



Planning Commission Minutes

Note: Anyone wishing to speak at any Planning Commission meeting is encouraged to do so. If you wish to speak, please rise and, after you have been recognized by the Chair, give your name and complete address for the record. You will then be allowed to speak. Please note the public testimony may be limited by the Chair.

June 25, 2024
STUDY SESSION
Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Verner called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Civic Center Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street.

Commissioners Present:

Lisa Verner
Doug Knauer
Susan MacCracken Jain
Gregory Perkinson
Russell Phillips
Eric Herron
Kerry KenCairn

Staff Present:

Brandon Goldman, Community Development Director
Derek Severson, Planning Manager
Michael Sullivan, Executive Assistant

Absent Members:

Council Liaison:

Paula Hyatt (absent)

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Community Development Director Brandon Goldman made the following announcement:

- The Commission will review an annexation and park installation proposal at 2228 East Main Street, as well as an appeal of staff's denial of a Verizon Wireless tower at the SOU Science Building, at the July 9, 2024 Regular Meeting.

III. PUBLIC FORUM – None

V. DISCUSSION ITEM

A. SOU Masterplan Background & Update Discussion

Staff Presentation

Mr. Goldman stated that the SOU Masterplan is a guiding document created by SOU, but also references SOU as a special district and guides how the Commission is to review new development in the area. Mr. Goldman described how SOU is proposing an update to the current Masterplan,





Planning Commission Minutes

which was last updated in 2010, which will then present full changes to the Commission before submitting them to the Council for approval.

Planning Manager Derek Severson stated that a formal SOU Masterplan update will come back to the Commission as a legislative action in the Fall of 2024. He described key elements of the original SOU Masterplan, which included: additional gateways and circulation; shifting student life to the northside of Siskiyou; refined parking treatment; promoting alternative transportation; faculty housing; and establishing a mixed-use corridor along Siskiyou Boulevard. Mr. Severson described how the development of SOU changed since this Masterplan was adopted, such as the faculty housing being converted into The Farm, and the Jefferson Public Radio (JPR) location shifting to the Theater Arts building (see attachment #1).

Mr. Severson listed some potential issues as the Masterplan Update progresses, such as:

- Public/Private Partnerships on Campus (Dorms were a PPP with American Campus Communities)
- Tree Removal Requirements (Could be more like Parks regulations)
- Demolition Process
- (Criteria for typical demolition have to do with waste stream and economically beneficial re-use)
- Parking & Parking Lots in light of eliminating parking minimums (Potential for solar Installations)
- Campus Art Installations & Sign Permit Program
- Disposition of University-owned Properties (How to zone/regulate once private)
- University District: Consistent palette of crosswalk markings, wayfinding and festival street treatment
- LEED certification requirements
- Temporary Uses (such as the Growers Market) & Food Trucks

Questions of Staff

Commissioner Perkinson asked if there had been a discussion to expand the boundary line of the University District. Mr. Goldman responded that he had been a party to some of those discussions, but that the current SOU Masterplan does not have an adopted map with defined boundary lines that would be subject to any wayfinding standards. He added that this could be a broader discussion outside of the SOU Masterplan update because it would impact private property in the vicinity.

Commissioner KenCairn asked if SOU has an arborist on staff. Mr. Severson responded that SOU did in the past, one with which the City had a good working relationship.



Planning Commission Minutes

Applicant Presentation

Alan Harper introduced himself as a land use attorney and a former member of the Commission. Also present was Jim McNamara from the SOU Facilities Department. Mr. Harper stated that the goal is to update the community on what SOU has accomplished thus far, and to begin laying the groundwork for future projects to ensure their success.

Mr. McNamara spoke to the changing nature of the Masterplan, and how some projects succeeded while others floundered. He noted that one key difference from the current Masterplan was the early projection of SOU accommodating nearly 6,000 students by this time, while this number has reached closer to 3,500. Because of this, no new building projects are being proposed, and instead an emphasis is being made to make SOU a focal point of the community and to foster sustainability. Mr. Harper emphasized SOU's public outreach to the community as a cornerstone of the Masterplan.

Questions of the Applicant

Chair Verner asked inquired about rumors regarding combining senior housing and student housing in the future. Mr. Harper responded that this has been implemented in other campuses and being considered for SOU. Mr. McNamara added that a more diverse student age group for SOU is needed, which senior housing could assist in achieving. Commissioner MacCracken Jain asked if SOU would also consider other forms of additional housing, such as affordable housing, as many students find themselves priced-out of the area. Mr. Harper responded that SOU is willing to innovate and is open to pursuing all avenues.

Commissioner KenCairn noted that SOU should be held to the same standard as Parks, and therefore should have an arborist on staff or have some form of contractual agreement to have an arborist as part of the process.

Commissioner Knauer asked if the current developments surrounding SOU have improved the student and faculty experience, and how the City could incentivize such developments. Mr. Harper responded that this could be done by identifying potentially beneficial developments and then using the zoning process to achieve this while maintaining appropriate oversight.

The Commission discussed including a daycare facility for students with children. Mr. McNamara responded that SOU does have a daycare facility but that it is relatively small.

Mr. Harper informed the Commission that the SOU team would consult with other stakeholders before bringing the final product back before the Commission.

B. SOU Business Venture Tournament Team Presentation



Planning Commission Minutes

SOU MBA Program Coordinator Douglas Daley gave a brief background on the history of the tournament and the struggles most businesses face (see attachment #2). He stated that most business fail for a variety of reasons, but primarily because the business owners do not have business backgrounds. This tournament would be open to students of all disciplines to foster ideas on how best to use the now-vacant Ashland Street Cinema building, with \$3,000 going to the winning student. Mr. Daley described how students were required to attend a tournament workshop, develop a business venture plan, give a 5-10 minute presentation, and create a one-minute or less video pitch to market their pitch and receive student votes.

Mr. Daley noted that this “Shark-Tank” style tournament received a limited number of entrants due to the heavy workload required and the demands of final exams.

Presentation

Holden Hellman introduced herself as an MBA student of SOU and active member of the community. Her plan involved transforming the Ashland Cinema building into an informal public activity center she titled Third Space. This would be act as a center for young people to engage with their communities and build skills that are being lost, such as sewing or gardening. It could also cater to young children, be leased for small events, and be used to soft-launch other entrepreneurial ventures.

Jenny Chynoweth stated that the strongest projects are those that can generate funding for themselves once they have been launched, which would be the primary function behind her proposal, Rogue Immersive Arts, an immersive venue similar to the Van Gogh exhibit in London. Ms. Chynoweth described how virtual reality could transform an interior space using lighting, sound, projection mapping, and interactive displays to attract locals and tourist alike. She noted that the immersive market is projected to expand by 20% by 2030, benefitting stakeholders and making the space self-sufficient (see attachment #3).

VI. OPEN DISCUSSION - None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

*Submitted by,
Michael Sullivan, Executive Assistant*



SOU Master Plan

Ashland Planning Commission
June 25, 2024 Study Session

A photograph of the Southern Oregon University entrance. A large, arched metal gate with a mesh screen spans the path. The words "SOUTHERN OREGON UNIVERSITY" are inscribed in gold letters across the arch. Behind the gate is a large, light-colored building with a tiled roof and arched windows. Pink cherry blossom trees are in full bloom in the foreground, flanking a paved walkway. The walkway is bordered by green grass and small white and orange flags.

SOUTHERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

SOU Master Plan
Background &
Preliminary Discussion

June 25, 2024

Southern Oregon University Masterplan

Background & Preliminary Discussion

'Light Update' Anticipated Fall/Winter '24

Standard Legislative Public Process to Follow

Background

The 2010 SOU MP

Changes

Since 2010 SOU MP

Likely Issues

For 2025-2035 SOU MP



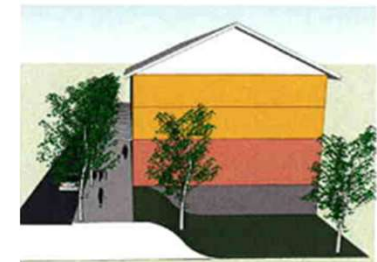
Also see accompanying large format plan

SOME KEY ELEMENTS

- Gateways & Circulation
- Shifting student life to northside of Siskiyou.
- Refine Parking Treatment
- Promote Alternate Modes
- Transportation Demand Management
- Mixed-Use Ashland Street
- Faculty Housing

Faculty Village

JPR Location

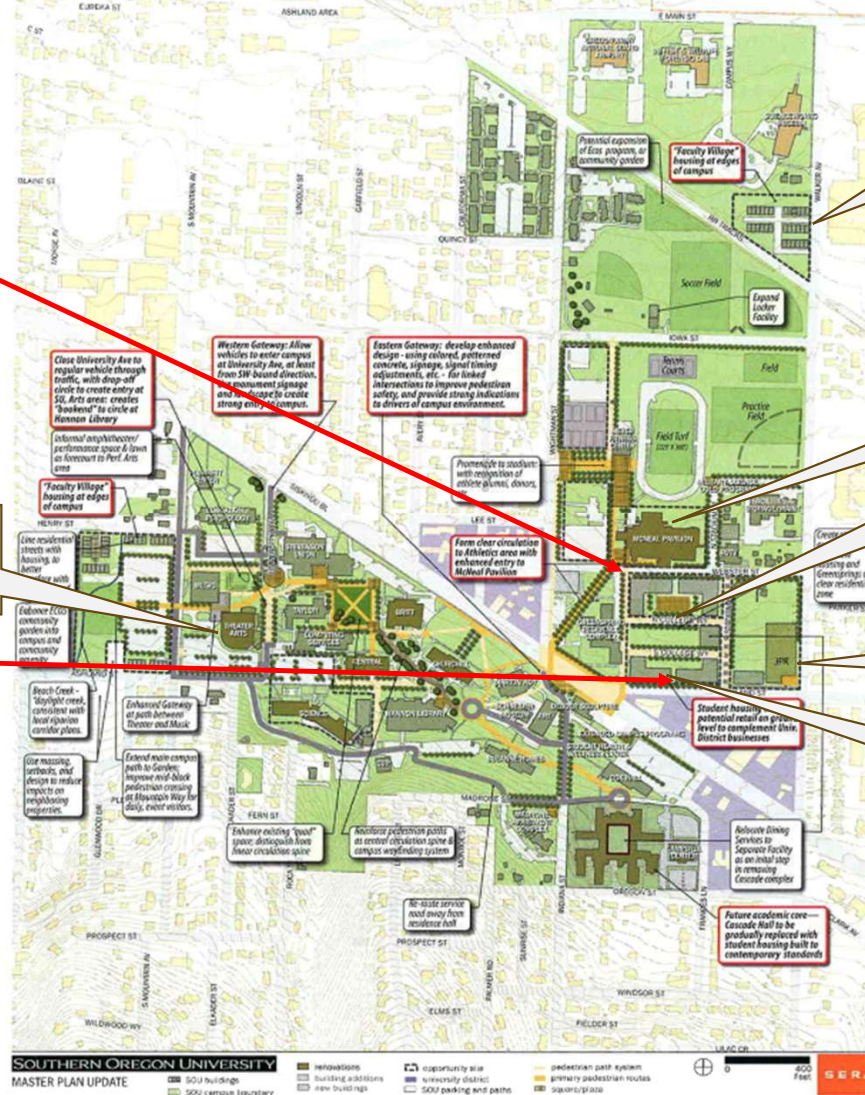


New campus housing is proposed for students. In appropriate areas, this might be in the form of mixed-use buildings.

MASTER PLAN

Figure 10: Master Plan

Also see accompanying large format plan



Faculty Village is now The Farm/Center for Sustainability (Modification Approved)

New Lithia Pavilion & Student Rec Center Constructed

Two Residence Halls & Dining Hall Constructed

JPR Location Shifted to Theater Arts

Dorm Location Shifted & Envelope Reserved Along Ashland Street

New Theater Arts Building & JPR Constructed

Since adoption...

SOME KEY ELEMENTS

✓ Shifting student life to northside of Siskiyou.

- Refine Parking Treatment
- Promote Alternate Modes
- Transportation Demand Management

○ Mixed-Use Ashland Street

○ Faculty Housing

Changes Since Master Plan Adoption...

North Campus Village [*Public/Private Partnership*]
Residences Halls (Shasta & McLoughlin) *Replaced Cascade*
Dining Hall (The Hawk)

Lithia Pavilion [*replaced McNeal Pavilion*]
Gym
Student Recreation Center

The Farm
Center for Sustainability/Thalden Pavilion
The Farm

Theater Arts Building
Theater
Jefferson Public Radio (JPR) *previously to be at Walker/Ashland*





