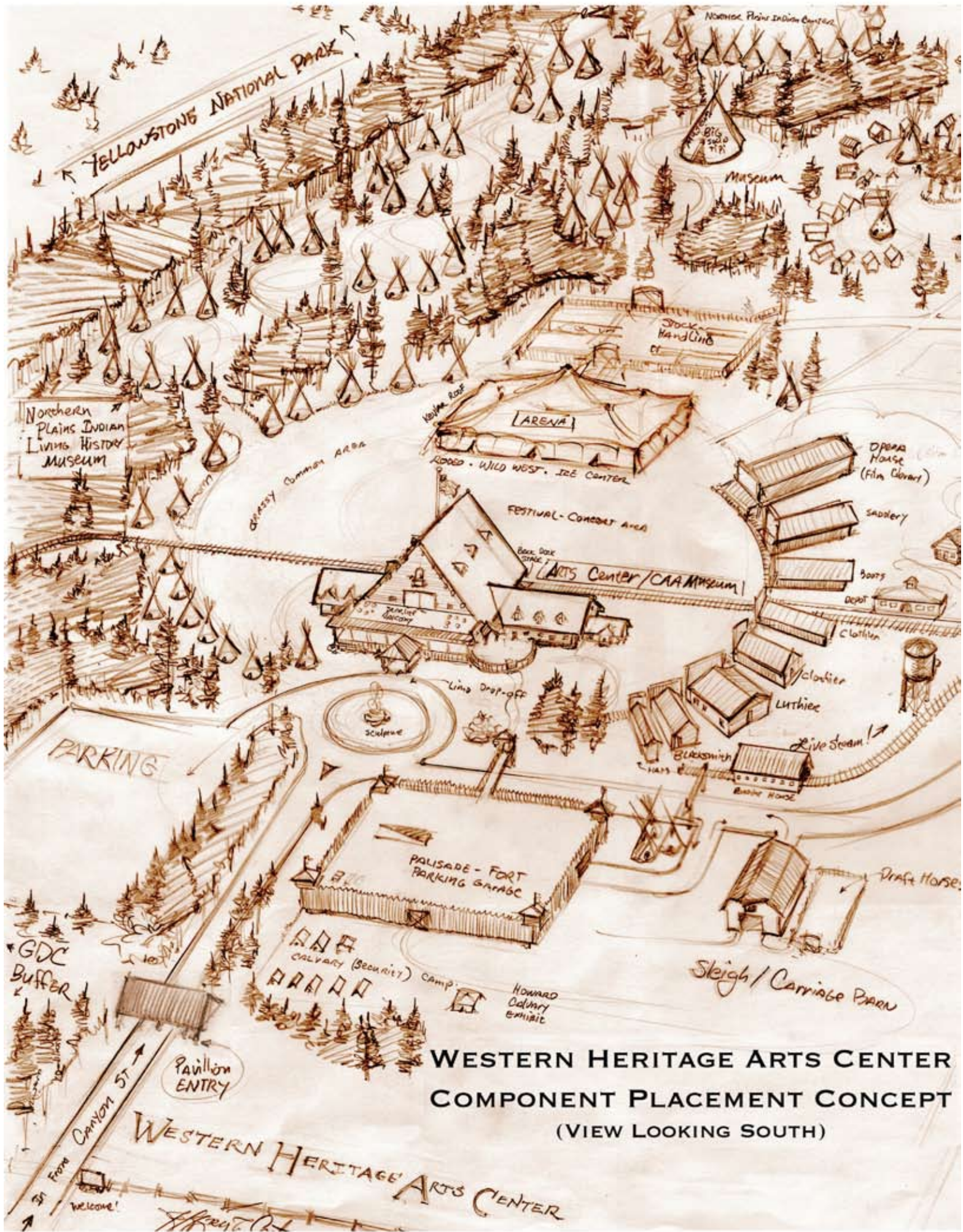
Three: The visitor experience is based around stage productions that employ combinations of traditional and contemporary cultural material using a variety of traditional and contemporary art forms. Those forms are:

Living history museums, exhibit museums, cultural libraries containing written, visual, recorded, and motion picture material.

