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EDMONDS DESIGNATED WASHINGTON STATE'S FIRST CREATIVE DISTRICT

Governor Inslee Announces Designation Tuesday Evening

(Edmonds, WA) - At the annual Governor's Arts and Heritage Awards Gala Dinner last evening in Bremerton, Governor Jay Inslee announced that the downtown area of Edmonds (see attached map) has been designated Washington State's first [Certified Creative District](#). The program, launched in January 2018 by the [Washington State Arts Commission](#) (ArtsWA), helps communities throughout the state grow their local economies through the arts and culture.

Official presentation of the certificate of Creative District designation to Edmonds Mayor Earling will be made on Monday, December 3rd at 11am in the Brackett Room on the Third Floor of Edmonds City Hall, located at 121 5th Avenue North in Downtown Edmonds. ArtsWA staff will be present, as well as local dignitaries and staff. This event will be open to the public and to the press, who are encouraged to attend.

The Creative District program was approved by the State Legislature in 2017 as a platform for communities to grow their arts and creative economies, providing jobs, educational and cultural opportunities, and sustainable economic growth. A Creative District is intended to comprise a geographically defined area where art, cultural, social, and economic activity takes

place. It includes cultural facilities, artists, creative industries and other businesses that support these activities.

Edmonds, located 12 miles north of Seattle on the shores of Puget Sound, has a prominent and long-lived arts and culture heritage. Primarily concentrated in Downtown Edmonds, theaters, museums and galleries are found side by side with creative restaurants, cafés, distillers, breweries, art shops and boutiques. Numerous venues for public gathering and performance, public art installations, and its eye-catching flower beds are concentrated in the historic Edmonds downtown.

But even more important to the Creative District review committee, who unanimously selected Edmonds for certification, is the city's long-term commitment to the arts and culture sector and its ambitious five-year work program intended to build on those successes to enhance the creative sector, enhance public engagement, grow jobs, and provide impetus for capital improvements.

"We are delighted to recognize Edmonds as the State's first certified Creative District," remarked Program Director Annette Roth, "and look forward to working with the City over the next five years to really build on its successes to enhance its creative economy and achieve its objectives. Edmonds is the first Creative District, and we are working with other communities around the State that we hope will be able to join them as Creative Districts in the coming months."

Creative District designation benefits communities in a number of ways. The state certification is an endorsement of the arts and culture activities that already exist in a community and can be used to attract more artists, entrepreneurs and creative businesses. It helps a community create a focal point where people can gather and enjoy arts and cultural activities that reflect the community. The District acts as a magnet for visitors, drawing both local residents and tourists alike. ArtsWA has created a comprehensive program to help support communities flourish with this designation, providing grant funding opportunities, technical assistance and training for communities and artist entrepreneurs, wayfinding signage and more.

"I couldn't be more delighted," commented Edmonds Mayor Dave Earling, "with ArtsWA's selection of Edmonds as the State's first certified Creative District. We pulled together a robust public-engagement process over this past year that helped us create goals, objectives and milestones for an ambitious five-year program that we included in our application. What's more, Edmonds has a long history of support for the arts and culture sector, with our Community Cultural Plan, dating back to the 1990s, one of the first in the State. My thanks go out to the review committee and ArtsWA staff for selecting Edmonds, and to Governor Inslee and the State Legislature for authorizing the Creative District program."

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