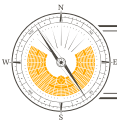




BURNING MAN PROJECT
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CULTURAL DIRECTION SETTING

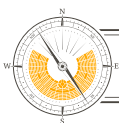
This vision has been created as a part of the Black Rock City Cultural Direction Setting project, and is a guidepost for where we want our culture in Black Rock City to be in the next five to 10 years. It addresses our current challenges, sets a course for the future, and suggests changes to placement and other approaches over time.

Table of Contents

Preface	3
Introduction	4
People Living the 10 Principles in Black Rock City	5
Camps Living the 10 Principles in Black Rock City	7
Vibrant Neighborhoods	8
Strengthening Our Neighborhoods	9
Transparent Communication from Burning Man Project to Residents	10
Space Use in Residential Black Rock City	11
Citizenship Beyond the Trash Fence	12
Conclusion	13
What's Next & How You Can Participate	13
Appendix	14
A. Cultural Vision Snapshot	14
B. The Black Rock City Cultural Direction Setting Visioning Group	16
C. Appreciations & Acknowledgments	16
D. The Process — How We Got to the Vision	19
E. Quotes	20



(Photo by Wayne Stadler)



Preface

The Cultural Direction Setting project began with these questions and concerns:

As the event in the desert has evolved and our culture gains more traction and attention in mainstream society, questions and concerns have been raised around the size of camps, relative inclusivity or exclusivity, requirements for interactivity, and the placement process. How might camps continue to grow and change? Where do we stand on turnkey, “plug and play,” or convenience camping? What course are we charting for the next five to 10 years?

To answer these questions and guide the Black Rock City community at large into the future, we needed a vision. We needed a clear, actionable vision that would give us guideposts without being too prescriptive. We needed a vision that would inspire us as individuals, leaders, citizens, and members of groups. We needed a vision that was not the brainchild of a select few but would come from the wisdom of our community.

After months of hard work and community feedback, we’re thrilled to share that vision with you. This vision sets the cultural direction of residential Black Rock City for the next five to 10 years.

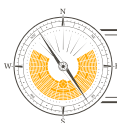
In the past nine months, you, the global Burning Man community, have shared your concerns, experiences, hopes, and ideas with the Cultural Direction Setting group. This group of 19 Black Rock City citizens who are also camp leaders, staff, community members, Regional Contacts, and Board Members digested a massive amount of community feedback and co-wrote this vision. In the surveys, interviews, community conversations, online response, and live input sessions, we heard a lot. If you want to learn more about the community engagement feedback and process, check out the appendix at the end.

This vision addresses many of the cultural challenges we’ve been facing in residential Black Rock City. The scope of the vision is the city itself — where we live, the culture of camps, and how we, as individuals and camps, impact the city. We’re talking about all camps and forms of camping — theme camps, villages, open campers, walk-in campers, mutant vehicle camps, art support camps, department camps, staff camps and work support camps.

We wrote the vision from the “we” perspective, and “we” doesn’t just mean the opinion of those who wrote it. What’s envisioned comes from our community’s input. It is everyone’s responsibility to make this vision a reality. “We” means all of us.

WE ALSO WROTE THE VISION IN THE PRESENT TENSE. SOME OF WHAT’S WRITTEN IS NOT HAPPENING...YET. IT’S WHAT WE WANT TO BE TRUE. IT’S WHERE WE’RE HEADED. READ IT WITH YOUR FUTURE GOGGLES ON.





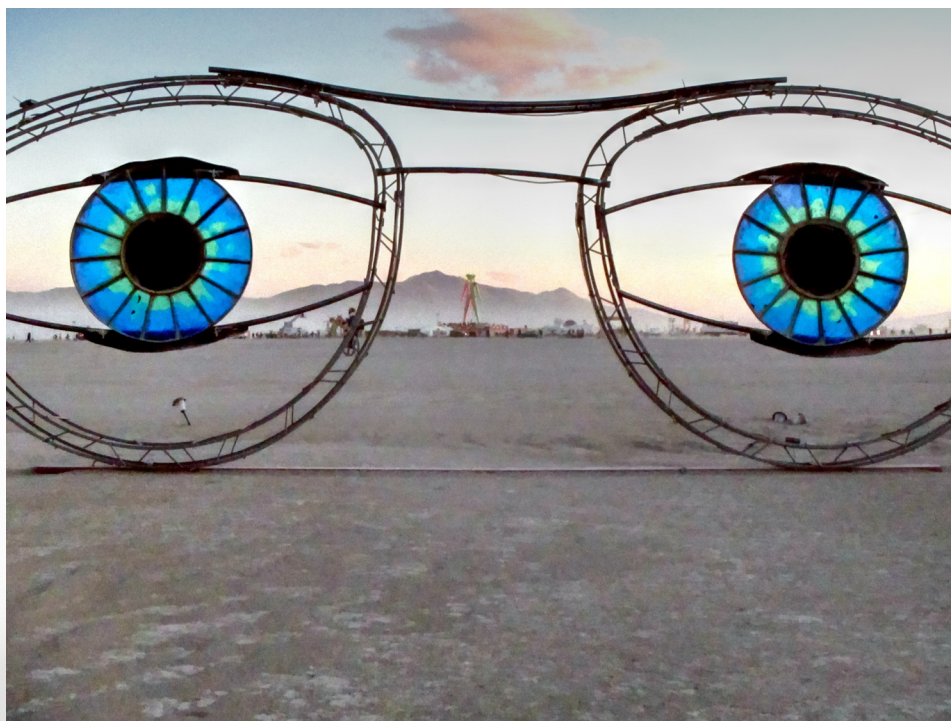
CULTURAL DIRECTION SETTING

This vision is just the beginning. In order to make it real, we enter the next phase of the Cultural Direction Setting project. Here, we will create and facilitate specialized implementation groups. Each group will focus on a particular topic and do the nitty-gritty work of turning the vision into processes, policies, guidelines, and educational materials where needed. These groups will include relevant stakeholders for each topic, such as camp leaders, community members, and Burning Man department stakeholders.