New Residence Halls during 2013 Council, Planning Commission & Staff Tour



New Residence Halls during 2013 Council, Planning Commission & Staff Tour



New Residence Halls during 2013 Council, Planning Commission & Staff Tour



The Hawk Dining Hall during 2013 Council, Planning Commission & Staff Tour



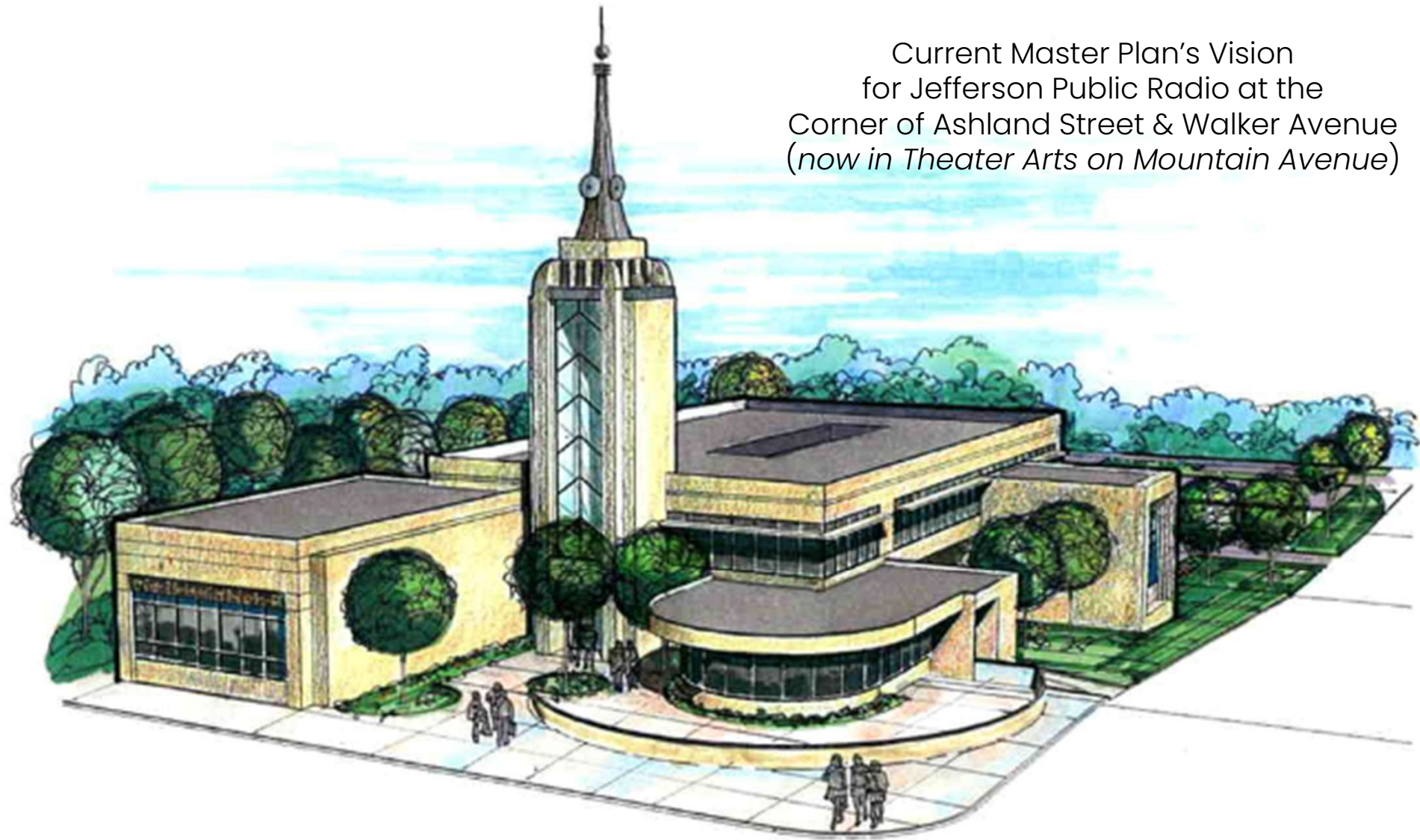
2018 PC Retreat Site Visit to new Lithia Pavilion & Student Rec Center





2018 PC Retreat Site Visit to SOU Theatre & JPR Building

Current Master Plan's Vision
for Jefferson Public Radio at the
Corner of Ashland Street & Walker Avenue
(now in Theater Arts on Mountain Avenue)





Thalden Pavilion at the Center for Sustainability on Walker Avenue (The Farm in the background)

Changes Since 2010

- ✓ Residence Halls & Dining Hall (“North Campus Village”)
 - Replaced Cascade (SDC credits transferred)
 - Designation of Future Building Envelope along Ashland Street
 - Shift of Residential Population North of Siskiyou
- ✓ Lithia Pavilion & Student Rec Center
- ✓ Theater Arts Building (Theater & Jefferson Public Radio)
 - JPR was to have been at Walker/Ashland corner
- ✓ *Siskiyou Arboretum*
 - *Some lots on Roca have now sold out of SOU ownership*
- ✓ The Farm/Center for Sustainability

Potential Issues/Themes

- ☐ Public/Private Partnerships on Campus (*Dorms were a PPP with American Campus Communities*)
- ☐ Tree Removal Requirements (Could be more like Parks regulations)
- ☐ Demolition Process
 - (Criteria for typical demolition have to do with waste stream and economically beneficial re-use)
- ☐ Parking & Parking Lots in light of eliminating parking minimums (Potential for solar Installations)
- ☐ Campus Art Installations & Sign Permit Program
- ☐ Disposition of University-owned Properties (*How to zone/regulate once private*)
- ☐ **University District:** Consistent palette of crosswalk markings, wayfinding and festival street treatment
- ☐ LEED certification requirements
- ☐ Temporary Uses (like the Growers Market) & Food Trucks

Any Questions?

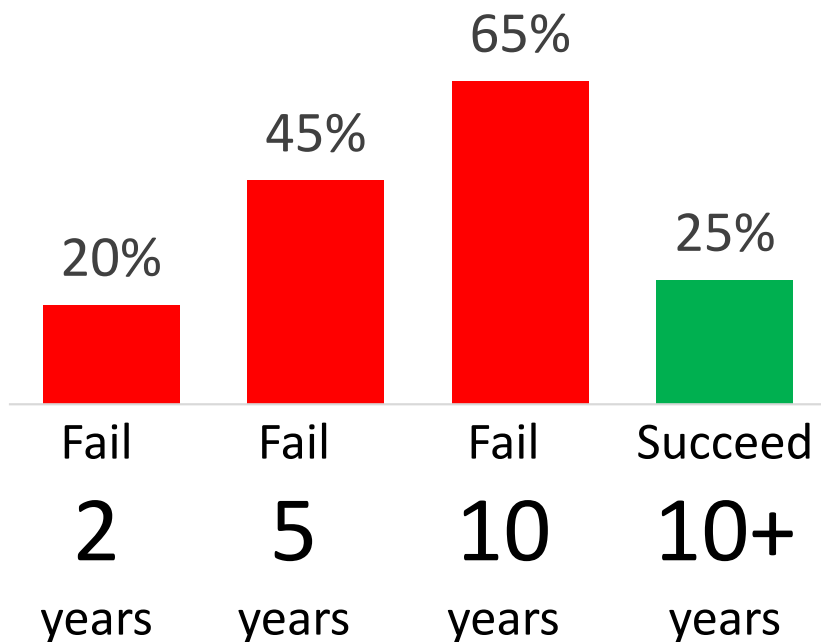


The
Business Venture
Tournament

SO
U

Problem:

New businesses have
about a 50/50 chance of success



Top Reasons for Failure

- Market Research
- Business Plan
- Financial Support
- Location

I found in my experience that new business owners excel at their passion but lack sufficient business knowledge and skills to succeed.

Source:

Bureau of Labor Statistics
Investopedia: <https://www.investopedia.com/financial-edge/1010/top-6-reasons-new-businesses-fail.aspx>

Business Venture Tournament

Open to students from all disciplines, majors, & programs

Student ideas for a
new Venture can win

\$3,000

All participants must attend the Tournament Workshop. The workshop emulates real-world business needs to teach and expose students to concepts needed for success.

Future development intended for
graduate students and local communities.

