



creativegreensboro



# Greensboro's Cultural Arts Master Plan

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# Acknowledgements

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# The Creative Greensboro Vision

**Greensboro is a vibrant hub for arts, culture, heritage and creativity.** All corners of Greensboro are reinvigorated and activated with nationally recognized arts and cultural events. Greensboro nurtures locally grown creativity, which sparks the hearts and minds of the artists as well as participants and patrons.

**Blending the past with present, one finds treasures throughout the city and its neighborhoods** – spaces transformed into intimate performance venues; artists breathing creative life into former mills and factories; open spaces showcasing festivals uniting numerous cultures and art genres; museums sharing our history, encouraging children's imaginations to grow and engaging us in the wonders of natural science.

**Greensboro is enriched with a variety of visible art engaging residents** in their daily lives and enhancing the experience of visitors. Arts are infused in the work of the city government, a key element in solving community challenges. Arts give voice to its peoples' struggles and hopes and records the unique qualities of Greensboro while paying homage to the sacrifices made to mold it.

**Art is everywhere.** Artists invite participation in vibrant, neighborhood places throughout the city. A wide range of arts opportunities exist for all— as makers, as artist, as audience, as participant, as patron. Cultural organizations across the spectrum – grassroots, arts education, arts for social change, larger performing and visual arts institutions –thrive from an infusion of resources, broadening reach and deepening impact. Equitable opportunities exist for every resident and visitor, and the arts sector works in concert, positively impacting the community and raising awareness of Greensboro as an arts destination.

**Greensboro is in a new, bold realm of its creative life.**

# Creative Greensboro's Values

**We value the work of artists and arts organizations**, their importance to the health and vitality of Greensboro, their contributions to the vibrancy of the community, and their role in economic development. Artists are carriers of culture and tradition and integral to enhancing our quality of life.

**We value all cultural expressions**, the diversity of traditions in Greensboro, and the right of all individuals to express themselves through their own language, customs, art forms and cultural expressions.

**We value the universities and colleges** in Greensboro that contribute and enrich, enhance and deepen the cultural life for Greensboro residents, the region and visitors.

**We value complete access** to arts and culture for all Greensboro residents, without financial, social, geographic or other barriers to participation, learning and exposure. All residents should have pathways for expressing their own creativity.

**We value the importance of a healthy, vibrant arts, cultural and creative community** supported through public, private and individual sources, recognizing that the non-profit arts community provides the foundational support for artistic celebration, exploration, engagement and education.

**We value the strength that comes from partnerships and collaborations** between the public, private, non-profit, and educational sectors. Artists, arts organizations, and the community as a whole experience an enriched arts and cultural environment.

**We value creating policies and practices ensuring fair, equitable access** for all organizations and individuals to participate in the arts, culture, heritage and creative expression. We are committed to the elimination of barriers to full participation and access to resources and support for creative endeavors.

**We value showcasing Greensboro as an arts destination** and invite visitors to experience our history, our present, and our future with us.





# Executive Summary

## Context

Greensboro loves to tell a good story. Our stories are shared in all manners of art, culture and heritage. Memorable stories made to last and pass down for generations to come. True to its southern roots, Greensboro finds the creative inspiration for these stories on the front porches and backyards of its community. These homegrown stories form a unique foundation, a Community Voice, the basis of our creative spirit.

Greensboro's stories include rich and colorful chapters defining the city's cultures, arts, traditions and creativity. They are stories with roots in the textile industry, in the civil rights struggle made visible with the Woolworth Sit-Ins, and in academics with seven colleges and universities within city boundaries.

As a city of growth, Greensboro is moving toward new stories while paying homage to familiar ones that shaped our neighborhoods, christened our collective ideas for building community, and gave Greensboro a name in arts and culture that extends far beyond its borders.

Greensboro is moving toward opportunities to be the place where art and culture are respected embraced and showcased. Where creative expression does more than delight and entertain; it aids in the healing after conflict and communicates needs and desires when words are not enough. At the core of these efforts lie important qualities, commitments and ideas for our city to be that successful arts destination.

The Community Voice calls for inclusiveness and diversity – two important ingredients for the impact we desire – equitable arts exposure for our youth, a vibrant arts and cultural district downtown, relevant arts programs in our neighborhoods, ongoing collaboration among artists and the entities that support them, and arts organizations and institutions that are thriving.

We embrace innovative and cutting-edge arts and cultural programs. We continue to shape that story and appreciate its richness. We celebrate the varied cultural flavors of dance, food and song that mingle at our festivals like a homemade stew, and arts that brighten our galleries and common areas and herald our dreams on stages big and small.