For example, one of the top cultural concerns we heard was about plug and play or convenience camps. The vision shares where we want to be in the future around this issue.

In the next phase of this project, an implementation group will focus on that topic to nail down the right approach going forward and confirm the standards we'll use when evaluating camps in light of this vision. You can read all the details about this next phase in a Burning Man Journal post we'll link at the end.

Implementation within the Burning Man organization alone won't make the vision real. It will take all of us as individuals and as camps to make it real. We hope you will actively guide the culture of this city we all love so dearly so that it evolves positively and continues well into the future.

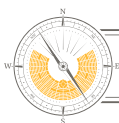


"The Quantum Observer" by Jason Hickey, 2015 (Photo by Cindy Graver)

Introduction

Burning Man is a community. A temporary city. A global cultural movement based on 10 practical Principles. At its heart, it's an opportunity to experiment with connection, engagement, self-expression, and authenticity. It's an invitation to re-imagine how we want to live in the world and for people to be who they want to be while being curious about and respectful of others.

Burning Man strives to stand in technicolor contrast to the typical consumerist, status-driven, brand-saturated, optimized-for-your-convenience world. We create Black Rock City every year because we believe there is value in having an entirely different kind of experience — one grounded in what you have to contribute, say, make, do, and share.



CULTURAL DIRECTION SETTING

When Larry Harvey wrote [the 10 Principles](#) in 2004, they were a description of the community's ethos and culture as it had organically developed since the event's inception. The feedback we received for this vision statement continued to point back to the 10 Principles as the core of who we are as individuals and within the groups we call our communities. Today, the 10 Principles remain a guiding light of the Burning Man ethos, and this vision complements them.

Culture is our collective lived experience. It's not something you are, but rather something you do. When we create, contribute, and participate in Black Rock City, it inspires others to do the same. When one approaches Black Rock City as a consumer or a spectator, it discourages others from contributing and devalues the experience. The success of Burning Man culture and Black Rock City will always rest on our community's embrace of our shared cultural values.



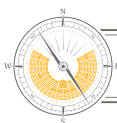
"Dream" by Laura Kimpton and Jeff Schomberg, 2015 (Photo by Philippe Glade)

People Living the 10 Principles in Black Rock City

As participants of Burning Man, our actions express the 10 Principles and the values of the culture. We have a rich cultural history that we strengthen and evolve as individual residents of Black Rock City. Each person's actions collectively create the culture through which we experience our city.

"UNIQUELY EXPRESSIVE ACTS GET TRANSFORMED AND ELABORATED INTO SOCIAL RITES, AND THROUGH PARTICIPATION THEY ACCRUE A BREADTH AND DEPTH OF MEANING WHICH CAN ONLY BE PRODUCED IN A COMMUNAL SETTING. IT IS THE PRIMAL PROCESS BY WHICH CULTURE IS CREATED." – Larry Harvey

We value differences and respect each other even when we don't understand one another. We start from a place of curiosity. We practice learning and teaching over reprimanding and judgment. We don't have to love or understand everyone, but we do respect everyone's right to self-expression.



CULTURAL DIRECTION SETTING

As citizens of Black Rock City, we embody personal responsibility — we don't expect things to be done for us (convenience culture) or dictated for us (we take responsibility for our culture). Real Radical Self-reliance and Participation cannot be outsourced, particularly not through financial means.

Participation is our state of being, and it comes in all shapes and sizes. It is each individual's responsibility to make sure they are contributing to the culture and the city.

Black Rock City is an inclusive community. Our city is a welcoming place for all forms of diversity, including race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, ability, socio-economic, political, and cultural backgrounds, and other forms of identity. Our actions serve radical inclusivity. *"There is enough exclusivity out in the default world, it shouldn't happen in BRC."* – Survey Respondent #136

Black Rock City is a place where we all feel free to be who we want to be, to express ourselves fully and be in full respect of other people's expressions. We practice consent, look out for each other, and respect personal boundaries. Everyone decides for themselves who they want to be in any moment and what they want to say yes or no to. We contribute to creating a safe space for one another to express ourselves fully, where harassment and sexual violence are not tolerated.

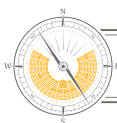
We understand the necessity of Immediacy. Black Rock City is a unique opportunity to step away from the devices and tools that shape our daily lives. We examine how our default world habits take us away from being present in Black Rock City and actively work to practice ways of being together. We understand that our actions, even the smallest ones, can either erode or reinforce our culture.

We know who we are, what we are doing, and take ownership of our story. We protect our culture from exploitation and prevent commodification of ourselves, our expression, and our community. We act as cultural ambassadors and mentors to those seeking our community.