Four Deliverables

- Business Venture Plan
- 5 to 10-minute in-person presentation
- 1-minute or less video pitch
- Market the pitch and get student votes

“Think
Shark Tank”



The deliverables address the
top reasons why businesses fail



Top Reasons for Failure

- Market Research
- Business Plan
- Financial Support
- Location

Benefactors

Jim Teece & Deena Matthews

Sponsor Partnerships

Jim Teece & Dena Matthews
Ashland Food Coop
Southern Oregon Wilderness Adventures
Talent Maker City
SOU Institute of Applied Sustainability
SOU Small Business Development Center
SCORE Jackson County Mentorship
Rogue To-Go | Be the Change
Rogue Valley Women in Business
Larry Sullivan LLC
SEED Collective
Craterworks Maker Space
Scharren Berger Chocolate Maker

Tournament Objectives

Prepare students for real-life scenarios.

Enrich communities with fresh ideas.

The tournament workshop can assist the planning commission with fresh ideas for the Ashland Cinema project that are generated by interested students in the local communities.

A category was added at the end of Spring Term to generate student ideas for the Cinema project. Unfortunately, finals, graduation and study fatigue contributed to limited responses. Two students did submit ideas who are here today.



Holden Hellman
MBA Student

Jenny Chynoweth

MBA Student

Rogue Immersive Arts: Ashland's newest attraction and community center



Lighthouse's Immersive Van Gogh Exhibit may have been one of the first to market in this new genre of live entertainment, but they certainly won't be the last. Savvy business investors are paying attention to the fact that this company made over \$300 million in less than five years.



Images from <https://www.immersivevangogh.com/>

Rogue Immersive Arts: Ashland's newest attraction and community center



Lighthouse's Immersive Van Gogh Exhibit may have been one of the first to market in this new genre of live entertainment, but they certainly won't be the last. Savvy business investors are paying attention to the fact that this company made over \$300 million in less than five years.



Images from <https://www.immersivevangogh.com/>

Rogue Immersive Arts: Ashland's newest attraction and community center



Lighthouse's Immersive Van Gogh Exhibit may have been one of the first to market in this new genre of live entertainment, but they certainly won't be the last. Savvy business investors are paying attention to the fact that this company made over \$300 million in less than five years.



Images from <https://www.immersivevangogh.com/>

Thank You!



The **Business Venture**
Tournament

SO | **Southern OREGON**
U | **UNIVERSITY**

Rogue Immersive Arts

Venture Proposal for City of Ashland Planning Commission for
Repurposing of Ashland Street Cinema Property
by Jenny Chynoweth

Mission:

To help raise money for local non-profits and community benefit programs, including youth development and community-based events, through the development and continual creative and entrepreneurial evolution of a high-tech immersive arts venue with food service, gift store, and a multimedia maker space inside the former Ashland Street Cinema property at 1644 Ashland Street.

Vision:

A one-of-a-kind immersive arts event venue that features its own proprietary shows and experiences that attract visitors and locals alike, including *Shakespeare: The Immersive Experience* and *Southern Oregon: The Immersive Experience*. The interior spaces will be transformed through creative design, lighting, sound, projection mapping, interactive displays, and extended reality experiences. The venue will offer food service and gift shop opportunities for additional earned income and educational training opportunities.

Key Stakeholders / Advisory Board Leadership Structure

Each group contributes its strengths to support programming components:

- **City of Ashland**
- **Ashland Chamber of Commerce**
- **Southern Oregon University**
 - **Southern Oregon University Foundation**
 - **SOU Youth Development Program**
 - **SOU School of Business**
 - **SOU Institute of Applied Sustainability**
 - **SOU Depts of Digital Media & Emerging Arts and Digital Cinema**
 - **SOU The Farm**
- **Oregon State University Extension – Jackson County 4-H**
- **Ashland Food Co-op**
- **Travel Southern Oregon**
- **Oregon Shakespeare Festival**
- **The Tech Interactive**
- **Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development Inc.**
- **Business Oregon**

Rogue Immersive Arts

Venture Proposal for City of Ashland Planning Commission for
Repurposing of Ashland Street Cinema Property
by Jenny Chynoweth

Key Stakeholders / Advisory Board Leadership Structure

_(arranged through bylaws and agreements)

Each group contributes its strengths to support programming components:

- **City of Ashland** (planning & zoning support, grant collaboration)
- **Ashland Chamber of Commerce** (support for entrepreneurship programming, grant collaboration)
- **Southern Oregon University** (student involvement as hands-on learning practicum/multimedia lab, internships, workshops, work-study, and student opportunities = job experience and job tracks)
 - **Southern Oregon University Foundation** (fundraising event opportunities, grant collaboration)
 - **SOU Youth Development Program** (summer programs for STEAM workshops)
 - **SOU School of Business** (entrepreneurship programming support)
 - **SOU Institute of Applied Sustainability** (advising on sustainable events elements and operations incorporated throughout)
 - **SOU Depts of Digital Media & Emerging Arts and Digital Cinema** (supports the creation of multimedia content development and use of technology)
 - **SOU The Farm** (supports the culinary arts youth education programs and provides some produce for concessions)
- **Oregon State University Extension – Jackson County 4-H** (grant collaboration, supports and provides the legal and educational infrastructure for some of the youth programming for ages 5-19, creative arts, culinary arts, entrepreneurship, community service, science, and technology, and more)
- **Ashland Food Co-op** (support for the culinary arts youth programs, food supplier for concessions)
- **Travel Southern Oregon** (support for content creation for Southern Oregon: The Immersive Experience shows including VR tours, augmented reality, and immersive projection mapping content, grant collaboration)
- **Oregon Shakespeare Festival** (grant collaboration, support for content creation for Shakespeare: The Immersive Experience shows including VR tours, augmented reality, live performances, and immersive projection mapping content, fundraising events)
- **The Tech Interactive** (grant collaboration, support for technological aspects of educational, interactive displays, their head grant writer lives in Ashland)
- **Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development Inc.** (grant collaboration, support for sustainable, long-term economic development goals, and helping the local economy rise with the success of Rogue Immersive Arts programming)
- **Business Oregon** (grant collaboration, support for venue rentals and brand activations for businesses)

Rogue Immersive Arts

Venture Proposal for City of Ashland Planning Commission for
Repurposing of Ashland Street Cinema Property
by Jenny Chynoweth

What is an Immersive Art Experience?

Travel writer Quintin Willekens (April 2024) explains in his article “Discover the New Era of Immersive Experiences: 25 Immersive Art Exhibits and Museums Around the World,”

“An immersive experience involves using technology and the surrounding environment to transport you into a new, simulated world. Immersive technologies like AR, VR, and projection mapping help change your perception and make you feel as if you are a part of a different reality.”

An immersive experience combines technology, the surrounding environment, and additional sensory engagement:

- Virtual Reality (VR) uses headsets with programmed content.
- Augmented Reality (AR) uses your smartphone or AR glasses to display digital content in the real world.
- Mixed Reality (MR) connects both VR and AR to allow you to see and interact with both real and digital objects.
- Projection mapping systems of projectors turn everything into a screen, including entire rooms and individual objects.
- Digital displays (floor, walls, kiosks) go beyond traditional screens, using touch panels and creative LED setups to enhance interactivity and visual engagement.
- Audio and sensory equipment technologies like spatial audio (3D audio) and haptic feedback enhance immersion.
- Props, sensory effects, and live performance elements create 4-D experience opportunities.