We express our creative energy through more than 80 nonprofit arts organizations, arts-focused for-profit and non-profit organizations, innovative school programs, individual artists, musicians, and creative entrepreneurs. Collaboration has created some exciting groups in recent years like ArtsGreensboro, which

plays a significant role in supporting and nurturing the arts sector. For the past four years ArtsGreensboro has given leadership and vision to one of Greensboro's most successful festivals, The North Carolina Folk Festival, beloved by residents and visitors. Further creative enrichment emanates from the seven college and university campuses where arts and cultural exploration and participation are an integral part of life in Greensboro.

These people and their organizations provide opportunities for artists and cultural organizations to evolve and collaborate. They are leaders in challenging residents to live creatively and find new ways to say "welcome."

Greensboro is committed to economically support the arts for its continued success and greater recognition as a hub for creativity. Greensboro can build a creative economy rivaling other North Carolina and national cities. Our vast network of diverse artists, organizations and audiences are the significant assets to fulfill this promise of a vibrant economy.

At the helm of this movement is the City of Greensboro, which gives financial and leadership support to the arts and culture through such entities as the Greensboro Cultural Center (opened in 1970); City Arts, a division of Parks and Recreation; financial support through the Community Partners Program; and, most recently, investing in the public/private partnership to develop the Steven Tanger Center for the Performing Arts.

Greensboro is a generous community, investing their philanthropic resources through foundations, corporations, individuals. The City has a close partnership with the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro, a key catalyst for bringing to fruition many arts and culture projects as well as assuring ongoing support.

## Why This Plan, Why Now?

The generosity and belief in the cultural life of Greensboro is evident with the richness of cultural resources. There is excitement in Greensboro with the imminent opening of the Steven Tanger Center for the Performing Arts; the growth and impact of the North Carolina Folk Festival; the centrality of public art in LeBauer Park and other initiatives on the horizon. Yet, Greensboro recognizes that it is in the midst of a shift with changes in the traditional funding environment that supported the arts.

Professional and volunteer leaders in the arts unanimously expressed their concerns about the strain of striving for greater artistic exploration while aiming to maintain finances in support of core operations and





facilities and changing patterns in participation. The planning process began with the question, “How do we generate more resources for the arts?”

Creative Greensboro addresses the changing realities in philanthropy and support by outlining new pathways for expanding support for arts and culture. Creative Greensboro reveals a comprehensive approach to expanding, nurturing and building the arts, culture and creative communities in Greensboro. While it reaches beyond the need for money, and encompasses all arts, culture, heritage and creativity across the city, this is anchored by considering sustainability. Creative Greensboro recognizes the top priority of addressing sustainability of the arts and cultural sector and addresses the vision for a broader, deeper cultural and creative life for the residents of Greensboro. As the residents of Greensboro communicated their vision for arts and culture, the plan expanded to encompass the desire for greater equity and access; new pathways for participation; and a more defined role for the City.

## Artists. Arts. Culture.

Creative Greensboro offers an inclusive view of artists, the arts, and the culture of the City. It draws an indistinct circle around the central domain of the arts sector, expands to encompass the unique culture of the City, and focuses on how public and private sector investments and policies can create the optimal conditions for artists to thrive and for residents to lead richly creative lives.

The title of Artist is traditionally applied to persons who engage in an activity deemed to be an art – creating, practicing, and/or demonstrating an artistic practice, typically within a discipline such as visual, performing, literary, music, or dance. Today, the definition of an artist is broader. Many artists are not limiting their work to one discipline – they are multi-disciplinary or may even define their work as post disciplinary. Artists are now moving across business, industrial, and creative sectors working in collaboration with the commercial world and are significant drivers of economic growth and innovation. In *Living with Art*, Mark Getlein proposes five activities, services or functions of today's artists. They create places for human purpose; they create extraordinary versions of ordinary objects; they record and commemorate; they give tangible form to the unknown and to emotion; and they refresh our vision and help us to see the world in new ways.

The term Arts traditionally meant the fine arts: visual arts, music, theater, dance and literature. Choreographer Liz Lerman, winner of a 2002 MacArthur “Genius” Award, describes the shift to a modern definition as a vertical hierarchy becoming a level playing field, with all art forms holding parallel value with a different focus. Culture is most often defined in anthropological terms: “An integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior. The outlook, attitudes, values, morals, goals, and customs shared by a society or group.” (Cultural Anthropology, McGraw Hill, 1990).