We recognize that our community is cooperative and is not based on transactional exchanges between consumers. We contribute through gifts of all sizes, shapes, and types. The entire city itself is a gift created by the collective whole and is only possible through the participation of all citizens.



"R-Evolution" by Marco Cochrane, 2015 (Photo by Wendy DeLano)



Camps Living the 10 Principles in Black Rock City

As Black Rock City camps, our collective actions express and teach the 10 Principles and the values of the culture. The 10 Principles are embedded within and amplified by all camps.

Many residents of Black Rock City are acculturated through participation in and in connection with camps. Camps take responsibility for educating, acculturating, and mentoring camp members as well as other participants about the 10 Principles and culture of Burning Man. Camps understand and take responsibility for their cultural leadership role. Camps teach and exemplify the 10 Principles. *"Camps should be the embodiment of the Principles."*

– Survey Respondent #69

Theme camps allocate their collective focus, time, and resources primarily toward their public contributions rather than personal comfort and convenience. Conveniences are used in service of the camp's contribution, which adds to the vibrancy of the city.

Theme camps are groups of participants who, together, contribute a service, engagement, art, or other creative interactive experience available for the citizens of Black Rock City.

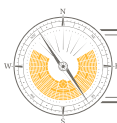
As participants, we evaluate a camp's alignment with our culture based on their behaviors and our interaction with them, rather than relying on generalizations, labels, and assumptions. We have clear language defining how and why camps are not acting in alignment with the 10 Principles. We utilize a clear set of standards for what behaviors are in alignment with our culture. We educate each other on these standards and support each other to live up to them.

"AT MOST FESTIVALS, THERE IS SOCIAL ENGINEERING THAT TAKES PLACE—AND IT'S DESIGNED TO INCREASE CONSUMPTION. THE PRODUCERS MAKE THEIR MONEY BY FEATURING HEADLINERS, TARGETING DEMOGRAPHICS, VENDING AT SCALE, AND THROUGH COMMERCIAL SPONSORSHIPS. WE DON'T DO THOSE THINGS. WHAT WE'VE ALWAYS DONE IS FORM THE CONTEXT OF SOCIETY. AND ALL OF THIS IS NOT IN SERVICE OF THE BOTTOM LINE, BUT IS AIMED AT GENERATING GREATER SOCIAL INTERACTION." – Larry Harvey

In Black Rock City, we interact beyond the simple exchange of money for an experience. *"...We are not businesses. We are communities based on gifting."* – Survey Respondent #878

WE UNDERSTAND THAT COMMODIFYING RESOURCES (PACKAGING, ADVERTISING, OR MARKETING CAMP SPACE, TICKETS, AN EXPERIENCE, ETC.) AND ALLOWING FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO SUBSTITUTE FOR PARTICIPATION IS NOT ONLY IN OPPOSITION TO BURNING MAN'S VALUES, BUT SIGNIFICANTLY DAMAGES THE CULTURE.

"Once you hit playa, you should decommodify. I understand this is a fuzzy boundary because we all buy [stuff] before we arrive, but it's an important fuzzy boundary." – Survey Respondent #3430 All camp members engage through meaningful and immediate contributions to camp interactivity and operations.



CULTURAL DIRECTION SETTING

Camps do not have camp members who don't help provide and support the camp's on playa interactivity and operations.

Everyone understands that camps and Black Rock City are not vacation or travel packages to be purchased. Camp production motivated by personal financial profit is unethical and unwelcome.

"ALL OF US...GIFT OUR TIME, ENERGY, SKILL, MONEY TO BRC PROJECTS WITH THE PURPOSE OF CREATING AN AMAZING COMMUNITY BUT WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IT'S A DECOMMODIFIED SPACE. PROFITEERS AREN'T JUST SELLING A CAMPING SPOT, THEY'RE SELLING THE EXPERIENCE THAT THE REST OF US BUILT FOR FREE AND PROFITING OFF OF OUR GIFTS WITHOUT OUR CONSENT." – Survey Respondent #2540

When unclear edges are encountered, we ask for help rather than assume we know the "right" answer.



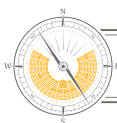
(Photo by Daryl Henderson)

Vibrant Neighborhoods

Black Rock City's neighborhoods are vibrant. Theme camps contribute to the culture of our city and engage their fellow participants. We create experiences for the Burning Man community, not just for our campmates or those who fit an exclusive criteria. Everyone works together to hold each other accountable in service of a healthy Black Rock City.

"[BURNING MAN IS] SELF-EXPRESSION ELEVATED TO A CIVIC DUTY. [...OUR] WORK CANNOT BE UNDERSTOOD AS A COMMODITY THAT'S SEPARATE FROM OUR COMMUNITY." – Larry Harvey

Theme camps engage participants and are open and welcoming to citizens from across Black Rock City. Theme camp contributions of all sizes and shapes are valued — from a small, intimate interaction to a large-scale, complex, resource intensive experience.



CULTURAL DIRECTION SETTING

The intention to bring a theme camp does not solely come from the desire to receive resources. It comes from the desire to participate communally, be creative, add to the culture, and give to others.