<https://rusticpathways.com/inside-rustic/online-magazine/new-era-immersive-experiences-vr-ar-mr-art-exhibits-museums-worldwide>

Rogue Immersive Arts

Venture Proposal for City of Ashland Planning Commission for
Repurposing of Ashland Street Cinema Property
by Jenny Chynoweth

Income Strategies:

- Ticket sales to proprietary shows and experiences
- Venue rental
- Customized media content fees
- Food concessions
- Gift store
- Grant funding
- Individual donations / membership revenue

Programming:

- Immersive art and digital galleries
- Integrated immersive environments
- Extended reality (XR) experiences (VR, AR, Mixed)
- Interactive and Participatory Art
- Experiential Immersive Center (combo of digital and physical aids to create an adventure experience)
- Custom content events / "themed experiences to order"

Education:

- Youth education programming utilizing Jackson County 4-H program and SOU Youth Development department (emerging media, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, entrepreneurship, community service, design, customer service, culinary arts, creative content creation, expressive arts)
- SOU college education programming (AR/VR/Mixed Reality course training, workshops, internships, apprenticeships, work-study)
- Educational immersive experiences (for field trips and groups)

Community:

- Discounted / scholarship venue rental opportunities are reserved for local non-profits and groups to use for fundraising and outreach events that benefit the community
- Year-round, family-friendly experiences that encourage locals and students to gather, engage, and learn together.
- Boosts local economy, neighboring small businesses in the same shopping complex, and Rogue Valley tourism/hospitality businesses by increasing visitor draw to Ashland with unique attractions
- Oregon Shakespeare Festival benefits from incorporating Shakespeare: The Immersive Experience shows into their program offerings, creating new interactive content each season, adding to their earned income and fundraising event opportunities.

Rogue Immersive Arts

Venture Proposal for City of Ashland Planning Commission for
Repurposing of Ashland Street Cinema Property
by Jenny Chynoweth

Target Market – Paying Customers:

- Millennials (highest demand demographic for immersive experience economy)
- Tourists who come for Oregon Shakespeare Festival events
- Tourists who come to explore Southern Oregon sights
- Local businesses (customized brand activation events and corporate retreats)
- SOU students (discounted tickets)
- Locals looking for evening and weekend entertainment

Target Market – Educational Programming:

- SOU Youth Development: local families
- OSU Extension Jackson County 4-H: local families
- Local school districts: kids and teachers for field trips

Target Market – Community Use:

- Local non-profits (outreach and fundraising events)
- Local groups (gathering / meeting space)
- Locals only events / One free event per month

Target Market – Funders:

Grant program categories:

- Creative arts
- Youth development
- Entrepreneurship
- Sustainable development, operations, and tourism
- Capital grants
- Technology
- STEAM education

Rogue Immersive Arts

Venture Proposal for City of Ashland Planning Commission for Repurposing of Ashland Street Cinema Property

by Jenny Chynoweth

Creating an immersive experience space and feature attraction show is cheaper than imagined. As estimated in the Market Watch article titled "Van Gogh immersive shows have become a money-making sensation," "Some producers are aided by the fact that shows can be created at a relatively modest cost... The initial investment can be around \$250,000 in the digital production itself" (Passy, 2022). One of the reasons that the popular Van Gogh immersive experiences are attractive to investors is the age of the artist's work. "Helping matters, Van Gogh's works are in the public domain, so no licensing fees are involved" (Passy, 2022).

Similarly, Shakespeare's works are in the public domain and, therefore, wide open for SOU to utilize to create signature immersive experience content that evolves without ever adding licensing fee expenses. In addition, creating a one-of-kind AR/VR travel experience highlighting the best of the Rogue Valley region can be created relatively inexpensively utilizing SOU's students and equipment.

Rogue Immersive Arts has the potential to strategically dominate the category of immersive arts experiences. This property could be the permanent new home of the United States' first and best Shakespeare: The Immersive Experience. Its second signature show featuring a VR/AR experience of the Rogue Valley and surrounding wonders could boost tourism and local economy engagement. Because the event venue space design works not only for Shakespeare but can also be customized with any multimedia content tailored to paying clients, the event venue can dominate the rentable spaces category in Southern Oregon.

As for the category of higher learning, having this arts complex and a unique, revenue-generating show and event venue allows SOU to dominate the category of high-tech, real-world opportunities for students. The complex also provides a marketing opportunity for SOU to increase enrollment, as it showcases the best of SOU's programs and resources. SOU's signature arts complex would offer unique artistic experiences that cannot be found anywhere else, positioning SOU to dominate in multiple categories beneficial to the University, students, partners, and the surrounding community.

Rogue Immersive Arts

Venture Proposal for City of Ashland Planning Commission for
Repurposing of Ashland Street Cinema Property
by Jenny Chynoweth

One-of-a-Kind Opportunities for Ashland:

The carefully designed venue spaces transform to meet almost any themed experience a client could want. Multimedia content creation and venue rental packages, purchased together or a la carte, maximize client options and profit margins. This venue design and high-tech flexibility will do something that no other immersive experience space does, which is monetize the space and the technology capabilities as rentals outside the regular signature ticketed event times. The venue can make money more hours of the day, rather than sitting idle outside ticketed show times. Instead, the venue has regular, special, and private showings, attracting customers, visitors, and prospective students year-round as a new leader in the experience economy.

The creative and sustainable design opportunities for the arts complex make unused spaces into something new, saturated with active, ever-changing art, desirable places to congregate, and over-the-top creative and technological amenities not accessible anywhere else. The depth to which Rogue Immersive Arts can go to showcase a commitment to arts, creative entrepreneurship, and sustainability could help provide a more secure financial future for every department of the University.

Some spaces could also be dedicated to artist/maker/student Pop-Up Shops that encourage entrepreneurship by making retail space affordable and flexible. Budding entrepreneurs could test the market with their products and gain valuable feedback through Pop-Up Shop events. Local artists, makers, and 4-H kids age 10+ could also participate in the Pop-Up Shop mall program to create retail opportunities that are not otherwise available.

Rogue Immersive Arts could create this venue complex without demolishing any buildings or constructing new ones. Funding sources such as grants and refurbishment funds could be directed to redesigning unused or outdated spaces for alternative use as revenue-generating spaces. Updating HVAC systems to utilize solar power (if allowed) and smart thermostat controls for individually controlled spaces while in use are just some examples of sustainable design practices that could be implemented throughout. The entire arts complex becomes an earned income source and a new shining star attraction.