## The Plan

Creative Greensboro is built around four strategies to fulfill Greensboro's vision for its arts, cultural and creative future, reflecting the input from residents, community and arts leaders, artists and creative entrepreneurs. Each strategy is accompanied by a set of actions and implementation steps providing for more specific direction.

The four strategies derived from the engagement process are to:

- 1) Provide Sustained Support for Arts and Culture by Enhancing and Expanding Resources.
- 2) Foster Cultural Equity and Arts Participation for All.
- 3) Create a Prosperous Environment for Artists and Arts and Cultural Organizations.
- 4) Support Development of a Vibrant City by Raising Awareness and Enhancing Visibility of the Arts.

## What Is Required For Implementing This Plan?

Though Creative Greensboro is intended as a roadmap for City government, Greensboro is a community that is proud of the range, depth and success of public/private partnerships. The plan serves as the municipality's framework for cultural development, although success will require a collaborative effort and partnership of community leaders, arts organization leaders, philanthropy, education, corporate and business leadership and others.

The arts and culture community has the opportunity to play a significant role in the success of Creative Greensboro by examining new approaches to collaboration and cooperation with the ultimate goal of a strengthened environment for all disciplines and level of organization. This begins with exploring ways to strengthen fundraising through collaborative efforts and convene around coordinated campaigns; seek collective efforts to promote Greensboro as a destination; and consider mechanisms for fair and equitable distribution of resources across the community.

Private philanthropy is a key partner and by examining its traditions, practices and norms in funding and investing in arts and culture, they will consider new and/or revised approaches consistent with the community vision for an enhanced cultural life.

Colleges and universities are an important partner of this plan, seeking new ways to connect their individual missions, their students, and their cultural and creative resources to this roadmap for a vibrant arts and cultural life for Greensboro. Additionally, each year the graduates from these institutions choose where they seek to live and work. Connecting the students with the vibrancy and quality of life in Greensboro builds a





deeper relationship between the students and the city, reinforcing for the brightest talent that this their home.

Economic and community development can play a role in implementing this plan by incorporating arts, culture and creativity as an integral component of their efforts – inviting arts ‘to the table’ – and viewing creative workers and creative industries as instrumental in attracting a broad range of workers and industries to Greensboro.

As Creative Greensboro unfolds it is important that oversight of the plan be diligent, committed, clear and transparent. Accountability begins with establishing a Cultural Affairs Commission and extends to sharing with the community an annual summary of outcomes on implementing the strategies and impacts on the sustainability of the arts, enhancements to programs, policies and growth in resources for arts and culture.

The cost of implementing Creative Greensboro is based primarily on reallocating resources within the City already dedicated to arts and culture. Additional expenses that will be required primarily include administrative and payroll costs with establishing a new Office of Arts and Culture and allocating programming funds over time as priorities are set for implementing actions and initiatives.

Numerous steps for implementation are likely to be collaborative efforts between the new Office of Arts and Culture, ArtsGreensboro, private and corporate philanthropy and others.

## What Is The Role Of ArtsGreensboro?

In developing Creative Greensboro the question arose as to the role of ArtsGreensboro. What is their relationship with a new Office of Arts and Culture? Does this plan conflict with ArtsGreensboro’s grants program? Do the strategies and actions in Creative Greensboro duplicate existing efforts?

ArtsGreensboro is a vital partner and collaborator in the success of this plan. They have a long and extraordinary history serving as the leader in promoting and supporting arts in Greensboro and surrounding communities. Their knowledge, experience is essential in building, enhancing the arts, culture and creative communities.

Many of the actions and implementation steps build on the core competency of ArtsGreensboro and present opportunities for partnership and collaboration with the City in meeting the Creative Greensboro vision.

It is important to note that action by the City of Greensboro in establishing an Office of Arts and Culture and a Grants for the Arts fund is not intended to replace ArtsGreensboro and its existing fundraising and support programs through ArtsGreensboro. In fact, the new Grants for the Arts program is integral to Strategy 1 – Provide Sustained Support for Arts and Culture Through Enhancing and Expanding Resources – building on ArtsGreensboro’s existing support programs. It is an opportunity to work in tandem to expand resources for arts and culture across the community. Additionally, many elements of Creative Greensboro present other opportunities for partnership and collaboration.