“THE MOST IMPACTFUL WAY A THEME CAMP CONTRIBUTES IS THE PARTICIPATION AND MINDSET OF THEIR MEMBERS. I VALUE OPENNESS, CREATIVITY, AND THE ENTHUSIASM THEME CAMPS CAN HAVE FOR THEIR PROJECTS. THE MAGIC OF BURNING MAN IS EVERYONE SHOWING THEIR PASSION FOR THEIR OWN AND EACH OTHER’S PROJECTS, EVEN IF THEY FAIL OR ARE NOT POPULAR.” – Survey Respondent #72

When we have the drive to make it bigger, brighter, and louder, we thoughtfully decipher whether or not our ambitions serve the camp, the city, and the overall culture. *“Are you really a camp if most of the people don’t know each other?”* – Survey Respondent #1357 We focus on potential challenges with camp size by acculturating and engaging all camp members, addressing camp leadership challenges, and ensuring group culture is not diluted.

Vibrant neighborhoods are supported by the collective efforts of the teams in the Burning Man Project through clear communications and strategic city planning.

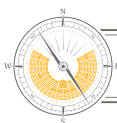
The Placement Team and camps co-create a living and flexible urban design mission statement, and Placement provides transparency on their methodology of developing neighborhoods. The Placement Team is responsible for curating the city in support of overall vibrancy and is transparent about how and why camps are placed and not placed. Placement encourages variety in neighborhood composition and camp locations while balancing culturally cohesive areas of the city. Curation is an ongoing experiment. One example is imagined by this survey respondent,

“IF MY CAMP GIVES OUT HAMBURGERS EVERY DAY, SAME AMOUNT AS ANOTHER CAMP, THEN EVALUATION MUST COME DOWN TO [SOMETHING]...EITHER...AESTHETICS, CLEANLINESS, OFF-PLAYA GOOD DEEDS, WHO’S HAIR SMELLS NICER, SOMETHING. IT DOESN’T HAVE TO BE ABOUT WHO’S GOT MORE MONEY, BUT ABOUT WHO IS OFFERING A...MORE INCLUSIVE...EXPERIENCE.” – Survey Respondent #2952

As a community, we believe in giving people the opportunity to learn and grow from feedback. When necessary, the Burning Man organization applies clear and transparent consequences to camps who repeatedly do not meet expectations. There is a healthy balance between allowing camps to grow to meet expectations and not allowing camps to slow walk their improvement. *“Everyone deserves second chances, but not nine of them.”* – Interviewee #28 There is clarity around what is not tolerated. The organization intervenes only as necessary and empowers the community to hold each other accountable to these expectations, too.

Strengthening Our Neighborhoods

We are a community that values Communal Effort — without other city residents, one sits alone in the desert. In Black Rock City, all individuals, collectives, and camps are welcoming and cooperative, and they communicate respectfully with each other. Camps share resources, collaborate, reduce their environmental impact, and generate opportunities for intentional interaction. We aspire toward a city where camps know who their neighbors are in advance of the event.



CULTURAL DIRECTION SETTING

We strive for community, not just between individuals, but among neighboring camps. The Placement Team facilitates the initial connection between neighboring camps within the appropriate context of the greater placement process. Camps have formal and informal ways of facilitating connection, resolving conflicts, sharing resources, and holding each other accountable. We do this not only in Black Rock City, but year-round as an interconnected network of camps, leaders, and citizens. Burning Man Project with endeavors such as the Camp Development & Support Team helps facilitate the greater camp community year-round.

Camps prioritize the bigger “We” over “I,” and appropriately prioritize the greater good of our city and culture over individual camp desires.

Camps are aware of how they are impacting their neighbors. Building relationships with neighbors, approaching them from a place of Radical Inclusion and curiosity, and mediating differences in an empathetic and respectful manner are the status quo. Camps engage in thoughtful conversations and prioritize learning and teaching over reprimanding and judgment.

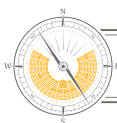


(Photo by Philippe Glade)

Transparent Communication from Burning Man Project to Residents

The Burning Man organization’s criteria for a placed camp in Black Rock City are clearly articulated and embraced by camps. The organization solicits camp input regarding policy changes that affect them. Camps have trust in the process and decisions, and continue to be cultural stewards of Black Rock City.

As Black Rock City evolves, the organization continues to work to understand all residential groups — theme camps, villages, open campers, walk-in campers, mutant vehicle camps, art support camps, department camps, and work support camps. The organization maintains appropriate resource channels to meet the needs of these residential groups so they can continue contributing to the city.



CULTURAL DIRECTION SETTING

The criteria to be a placed camp is clearly defined and communicated, as well as the process for what happens when that criterion is not met. Burning Man Project's teams keep criteria and policies relevant by updating them when needed. The community publicly celebrates those who are doing it right. We have outlets to share how many camps aren't meeting expectations each year.

The relationship between camps and the Placement Team is mutually supportive, and communication flows effectively. Transparency on both ends helps educate camps and build trust in the criteria, process, vision, and culture within the community. Whenever possible, the Placement Team is transparent with their process and consults the camp community about potential changes in the process.

The organization manages helpful, organized, and easily accessible information about residential Black Rock City and relays necessary updates to the various groups of residential Black Rock City in a timely manner. This creates clarity and supports acculturation. The citizens in turn seek to digest and absorb the information shared.