Rogue Immersive Arts

Venture Proposal for City of Ashland Planning Commission for
Repurposing of Ashland Street Cinema Property

by Jenny Chynoweth

SWOT Analysis:

Strengths:

- The former cinema complex is already designed for this type of use (spaces can be easily modified to be mixed-use). Technology and interior space modification would be the primary start-up investments.
- A non-profit structure allows multiple parties to collaborate for mutual benefit, creating a stronger grant funding position for the entire project.
- Earned income strategies through ticket sales, food concessions, and merchandise offset the pressure to keep this immersive arts and community center funded purely from grants and donations.
- Immersive arts, education, and community center programming allow the property to be active daily year-round for public benefit and income generation.
- Dedicated multimedia maker space offers educational workshops, after-school activities, community service opportunities, and hands-on learning experiences for youth middle school, high school, and college students.
- It helps local non-profits raise money through customized events and grant funding opportunities for mutual projects. The gift store also creates entrepreneurial start-up opportunities for local small business owners.

Weaknesses:

- Involves delayed process of recruiting Board from participating key stakeholders, forming a non-profit organization, applying for and securing grant funding, hiring key staff, etc.
- Involves creating proprietary content, shows, and experiences that involve a lot of creative troubleshooting.

Opportunities:

- Oregon Shakespeare Festival and Travel Southern Oregon are already working to increase tourism draw. This creates proprietary experience opportunities that capitalize on existing community assets.
- SOU subcontractor, Left Field Innovations, LLC, is a local company specializing in creating immersive environments for private and public events and corporate brand activations worldwide. The owner is willing to contribute a property walk-through for space and technology designs for this property. LFI is available for a request for a project proposal for the full redesign, build-out of the property interiors, technology system design, and all other specialty installations.

Threats:

- The property is currently for sale on the open market and could be sold to another party at any time during the venture development phase.
- Annual property tax is about \$103,000, not including mortgage, insurance, etc. The pressure to generate sustainable income from ticket sales and venue rental fees is substantial.
- Logistically challenging to manage multiple youth education programs, community events, and branded experiences.
- Demand for shows, venue rentals, and community events could eventually exceed the building capacity.

Rogue Immersive Arts

Venture Proposal for City of Ashland Planning Commission for
Repurposing of Ashland Street Cinema Property

by Jenny Chynoweth

Next Steps for Venture Development:

- Schedule property walk-through with stakeholders and Chris Draheim, owner of Left Field Innovations, LLC, to start an initial feasibility study and general start-up budget for design/construction/technology installation.
- Identify and recruit key stakeholders for mutual collaboration (pitch meetings, workshops, planning sessions)
- Develop pitch proposal and market research into full start-up business plan with outreach materials
- Schedule a research session with Roslyn Donald, Jackson County Business Librarian, to compile grant funding and donor opportunities for start-up and first years of operation until earned income and regular funding offset expenses

Rogue Immersive Arts

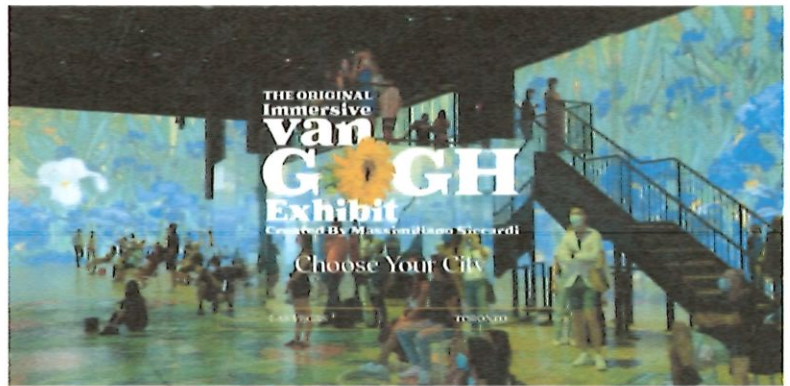
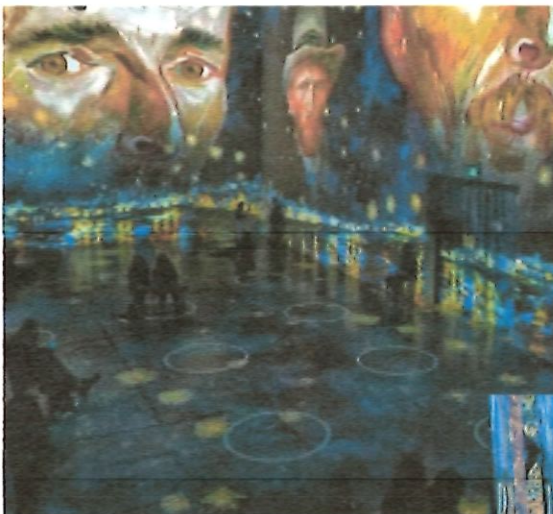
Venture Proposal for City of Ashland Planning Commission for Repurposing of Ashland Street Cinema Property

by Jenny Chynoweth

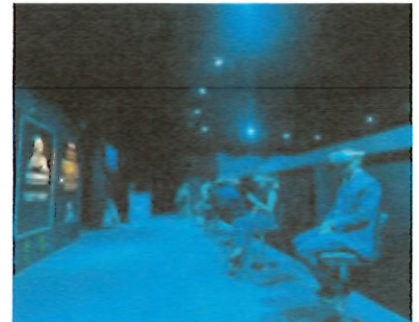
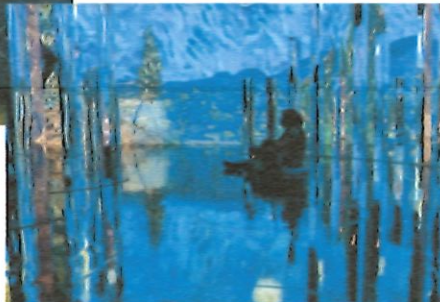
Market Research on Immersive Experience Industry

The proposed venue and signature events capitalize on experiential art's growing popularity and revenue capacity. "Experiential art refers to installations or exhibitions aiming to deliver an immersive experience to the audience by relying on a range of new media, such as projections, videos, VR (virtual reality), or AR (augmented reality) technologies" (Statista, 2022). Immersive experiences are exhibitions that "bring art to life through immersive, digital experiences that project the pictures within massive spaces" (Passy, 2022). So far, the leaders of this rising new industry have focused their business model on traveling exhibits using temporarily converted venue spaces that require substantial customized setup and modification with each move.

One of the first to develop and break through in this new industry is *Lighthouse's Immersive Van Gogh Exhibit*. "This is a new genre," says one of their producers (Passy, 2022). This new genre is shaking up the experience economy, and those looking to capitalize on the high-profit margin potential are paying close attention and jumping on board. "Investors are pouring hundreds of millions of dollars into ticketed experiences — immersive, interactive museum-like spaces that don't have the do-not-touch stuffiness of traditional museums" (Salmon, 2021).



Lighthouse's Immersive Van Gogh Exhibit may have been one of the first to market in this new genre of live entertainment, but they certainly won't be the last. Savvy business investors are paying attention to the fact that this company made over \$300 million in less than five years.