# Overview Of Strategies And Actions

## Strategy 1: Provide Sustained Support for Arts and Culture by Enhancing and Expanding Resources

- 1.1 Establish a City of Greensboro Office of Arts and Culture dedicated to arts and cultural development, with a permanent, full-time management position reporting to the Office of the City Manager.
- 1.2 Establish a Cultural Affairs Commission as a policy-making and advisory Board to work with the Office of Arts and Culture in developing policies and serving as a liaison to City Council on community matters related to arts and culture.
- 1.3 Establish an annual Grants for the Arts program through the Office of Arts and Culture in partnership with ArtsGreensboro.
- 1.4 Establish a working group to explore viable mechanisms for a dedicated annual revenue source to support arts, culture and creativity.
- 1.5 Initiate comprehensive research on the breadth, depth and impact of the arts and cultural sector to establish a data-driven baseline to assess change in the sector.
- 1.6 Explore establishing a private trust for arts and culture.

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**Office of Arts and Culture** Cultural Affairs  
Commission Annual Grants Equity Policy  
**Expand Education** Culture Pass **Dedicated Funding**

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## Strategy 2: Foster Cultural Equity and Arts Participation for All Greensboro Residents.

- 2.1 Draft and adopt a Cultural Equity Policy in relation to arts and culture functions for the City of Greensboro.
- 2.2 Identify culturally specific and emerging arts and cultural organizations and develop an initiative supporting their organizational growth, resilience and programmatic reach.
- 2.3: Examine opportunities for supporting and expanding both in-school and out-of-school arts education through strengthening a community of practice.
- 2.4 Create a comprehensive leadership program for both professional and community leadership in the arts and culture community.
- 2.5 Examine existing policies and procedures for residency and usage of space in the Greensboro Cultural Center and refine to create opportunities for greater and more equitable access.
- 2.6 Launch a Citywide Culture Pass.
- 2.7 Support neighborhoods to broaden and diversify arts experiences.





### Strategy 3: Create a Prosperous Environment for Artists and Arts and Cultural Organizations.

- 3.1 Provide individual artists and creative entrepreneurs with professional support systems and programs for networking, professional practices training and technical assistance.
  - 3.2 Create an artist-in-residence program to embed artists into departments across the functions of the municipality.
  - 3.3 Design and implement programs that build the capacities of the arts and cultural sector to be more resilient, agile and adaptive.
  - 3.4 Support greater access to facilities for artists, creative businesses and arts organizations for rehearsals, performances, exhibitions and work space (cross reference 2.5).
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## Professional Support Systems **Resilient** Agile Adaptive **Celebrate Greensboro** **Increase Diversity** Cultural Districts/Hubs

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### Strategy 4: Support Development of a Vibrant City Through the Arts.

- 4.1 Create a program to establish and develop cultural districts and cultural hubs as an approach for both promotion and economic development.
- 4.2 Expand the role of public art as a key element to enhance and celebrate Greensboro's built environment, identity and sense of place.
- 4.3 Explore options for creative placemaking throughout the city as an integrated element in economic and community development.
- 4.4 Initiate a coordinated audience development initiative to increase and diversify audiences and expand participation across all sectors of the community.
- 4.5 Coordinate a centralized effort to strengthen existing arts, culture and event promotion and communication tools serving Greensboro and the surrounding region for greater reach and impact.



# Strategy 1: Provide Sustained Support For Arts And Culture By Enhancing And Expanding Resources

Creative Greensboro emerged from discussions among leaders in the municipal, arts, philanthropic and community about the challenging financial environment and diminishing organizational health of many arts and cultural organizations in Greensboro. Originally, the cultural planning process was focused on long-term financial resources for Greensboro's arts and cultural organizations, although expanded to address the full ecosystem of arts and culture with the realization the Greensboro community has additional aspirations, needs, and resource gaps.

The highest priority for the arts and cultural sector is sustainability. The community-based Task Force charged with examining this important issue, defines sustainability success as:

- Arts organizations and artists having access to core operating revenues that are reliable and predictable over time, weathering economic downturns and governmental changes;
- Broad-based support built on public and private partnerships;
- Organizational operations are grounded in professional management and sound governance practices; and
- Resources encourage adaptability and a willingness for creative exploration while being responsive to and representative of the community.

Overall, Greensboro's arts and cultural sector seeks:

- Stronger support for the arts and culture sector through City government;
- Greater financial support of existing organizations, and
- Ways to foster collaborations and sharing of resources with other organizations.