"The Temple of Whollyness" by SYNTHESIS LLC: Gregg Fleishman, Melissa Barron, Lightning Clearwater III, 2013
(Photo by Scott Williams)

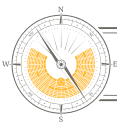
Space Use in Residential Black Rock City

Residential Black Rock City is a diverse and integrated environment — demographically, culturally, interactively. There is clarity around the allocation of and access to space. We respect and make space for differences in the way people prefer to live in Black Rock City.

Placement has clear policies around land use and residents understand their options for space. Under the current configuration for city planning, placed camping may not be possible for everyone who wants it, open camping and walk-in camping (unplaced areas) will continue to be viable options for groups wishing to participate in Black Rock City.

Open camping and walk-in camping provide unique value to the culture of Black Rock City. Open campers contribute to Black Rock City in groups and as individual participants. *"I value spontaneous experiences. I find... unplaced zones are becoming the best place for this."* — Survey Respondent #252 Burning Man's City Planning Team and the Placement Team establish and maintain a minimum threshold of space for open camping.

We have neighborly solutions for occupying space in open camping. We implement solutions that are practical. Residents understand the purpose of open camping. We all promote a "take what you need, use what you take" mentality.



CULTURAL DIRECTION SETTING

Since Black Rock City is different each year, we are flexible with our land use policies. If major changes are being considered, there will be an opportunity for community input. This allows us to respond to a given year's residential composition to determine the space allocated for each camping type.



(Photo by Dan Adams)

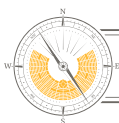
Citizenship Beyond the Trash Fence

Black Rock City citizenship goes beyond the trash fence. As members of the global Burning Man community, we are creators, connectors, and cultural ambassadors that bring Burning Man values into the world. We share without evangelism. We share by doing; by example. These culturally aligned efforts are separate from any resources provided in Black Rock City.

“WE THINK BURNING MAN HAS GREAT APPLICATION TO THE WORLD, BUT A LARGER ITERATION CAN ONLY OCCUR AS PEOPLE INCORPORATE THE ESSENTIAL ETHOS OF IT. THE TEN PRINCIPLES ARE MEANT TO DESCRIBE THAT ETHOS, THAT WAY OF LIFE; AND THEN, BY THEIR OWN INSPIRATION AND BY COLLABORATION WITH OTHERS IN THE EVERYDAY WORLD, PEOPLE WILL FIND APPLICATIONS THAT ARE AS VARIOUS AS THE MANY GIFTS THEY BRING TO IT. IT HAS TO BE CULTURALLY TRANSMITTED THAT WAY.” – Larry Harvey

We foster and encourage the sharing of Burning Man culture beyond the borders of Black Rock City. *“Furthering [Burning Man] culture the rest of the year can have a much bigger impact on our world, and is very worthy.”* – Survey Respondent #70
Burning Man Project strives to understand and share what and how Burners are doing beyond the fence.





CULTURAL DIRECTION SETTING

Burners choose to be good citizens out beyond Black Rock City as a matter of personal integrity. However, those efforts should not be assumed to have any overt influence on receiving placement in Black Rock City. However, problematic group behavior beyond the fence that is not aligned with our culture may be taken into consideration for Black Rock City camp placement decisions. Citizenship beyond the fence is continually inspired by and celebrated within Black Rock City and by Burning Man Project.

Conclusion

Our city and our culture are complex, and there's no single solution for the problems we face. Burning Man culture is the sum of those who embody it and our relationship to larger society at that time, which means its natural and healthy for it to evolve. Culture is what we all imagine and create together.

SETTING A CULTURAL DIRECTION FOR RESIDENTIAL BLACK ROCK CITY REQUIRES COLLECTIVE ACTION.

This vision for the next five to 10 years will only be possible with engagement and support from every Black Rock City citizen. It is up to each person and camp, and to Burning Man Project to hold each other responsible for living the culture of Burning Man and modeling the behavior we want to see in Black Rock City.

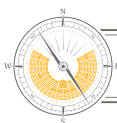
Since Burning Man's inception, we (and we do mean the big "we") have managed to create a thriving global culture of makers, doers, dreamers, and believers. Year after year, we build a thriving temporary metropolis that's now over 70,000 people and there is a widespread, global Burning Man community that is having an impact on people all around the world. You can find Burning Man culture on all seven continents! We believe that if nurtured properly, Burning Man has the potential to create lasting positive social change far beyond the fence and have already seen evidence of that.

We built this thing. And together, we can steer it towards a long-lasting and vibrant future that continues to inspire each of us and many others for decades to come.

We invite you to bring this vision to your camp, team, collective, fellow Black Rock City citizens, and interested future participants who you know to discuss how you can contribute to bringing this vision to life. Whether it's your first time in Black Rock City, or you haven't gotten the playa dust out of your fur coat from the past 20 years, it's up to all of us.

What's Next & How You Can Participate

Read [the Burning Man Journal blog post](#) about the release of the vision and how you can participate. Hungry for more? We recommend reading on below for quotes and wide-ranging perspectives from the surveys, interviews, community conversations, and online forums.



Appendix

A. Cultural Vision Snapshot

This is a very short version of the Cultural Vision for Residential Black Rock City. We've pulled out the foundational parts and we highly recommend reading the whole vision to understand everything envisioned for the next five to 10 years.

PREFACE

This vision addresses many of the cultural challenges we've been facing in residential Black Rock City, and sets the cultural direction for the next five to 10 years. The scope of the vision is the city itself — where we live, the culture of camps, and how we, as individuals and camps, impact the city.