Our challenge is to interpret the mythology of the west, (as well as the mythology of the mythology), and distinguish the myths from the historical realities in such a way that diminishes stereotypes and celebrates the strengths of the diversity of both western American cultures.

Our intention is to present the material in entertaining and memorable ways that celebrates and acknowledges the "mythology" while honoring and

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**WESTERN HERITAGE ARTS CENTER
 COMPONENT PLACEMENT CONCEPT
 (VIEW LOOKING SOUTH)**

WESTERN HERITAGE ARTS CENTER

From Canyon St
 Pavilion ENTRY

GDC Buffer

welcome!

Components Envisioned:

Within a large arts-center building:

- Western Cultural Museum
- Western Art Museum
- Northern Plains Native American Cultural Museum
- Libraries and Collections
- Indoor performance Venue (including large capacity outdoor festival grass)

On the Grounds:

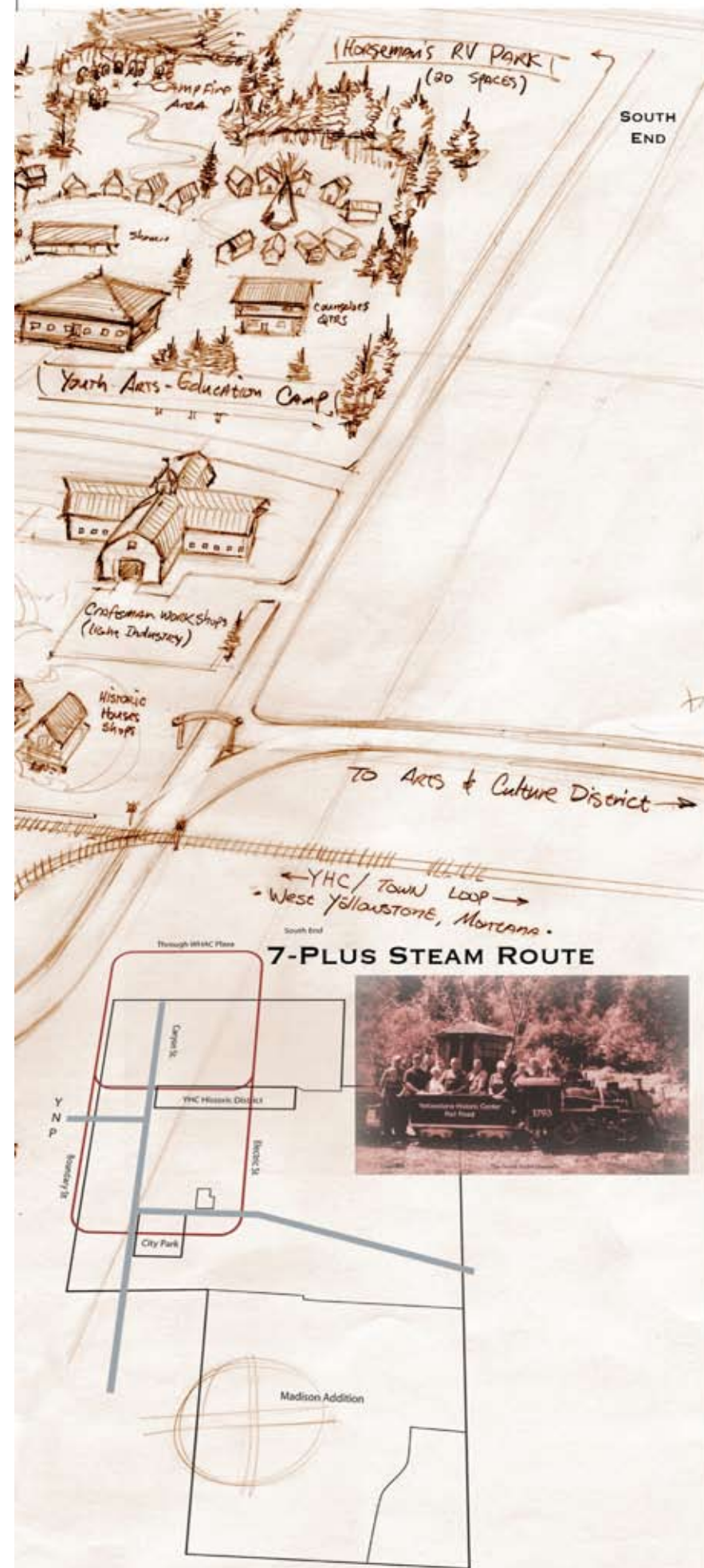
- Northern Plains Native American living history museum
- 19th Century Pioneer Artisan living history Museum
- Arena
- Outdoor music venue
- Wagon / Carriage Barn
- Youth Arts Education Camp
- Palisade parking garage