Images from <https://www.immersivevangogh.com/>

Digital copy at
<https://bit.ly/rogueimmersivearts>

Rogue Immersive Arts

Venture Proposal for City of Ashland Planning Commission for
Repurposing of Ashland Street Cinema Property
by Jenny Chynoweth

Market Research on the Immersive Experience Industry

Soon, copycat augmented reality immersive experience companies popped up around the United States, exploiting the original show's popularity, and launching their versions featuring artists with public domain content they could produce cheaply. Despite the competition, the Lighthouse Immersive Van Gogh Exhibit sold millions of tickets over the past few years, generating over \$250 million in revenue and tens of millions in additional tourism revenue for the cities of the traveling exhibitions (Passy, 2022). The signature attraction revenue has cash cascade effects for the local economy, providing even more public benefit.

An excellent example of the cascade effects of immersive entertainment happened in Charlotte, North Carolina, where the estimated local economic impact of the limited run of the Immersive Van Gogh Exhibit was more than \$40 million, including the tourism, hotels, parking, dining, and other income generated from the ticket buyers (Blumenthal Performing Arts, 2022). This growing experience economy is more than just a trend in the United States. The demand for immersive experiences is also booming internationally, and investors are grossing big profits. For example, between June 2018 and May 2019, two immersive art spaces opened in Tokyo, teamLab Borderless and teamLab Planets, which recorded a combined attendance of roughly 3.55 million. Over that period, the two venues hosting the digital works created by the Japan-based art collective teamLab recorded around 69 million and 37.5 million U.S. dollars in gross sales, respectively" (Statista, 2022).

So many cities are keen on partnering with immersive experience providers, knowing the economic benefit it will bring to the venue space landlords, valuable partners, neighbors, and other small business owners. Strong local economies are sustainable economies. A booming immersive arts complex would support many more partners and small businesses in Ashland while showcasing the best of what Southern Oregon University and Southern Oregon, in general, have to offer.

The Oregon Shakespeare Festival attracts annual visitors from around the world and local repeat fans. Since Shakespeare's works are in the public domain and available without licensing price tags, SOU's development of a signature Shakespeare: The Immersive Experience capitalizes on this adjacent and existing market. Shakespeare fans number in the millions across the world. Rogue Immersive Arts can tap into the experience economy market and the Shakespeare fanbase market by partnering with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival to create one-of-a-kind immersive experiences with live performance elements that can create a more stable financial future for both organizations as well as local supporting small businesses that benefit from added visitor revenue.

Rogue Immersive Arts

Venture Proposal for City of Ashland Planning Commission for
Repurposing of Ashland Street Cinema Property
by Jenny Chynoweth

Market Research on the Immersive Experience Industry

As of 2024, IBISWorld industry predictions report that admission to live performing arts events is a 22 billion dollar per year industry. This predicted number should grow as "demand for live events has skyrocketed since COVID-19 lockdown" (IBISWorld, 2024, p. 10). That means investing in this market category now could have potentially high-rate payoffs for many years. "Continued demand for live event experiences and new investment in alternative consumption options will drive industry revenue growth moving forward. As tech-savvy generations, which are increasingly embracing culture and creation, continue to advance the live event space, growth will follow. Following a period of instability (during the COVID-19 lockdown), profit is expected to remain steady as favorable demand conditions sustain demand for promoters...

Over the next few years, demand will be driven by a sustained economic recovery... reaching \$39.5 billion in 2028 (IBISWorld, 2024, p. 14). These events are made possible by the explosion of immersive technology, which is now widely available. "Precedence Research estimates that the immersive technology market will grow to USD 138.18 billion by 2030. In 2021, it was USD 21.66 billion, so this suggests a compound annual growth rate of 22.46% from 2022 to 2030" (Tullin, 2024). This technology creates entrepreneurial opportunities to pair the technology with live events to meet growing market demand.

"Location-based experiences such as VR (virtual reality) and mixed reality are both expected to grow significantly. In fact, "a total of 755 new immersive experiences and shows were catalogued in 2019 alone" (Tullin, 2024). Creating an eye-popping immersive arts complex could allow Rogue Immersive Arts to capitalize on this growth wave and be a leader in sustainability while meeting the market's growing demand.

Other examples of successful immersive arts venues and installations include:

[The LUME in Melbourne, Australia](#) (Da Vinci themed immersive experience)

[Van Gogh: The Immersive Experience](#) in the United States

[Atelier des Lumières](#) in Paris, France (there are several others in France)

[Khroma](#) in Berlin, Germany

[Teamlab Borderless](#) and Planets in Tokyo, Japan

[Frameless](#) in London, England

[Art Museum](#) in Las Vegas, Nevada

Digital copy at
<https://bit.ly/rogueimmersivearts>

Rogue Immersive Arts

Venture Proposal for City of Ashland Planning Commission for
Repurposing of Ashland Street Cinema Property
by Jenny Chynoweth

Market Research on the Immersive Experience Industry

Venue Rental and Customizable Immersive Experiences

The strategic design of Rogue Immersive Arts mixed reality venue offers what no other business is offering the growing market: an immersive experience space that can customize the multimedia content for the client, bringing to life anything they might imagine with the help of designers and event planners who can make event dreams to life. So, for example, the companies who designed the Van Gogh exhibits built traveling set pieces and installations around a one-show theme, and they were always limited to working around the architecture and restrictions of the building(s) they were leasing, forced to create a different venue within a venue with each move. These space restrictions limit these augmented reality companies from being able to transition the space to another theme or offer clients service packages with new experience content. Thus, the Van Gogh experiences are more akin to high-tech, traveling museum exhibitions rather than taking full advantage of revenue-generating opportunities, creating in-demand, rentable spaces outside show mode. "Digital technologies offer much faster and more personalized experiences, insights, and touchpoint interactions. The virtually created spaces can adapt much more to individual preferences, resulting in an incredible diversity in consumer engagement. Real and virtual worlds will undoubtedly merge, and we are only at the beginning of this journey" (Weiss, 2023).