We wrote the vision from the “we” perspective, and “we” doesn't just mean the opinion of those who wrote it. What's envisioned comes from our community's input. It is everyone's responsibility to make this vision a reality. “We” means all of us.

We also wrote the vision in the present tense. Some of what's written is not happening...yet. It's what we want to be true. It's where we're headed. Read it with your future goggles on.

INTRODUCTION

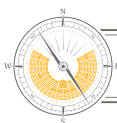
Culture is our collective lived experience. It's not something you are, but rather something you do. When we create, contribute, and participate in Black Rock City, it inspires others to do the same. When one approaches Black Rock City as a consumer or a spectator, it discourages others from contributing. The success of Burning Man culture and Black Rock City will always rest on our community's embrace of our shared cultural values.

1. PEOPLE LIVING THE 10 PRINCIPLES

As participants of Burning Man, our actions express the 10 Principles and the values of the culture. We have a rich cultural history that we strengthen and evolve as individual residents of Black Rock City. Each person's actions collectively create the culture through which we experience our city.

2. CAMPS LIVING THE 10 PRINCIPLES

As Black Rock City camps, our collective actions express and teach the 10 Principles and the values of the culture. The 10 Principles are embedded within and amplified by all camps. Theme camps allocate their collective focus, time, and resources primarily toward their public contributions rather than personal comfort and convenience. Conveniences are used in service of the camp's contribution, which adds to the vibrancy of the city. We understand that commodifying resources (packaging, advertising, or marketing camp space, tickets, an experience, etc.) and allowing financial contributions to substitute for participation is not only in opposition to Burning Man's values, but significantly damages the culture. When unclear edges are encountered, we ask for help rather than assume we know the “right” answer.



CULTURAL DIRECTION SETTING

3. VIBRANT NEIGHBORHOODS

Black Rock City's neighborhoods are vibrant. Theme camps contribute to the culture of our city and engage their fellow participants. The experiences we create are an offering to the Burning Man community, not just for our campmates or those who fit an exclusive criteria. Everyone works together to hold each other accountable in service of a healthy and inclusive Black Rock City.

4. STRENGTHENING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

We are a community that values Communal Effort — without other city residents, one sits alone in the desert. In Black Rock City, all individuals, collectives, and camps are welcoming and cooperative, and they communicate respectfully with each other. Camps share resources, collaborate, reduce their environmental impact, and generate opportunities for intentional interaction. We aspire toward a city where camps know who their neighbors are in advance of the event.

5. TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION FROM BURNING MAN PROJECT TO RESIDENTS

The Burning Man organization's criteria for a placed camp in Black Rock City are clear and embraced by camps. Camp input is solicited by the organization regarding policy changes that affect them. Camps have trust in the process and decisions and continue to be cultural stewards of Black Rock City.

6. SPACE USE IN RESIDENTIAL BLACK ROCK CITY

Residential Black Rock City is a diverse and integrated environment — demographically, culturally, interactively. There is clarity around the allocation of and access to space. We respect and make space for differences in the way people prefer to live in Black Rock City.

7. CITIZENSHIP BEYOND THE TRASH FENCE

Black Rock City citizenship goes beyond the trash fence. As Burners, we are creators, connectors, and cultural ambassadors that bring Burning Man values into the world. We share without evangelism. We share by doing; by example. These culturally aligned efforts are separate from any resources provided in Black Rock City. Burners choose to be good citizens out beyond Black Rock City as a matter of personal integrity. However, those efforts should not be assumed to have any overt influence on receiving placement in Black Rock City.

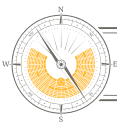
CONCLUSION

Setting a cultural direction for residential Black Rock City requires collective action. Together, we can steer it towards a long-lasting and vibrant future that continues to inspire each of us and many others for decades to come. We invite you to bring this vision statement to your camp, team, collective, and any other citizens of Black Rock City you know and discuss how you can contribute to bringing this vision to life. Whether it's your first time in Black Rock City, or you haven't gotten the playa dust out of your fur coat from the past 20 years, it's up to all of us.

WHAT'S NEXT & HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE

Read the Burning Man Journal blog post about the release of the vision and how you can participate.





B. THE BLACK ROCK CITY CULTURAL DIRECTION SETTING VISIONING GROUP

The Black Rock City Cultural Direction Setting group co-authored this Cultural Vision for Residential Black Rock City.

This group is made up of leaders from camps, community members, Burning Man Project's Board, Regional Contact leadership, Placement Team members, and Burning Man Project Staff. These individuals represent a cross-section of Black Rock City in terms of camp size and complexity, number of years as an established camp, and camp location. They are:

Bravo (Placement Team), Jennifer Warburg (Boom Boom Womb Camp), Jess Hobbs (Flux Foundation and Flaming Lotus Girls), Kari Gregg (Education and Philanthropic Engagement for Burning Man Project), Kimba Standridge (Facilitator & Man Pavilion Project Manager), Lauren Brand (Varsity Camp & Cirque Gitane), Level (Placement Team), Marisa Lenhardt (Death Guild Thunderdome), Mercedes Martinez (Burning Man Project Board Member and Ashram Galactica), Michael Mikel (Burning Man Cultural Founder), Ray Russ (Community Member), Scotto (Meta-Regional & PolyParadise Village), Shadow (Placement Team), Simone Torrey (Lead Facilitator, BeeCharge! Camp), Skywalker (Root Society Camp), Terry Schoop (Community Services Manager), Trippi Longstocking / Victoria Mitchell (Associate Director & Cultural Direction Setting Project Creator), Wally Bomgaars (Burning Man Staff and Community Member), and Zang (Suspended Animation Camp)

This group was supported by Marian Goodell (CEO and Cultural Founder of Burning Man Project), Larry Harvey (Cultural Founder of Burning Man Project), Harley K. Dubois (Cultural Founder of Burning Man Project), Charlie Dolman (Black Rock City Event Director), and Heather White (COO of Burning Man Project).