The City of Greensboro is an important investment partner in building and sustaining the arts community, with a history of significant financial and programmatic contributions to the arts. The Greensboro Cultural Center represents an extraordinary long-term commitment and has been an important anchor for cultural organizations and activity. The public/private partnership for the Steven Tanger Center for the Performing Arts is a remarkable investment coming to fruition in 2020. Additionally, the City supports operating and capital funds through the Community Partners program.

Strategy 1 Actions aim to shift City support from incidental to intentional. There is both great pride in the depth and breadth of Greensboro's cultural resources, and significant frustration with constrained financial resources required to advance Greensboro as a vibrant, thriving destination for arts, culture and creativity. Elevating the municipal functions for arts and culture to a dedicated Office of Arts and Culture, consolidating programs, funding and functions is the first major step. Greensboro takes pride in the depth and breadth of its cultural resources, however, constrained financial resources block its path to becoming a vibrant, thriving arts and culture destination. Designating an Office of Arts and Culture, and consolidating programs, funds and functions is the major first step toward this exciting destination.

The planning process examined the City of Greensboro's current allocation of resources to arts and culture

and found the resources are embedded in several departments and areas, including Parks and Recreation, Facilities, the Coliseum, and the Community Partners Program. Many budget line-items are part of annual departmental expenditures while others are more episodic, responding to immediate needs in the city or requests from a range of cultural organizations, often for significant capital projects.

In several respects, the City is generous in its support of the arts. For more than 25 years, the City has provided \$1/year rent for 15 arts and cultural organizations at the Greensboro Cultural Center. The Parks and Recreation Department oversees the Cultural Center and all operating and facility costs are borne by the City.

Annually, the City provides on average \$500,000 in direct funding to various cultural organizations through the Community Partners grants program. Strategy 1 Actions outline a commitment that episodic funds allocated from the General Fund for the Community Partners program be converted to a line-item commitment and distributed through an annual grants program.

Many in the arts and cultural sector question whether the current methodology for funding and arts support is the most effective approach - such as equity in the distribution of City support and access to cultural services by the residents. At present, certain institutions receive operating support while additional funding is provided for various festivals and special events.

While Strategy 1 includes actions for re-purposing and expanding existing resources through the City of Greensboro, it is not a mechanism for a significant expansion of resources. Strategy 1 also aims to expand resources for arts and culture through the pursuit of new funding mechanisms, both public and private.

## Pursuing Public And Private Financing Options

Communities throughout the U.S. share the goal of creating a renewable, sustainable funding source dedicated to arts and culture. Cities, counties, regions and states have adopted a range of approaches to fulfilling this purpose, with successful outcomes for their arts communities and the communities they serve.

Members of the Task Force examined several models for public, community-wide arts funding across the country, most adopted based on locally-available mechanisms. A summary of these models is provided in The Community Wide Arts Funding Brief included in this plan's Appendix, outlines models studied. The key is undertaking a coordinated, focused, sustained and well-researched community advocacy effort to build awareness and communicate the benefits for residents. The lesson learned a focus on "more money for the arts" "is not a key driver of success. Building a case for a more robust cultural life, as it relates to economic and community development and quality of life is far more successful.

The models included in the Funding Brief are just a few examples of myriad approaches nationally. As Greensboro leaders consider a dedicated revenue source, they must first examine and understand available mechanisms that correspond to state and local laws. It is likely that many options will require voter approval. Two potential avenues for resources that emerged through the planning process included a county-wide



(Guildford County) food and beverage tax similar to those utilized in Raleigh and Charlotte, or a modest sales tax augmentation. It is an appropriate role for an Arts Commission, should one be established per recommendations below, to explore these and other viable options for expanded arts support. There are several action and implementation steps included below in pursuing any options for long-term, sustained and dedicated resources for arts, culture and creativity.

## ACTIONS AND STEPS TO IMPLEMENTATION

1.1: Establish a City of Greensboro Office of Arts and Culture dedicated to arts and cultural development, with a permanent, full-time management position reporting to the Office of the City Manager.

1.1.1. Create a full-time position reporting to the Office of the City Manager who is an experienced municipal arts leader, program manager and administrator, with the capacity and credentials to address the issues related to a newly established position and development of a dedicated function of cultural affairs.

1.1.2. Provide resources for professional development to connect the position and the City of Greensboro with a professional national network through Americans for the Arts<sup>1</sup>.

1.1.3. Consolidate existing City expenditures on arts and culture to establish a base of resources and a portfolio of operations for arts and cultural function within the Office of Arts and Culture.

1.2: Establish a Cultural Affairs Commission as a policy-making and advisory Board to work with the Office of Arts and Culture in developing policies and serving as a liaison to City Council on community matters related to arts and culture.

