



# Art Center of Corpus Christi

## Communities as Startups Final Report

Value Proposition, Strategic Priorities,  
and Action Plan • June 1, 2022

Art Center of Corpus Christi



TEXAS A&M  
UNIVERSITY  
CORPUS  
CHRISTI

COASTAL BEND BUSINESS  
INNOVATION CENTER  
AN EDA UNIVERSITY CENTER

## **The Art Center of Corpus Christi**

The CBBIC began applying the “Community As Start Up” (CASU) model with the Art Center of Corpus Christi, in March, 2021. The purpose of the facilitation and consulting is to provide technical assistance to a major economic development function of downtown Corpus Christi, Texas. The initial meeting schedule was set at once per month for the purpose of 1) identifying the goals, 2) understanding the aspirations, 3) constructing the business model (s) and 4) crafting the implementation action plan for the center. The meetings were facilitated by Mr. Russell Franques and Mrs. Shawn Elizondo of the CBBIC, and Dr. Kent Byus of the College of Business at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. The representatives of the Art Center of Corpus Christi included Mrs. Dianna Bluntzer, the Executive Director of the center and Mrs. Kim Schmidt, a member of the Board of Directors of the center.

The Art Center of Corpus Christi is a 501 C3 non-profit corporation that is owned by the City of Corpus Christi and managed within the Parks and Recreation Department. The initial discussions revealed that the center would like to 1) expand the existing facilities, 2) enhance the offerings to include more interactive functions and displays, and 3) create greater economic impact into the downtown waterfront for art, creativity, education, and tourism.

The CASU model development was used to assist in developing a more detailed specification of the various segments to be targeted, the development of the specific value propositions for each of the four primary segments identified, the business model for each of the segments, and the costs associated with the initial phase of the expansion, enhancement and economic development. The first phase is the building, equipping, and operation of the interactive makerspace to be called “The Creative Lab.” Additional future phase projects will be the focus of additional CASU model integration discussions. The proposed “Creative Lab” project received acceptance by the Parks and Recreation Department and is slated for funding inclusion on the November, 2022 Bond proposal. Fresch Architecture (the firm) was unanimously selected by the CIP committee and approved by the Board to be the Lead Architect for the project. Specific agreements and contracts will be forthcoming conditioned on the final approvals and expectations of the center and the City of Corpus Christi.

Completion of the planning project for the Art Center in Corpus Christi, TX. As part of the CASU project methodology, preliminary discussions were held with EDA personnel regarding the potential for additional funding for other phases of the expansion project and/or grant opportunities for industrial equipment for the lab to augment funds included in the Bond proposal. This major phase of the CASU model project under the referenced grant was completed on May 24, 2022, with the understanding that additional facilitation and consultation could be provided to assist the Art Center of Corpus Christi continue to redefine the center’s business model(s), specify potential revenue streams, and to continue planning the operations of the multi-dimensional needs to serve the regions community of artisans, tourists, and educational program providers/users.