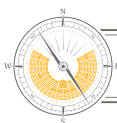
C. APPRECIATIONS & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are deeply appreciative of all the people who contributed to this vision and the process it took to get here.

FIRST, TO ALL THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED IN THIS PROCESS IN THE FALL OF 2018.

Thank you to the camps at the 2018 Burning Man event who welcomed the visioning group members into your spaces and told us what you really thought about and wanted for the culture of Black Rock City. Those experiences kicked off this whole project before it was even announced, and we appreciate your readiness to participate in something that was unknown.

Thank you to the 4,804 community members from 78 countries who responded to a very long survey about the culture of Black Rock City. The thought and heart you put into your responses blew everyone away. Thank you to all those who collectively wrote thousands of comments on the initial Journal post, the Facebook group, and ePlaya.



CULTURAL DIRECTION SETTING

Thank you to the 67 camp leaders, artists, staff, and other community leaders who we interviewed. Going deeper with you allowed us to walk alongside you from so many angles and perspectives.

We are so inspired by how global this process has been. Thank you to those hosts who organized and all those who participated in the 19 community conversations that happened in Austin, Texas; Bishop, California; virtually in Brazil; Eugene, Oregon; Kimberly, Idaho; Marina Del Ray, California; New York, New York; Portland, Oregon; Queerborhood participants in San Francisco; Reno, Nevada; Sacramento, California; San Francisco, California; San Jose, California; Seattle, Washington; Kyiv, Ukraine; and Vancouver, British Columbia.

Thank you to the Burning Man Project staff and leaders who have cheered Cultural Direction Setting on, participated in three staff-focused community conversations, and given so much input, so many ideas, and put so much of themselves and their work into this work.

The process continued into the spring at the March 2019 Theme Camp Symposium. Thank you to the 500 camp leaders who listened first to the rough draft version of this vision. Over 150 Symposium participants took the time to give direct feedback to the visioning group afterward. It was nerve wracking to share a work-in-progress and you all were both supportive and gave helpful criticism. It was so valuable to hear what you thought so we could integrate that into the final vision.

To those who participated in the April 2019 European Leadership Summit, thank you for giving such insightful feedback about the overall Cultural Direction Setting framework and the rough draft of the vision. It was truly amazing to see and understand the echoes of this work throughout the Global Network.

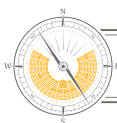
NEXT, TO ALL THOSE WHO SUPPORTED THIS PROCESS.

This vision could not have happened without these individuals.

Thank you to Marian Goodell, Harley K. Dubois, Charlie Dolman, and Heather White. From the very beginning, you saw the need and spearheaded the idea of change. You have contributed critical thoughts and ideas, expertly shepherded the process forward, stepped back and let others take charge and have given so much of yourselves to this project. You've been thoughtful, fearless, strategic thought partners, stakeholders, and have showed up in such incredible ways throughout this process. And it's not over yet! Thank you for enabling and supporting this journey we're on together on behalf of the Burning Man community. Thank you for setting an example as "direction setters."

Thank you to Larry Harvey, who was clearly keen on keeping the culture moving forward not backwards, and who participated in the first two meetings to get this project off the ground before his stroke. Thank you Larry for so much, particularly in this context for your support and the philosophical foundations you've contributed to Cultural Direction Setting. We hope you would be proud of this vision.

Thank you to the 2018 Placement Team for your deep thoughts and willingness to go here. This vision for the next five to 10 years is possible because of your individual and collective hard work getting us to where we are now. Facilitating, mapping, and placing residential Black Rock City is no small feat and we are so grateful for the work you do. Thank you Baulknaub, Beemah, Black Beauty, Bravo, Fibber, Happy, HepKitten, Hot Water, KGB,



CULTURAL DIRECTION SETTING

Kozmik Kat, Level, machine, Monday, Muppet, Papa Bear, Shadow, The Governess, and WhatsIt for your incredible input into this process and the vision itself.

Thank you to Burning Man Project's Communications Team, especially Megan Miller, Dominique Debucquoy-Dodley, Jon Mitchell, and Jane Lyons for your continuous support as we've communicated with our community. Your fantastic partnership on this project from the survey to the blog posts to the website we're reading this on now has been essential.

Thank you to Natasha McPharland, Kelly Anders, Shannon Kelley, Autumn Winston, Tevna Jones, Sarah Harpold, and Marin Franz for your administrative magical cat-herding to get people in the room together and ensure everyone could participate at our best. Thank you to Kye Horton, Tevna Jones, Leigh Ann Van Cleave a.k.a. Epiphany for taking awesome notes during our work weekends on this project so we could remember and build on all the things we talked about.