Our Implementation Priorities:

- Fundraising, Land Exchange.
- Board members experienced in creating complex projects, Native American tribe members and other experts.
- Affiliation with like-minded entities to partner with our organization with Yellowstone and American Indian outreach and other programs.
- Hiring of professional site, and master planners, architects, finance and funding professionals, contractor, consultants. etc.



Gary Carter's adoption ceremony on the Crow Reservation



A rough component placement concept sketch by Jeff Carter

enhancing the cultural contribution to western American civilization.

It has sometimes been useful to say that the museums at Cody, WY have the "hardware" of the west--artifacts, buildings, historical sites, etc. We want to showcase the "software" of the west--the living traditions, storytelling and interpretations and artistic expressions, by giving a place and a venue for both native and euro-Americans to present a more authentic voice in the cultural dialogue of our country.

The art forms include, but are not limited to:

- Folklore and factual story telling, perhaps even (or especially) some stand-up comedy.
- Music, movement, and dance.
- Staged productions that combine all these entertainment forms in indoor, outdoor and arena settings.

In addition to these live presentations, people from each tribe can relate their historical interpretations of their peoples to visitors in their own way.

Museum exhibits and collections will feature the trappings--things and tools used by the peoples of the west--as well as visual, written and motion picture materials to show the evolution of our western mythology.

The mantra of Western Heritage Arts Center is "Memories and Meaning".

What we have done so far:

Years of conceptual development have allowed us to hone, and continue to improve the story, message, scope and purpose of this multi-faceted idea. Here's what we have done to make our concepts a reality:

Western Heritage Arts Center, Inc. qualified to become a 501(c)3 non-profit organization established in December of 2007. This is the same year Jeff Carter earned an MS c. in management of non-profit agencies from Capella University (when much of the current materials were developed). Our first project

of Western Heritage Arts Center -- the **Pine Cone Playhouse** -- has staged nearly 30 productions, two original productions, and is our workshop for producing the material that will be featured on the Western Heritage Arts Center grounds.

We have gained experience with the federal lands exchange process, as well as the congressional land adjustment process and *now have in motion a land exchange with the owner of the last section of private property within Grand Canyon National Park in order to secure land on West Yellowstone's southern border.*

Our popular **winter arts-education programs** have allowed us to refine children's theatre programs (two age groups), youth and adult drawing classes, group guitar, community theater and vocal group.

An increasingly popular component of our efforts for educational heritage outreach is the **Heritage Quilt Workshops**. Eight workshops have been held so far, and are open to all interested.

For two years, we have held the "**Yellowgrass Folk Festival**" which has featured folk, bluegrass and cowboy music, as well as a fiddle competition. We are now working on a shoulder season "Snowgrass Bluegrass Festival" for spring of 2012.

The list of intellectual capital products continues to grow: from creating vision and training materials to organizational management materials, to strategic planning, marketing, publications and promotion, stakeholder relations and policy manuals.

"Where do we go from here?"

This is a question we use to respond to the difficult history between native peoples and the dominant euro-American culture. "Where do we go from here?" helps us focus on why any of these things are relevant.

Now that we have laid the groundwork for what will be a rich and engaging attraction, we are excited to cooperate with partners who can join us in implementing our vision of western heritage and the related arts.

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