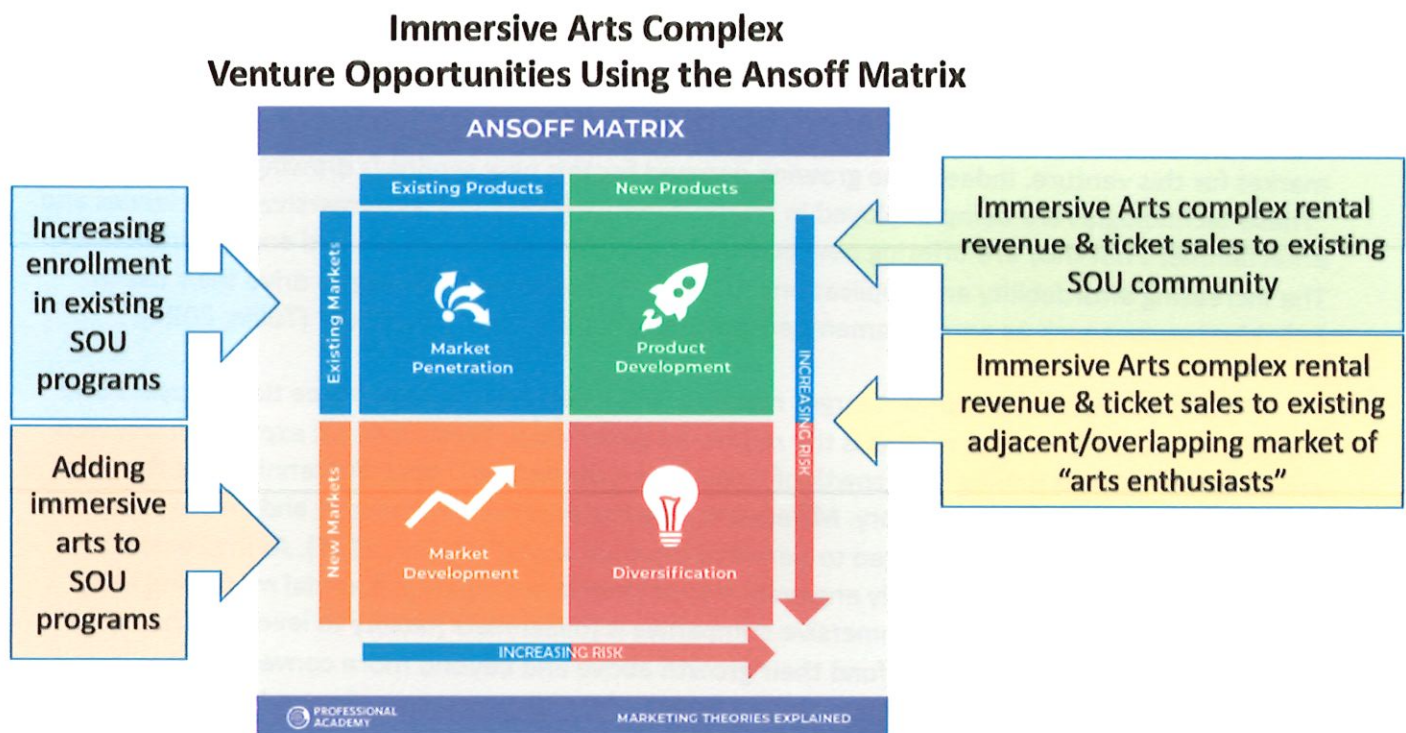
Private clients who want to create personalized events for celebrations, non-profit organizations who need to create compelling fundraising events, corporate businesses who wish to create their own branded event experiences, student and group artistic showcases, live performance promoters who desire customized content, wedding clients who want one-of-a-kind augmented reality content, all of these customer types could be Rogue Immersive Arts' new target market for this venture. Indeed, the growing demand for this new service is drawing attention. "These technologies are being deployed in multiple industries not just as immersive experiences and entertainment but they are offering new possibilities for how we tell stories and engage audiences... The increasing affordability and applications of these technologies is helping to drive their use in individual sectors such as entertainment, education, and the games industries" (Tullin, 2024).

One of the most important target markets for immersive arts experience ticket buyers and the future market for venue rentals is the millennial generation. Remix Summit explains in the web article titled "What is driving the growth of immersive experiences?" that "Millennials are the most powerful consumer cohort in history. Millennials love the experience economy and immersive experience providers are well placed to benefit from their spend" (Tullin, 2024). As impressed customers, the generations actively engaged in social media are highly influential marketing allies. "Something very powerful (for) immersive companies is (millennials') ability to leverage their tribal fan bases and social followings to fund their growth above and beyond more conventional investment" (Tullin, 2024). Younger generations want their in-person experiences to interact with their online experiences, real life and digital life overlapping.

Rogue Immersive Arts

Venture Proposal for City of Ashland Planning Commission for Repurposing of Ashland Street Cinema Property by Jenny Chynoweth

Developing new revenue strategies that align with branding and marketing goals requires careful risk assessment for experimentation. One of the tools taught in SOU's MBA Marketing Strategies course is the Ansoff Matrix. "The Ansoff Matrix can be used to categorize an existing strategy, to determine risk associated with a new or proposed strategy, or to develop new strategies... The matrix considers products or services in comparison to the markets the company proposes to serve" and assesses associated risks with each strategy from low to moderate to high (Wayland, M., & Wayland, M. S., 2015, p. 151). For example, strategies focusing solely on increasing student enrollment to generate more revenue would be categorized as "market penetration" on the Ansoff Matrix. "Market penetration" is the lowest risk category by serving existing markets with existing services (Wayland, M., & Wayland, M.S., 2015, p. 151). Maximizing student enrollment at SOU is a strategy that takes time and depends on solving the current marketing and financial crisis. So, while the tuition fees-for-service revenue model is well worth building over time with strategic marketing, it is not enough to solve SOU's short-term problems. Low risk is a low reward in this case. "Market development," as categorized by the Ansoff Matrix, is a moderate risk strategy because you are trying to bring your existing service to a new customer market. There are inherent challenges, of course, in reaching a new customer market. "Due diligence indicates that the market has a need for the service, but the provider must repackage its marketing materials and other aspects of its business to meet the needs of the new market" (Wayland, M., & Wayland, M. S., 2015, p. 151).



Modified from original image (Professional Academy, 2024)

Digital copy at
<https://bit.ly/rogueimmersivearts>

Rogue Immersive Arts

Venture Proposal for City of Ashland Planning Commission for
Repurposing of Ashland Street Cinema Property
by Jenny Chynoweth

References:

Ansoff Matrix Chart Graphic. Professional Academy: Marketing Strategies Explained.
<https://www.professionalacademy.com/blogs/marketing-theories-explaining-the-ansoff-matrix/>

IBISWorld. (2024, January). Concert and event promotion in the US. IBISWorld Industry Report 71133. Retrieved February 6, 2024, from IBISWorld database.

Immersive Van Gogh (2024). The original immersive Van Gogh exhibit: Created by Massimiliano Siccardi. <https://www.immersivevangogh.com/>

Passy, C., (2022). Van Gogh immersive shows have become a money-making sensation. Market Watch. <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/how-van-gogh-became-one-of-the-entertainment-worlds-biggest-stars-in-2021-11640638081>

Statista Research Department. (2022, June 3). Key data on selected immersive art experiences worldwide 2017-2020. Statista. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/939714/key-data-immersive-art-experiences-worldwide/>

Salmon, F. (2021). Investors pour millions into immersive, interactive art experiences. Axios. <https://www.axios.com/2021/09/23/investors-pour-millions-vr-experience>

Tullin, P. (2024). What is driving the growth of immersive experiences? Remix Summits. <https://www.remixsummits.com/what-is-driving-the-growth-of-immersive-experiences/...he%20size%20of%20the%20immersive,that%20has%20embraced%20immersive%20experiences>

Wayland, M., & Wayland. M. S. (2015). Strategic analysis for healthcare concepts and practical applications. Health Administration Press.

Weiss, J. (2023). Diving into a new reality: How immersive experiences along the customer journey succeed. NIM Marketing Intelligence Review Volume 15, No. 2.

Willkens, Q. (2024, April 29). Discover the new era of immersive experiences: 25 immersive art exhibits and museums around the world. Rustic Pathways. <https://rusticpathways.com/inside-rustic/online-magazine/new-era-immersive-experiences-vr-ar-mr-art-exhibits-museums-worldwide>