Thank you to Dana Devaul a.k.a. DV8, Cameron Mitchell, and Aaron Shev of the Census Team for ensuring the survey was well-worded and data-scientist approved. Thank you for your efforts to tabulate the survey's results against the 2018 Black Rock City Census so we could understand the level of accuracy of our survey (for those playing along — the Cultural Direction Setting survey was representative!).

Thank you to Tanner Boeger for the on-point graphics and to all the photographers of the Burning Man Gallery for your beautiful images to support this vision.

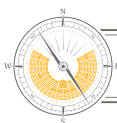
Thank you to Wally Bomgaars, Simone Torrey, Marian Goodell, Heather White, Jane Lyons, Megan Miller and especially Kari Gregg for finessing language, merging drafts upon drafts, questioning every sentence, finally finding the right words, and bringing your collective wordly crafts into this final form.

FINALLY, TO THE VISIONING GROUP WHO SHEPHERDED AND CO-AUTHORED THIS VISION.

Bravo, Jennifer Warburg, Jess Hobbs, Kari Gregg, Lauren Brand, Level, Marisa Lenhardt, Mercedes Martinez, Michael Mikel, Ray Russ, Scotto, Shadow, Skywalker, Terry Schoop, Wally Bomgaars, and Zang — you each put an unfathomable amount of heart, mind, and as Skywalker would say, soulfulness into this project. You had no idea exactly what you were signing up for and the number of unknowns was high. In meetings and work weekends alone you have volunteered over 100 hours each (let alone all the work you did independently) in reading thousands of surveys and comments and excavating the challenges facing our culture. Whilst listening to and holding so many voices in addition to your own, you articulated and envisioned a future.

Thank you to our partners, families, campmates, and friends who supported you in doing this work. A project like this takes more than the literal time it takes. It took bandwidth, headspace, and responsibility juggling to make it all work. Thank you for saying yes and making this vision happen.

Thank you to Kimba Standridge, who alongside her job of project managing The Man into reality, spent her time co-facilitating this project into reality. Your skill in leading groups, handling logistics like such a boss, and enabling people to do their best work is so deeply appreciated. Having you on board has been a dream.



CULTURAL DIRECTION SETTING

Thank you to Simone Torrey, who co-designed and leads the facilitation for this project. Your thoughtful presence, ability to create flow in moments of tension, and brilliant foresight have allowed for the birth of this vision. You built trust in such a deep way amongst everyone involved, you wove pieces of process that felt un-weavable, and you brought ideas to the table that were absolutely essential to the success of this project. Thank you for doing all this amidst such big life changes of getting married and having a baby; we appreciate Pat and Aiden for their support. Thank you for your perceptive brain, your grounded dedication, and your empathetic heart.

Thank you to all those who have and will participate in taking this Cultural Vision for Residential Black Rock City off the page and into your lives, and the life of our city and culture.

With deep appreciation,

Victoria Mitchell, a.k.a Trippi Longstocking
Associate Director, Burning Man Project
Cultural Direction Setting Creator & Visioning Group Co-Leader

EDITOR NOTE:

The organization wants to profusely thank Victoria Mitchell (a.k.a. Trippi Longstocking). We take great pride in the Project with prototyping new ways to do things to keep the public engaged. Victoria brought to the Cultural Direction Setting process a tone and intention that wasn't available anywhere in the organization. It was her vision and wisdom to take the approach we did to a problem that deserved a broad base of input with a broad representation in the narrowing of the language and the options as we reached the end of this first stage. Culture is important to Burning Man, and Victoria's experience and deft hand at leadership continues to teach us so much. Thank you Victoria Mitchell for making the Cultural Direction Setting idea come to life with such effective results.

D. The Process — How We Got to the Vision

The Cultural Direction Setting framework was created by Victoria Mitchell, a.k.a Trippi Longstocking, and co-designed and supported by facilitator Simone Torrey. The Visioning Group has published many Burning Man Journal blog posts along the way to this vision. If you're interested to understand the process, we recommend reading these posts.

October 19, 2018 — [Setting a Cultural Direction for Residential Black Rock City](#)

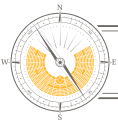
March 18, 2019 — [Cultural Direction Setting: What's Happened](#)

March 19, 2019 — [Cultural Direction Setting: What We Heard](#)

March 23, 2019 — [Cultural Direction Setting Update at Theme Camp Symposium](#)

April 17, 2019 — [Cultural Direction Setting: Where Do We Go From Here](#)

July 3, 2019 — [Help Bring the New Cultural Vision for Residential Black Rock City to Life!](#)



E. Quotes

For a summary and analysis of what we heard during the community engagement we did, we recommend reading our Burning Man Journal post titled [Cultural Direction Setting: What We Heard](#). We've compiled an interesting, fun to read, seemingly endless supply of quotes from: 4,804 survey respondents from 78 countries, the 67 in-depth interviews with camp leaders, artists, organization leaders, and staff, the 19 community conversations hosted in local communities, and the thousands of online comments from the Burning Man Journal posts, online groups, and more.

These were the voices and comments that led to the vision. There were many opinions, many possible directions, and we hope you appreciate reading them as much as we did.

To read the quotes, visit the online version of the Cultural Vision for Residential Black Rock City at: <https://journal.burningman.org/culturalvision/>