1.2.1 Appointments to the Commission, selected through an open invitation to residents of Greensboro, should reflect broad and diverse community representation and professional expertise and/or background in the arts and utilize best practices for municipal arts commissions and boards in determining charge of the commission and composition of commission members. The Commission should have a minimum of nine members.

1.3: Establish an annual Grants for the Arts program through the Office of Arts and Culture in partnership with ArtsGreensboro.

1.3.1 Consolidate average total funding to arts and culture over the past three years through the Community Partners Funding program into a unified, dedicated Grants for the Arts program with an initial budget of at least \$500,000 upon launch.

1.3.2 Design a Grants for the Arts program<sup>2</sup> focused on strengthening the broad range of arts and cultural organizations across the City of Greensboro. The goal is to support sustainability while encouraging artistic exploration and curatorial risks. Structure the grant-making strategy to specifically recognize the unique characteristics and needs of large Institutions distinct from mid and smaller organizations, and recognizing the various stages of life cycle, including new, emerging, culturally-specific and community-based organizations (cross-reference 2.2.3, 2.3.2, 2.7.1, 3.3.1 and 4.3.2).

1.3.3 Engage ArtsGreensboro as the external grants process manager. Guidelines for the specific use of City resources should be developed and directed by the Office of Arts and Culture and overall

<sup>1</sup> [Membership](#) for a department with one position is \$75 per year.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix section for an example of a grant program framework. A primary responsibility of a newly-appointed Director of Arts and Culture would be design of an arts grants program, including drafting of guidelines, application and adjudication process and program administration

direction for the program established by the Cultural Affairs Commission.

1.3.4 Utilize the Grants for the Arts program as a catalyst to expand funding through ArtsGreensboro by requiring a 2:1 match, enhancing the existing cooperative funding mechanisms through ArtsGreensboro.

1.3.5 Extend the Grants for the Arts program through initiating an annual innovation/risk prize on a significant scale to incentivize entrepreneurial activity based on creative and cultural exploration. This fund or prize would consist of a single large-scale project annually with the aim of incentivizing increased creative activity.

1.4: Establish a working group to explore viable mechanisms for a dedicated annual revenue source to support arts, culture and creativity.

1.4.1 Gather research on existing arts funding mechanisms in place throughout communities in North Carolina. Examine the process by which each was established and explore the successes and barriers encountered by each mechanism.

1.4.2 Explore the legal and regulatory requirements to consider the potential options for a mechanism in the City of Greensboro and/or Guilford County. The two suggested approaches identified in the development of this plan are a sales tax augmentation and a food and beverage tax.

1.5: Initiate comprehensive research on the breadth, depth and impact of the cultural sector to establish a data-driven baseline on the arts and culture sector.

1.5.1 Collect baseline financial and operating data on the arts by adopting a common, reliable, consistent data-gathering platform, such as DataArts<sup>3</sup> for fiscal and programmatic activity on the 80-plus non-profit arts and culture organizations in Greensboro. Explore a formal collaboration DataArts and partner with ArtsGreensboro on use of the reporting mechanisms for the newly established grants program.

1.5.2 Commission a comprehensive study of private and public financial support for arts, culture and creativity in Greensboro through a partnership with private philanthropy, to gather, analyze and share reliable, longitudinal data on public and private support for arts organizations to fully understand trends, shifts, and changing priorities in that support.

1.5.3 Establish a benchmark system or create an on-line dashboard to monitor and track changes in audience, arts philanthropy, economic activity, program reach and effectiveness and sector impact. This dashboard should be developed with the intent of demonstrating the depth of cultural participation and breadth of the cultural sector as a community asset and as a means for tracking changes over time and providing data for an annual review of policy, program development and special initiatives.

1.5.4 Collaborate with the recently-launched Community Indicators Project coordinated by the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro in development of arts and culture indicators for inclusion in the project.

1.6: Explore establishing a private trust for arts and culture.

1.6.1 Research the range of options for establishing a cultural trust and determine appropriate, relevant and viable approaches for Greensboro. Cultural trusts range in structures from land and facilities trusts to public/state trusts, to private charitable funds that are essentially an endowment

<sup>3</sup> <https://culturaldata.org/>

<sup>4</sup> Examples of data that could be included is total philanthropic dollars raised across the arts non-profit sector; attendance at performing and visual arts events, including the Tanger Center once it is open.

<sup>5</sup> The [Pittsburgh Cultural Trust](#) was established as a community redevelopment effort and is focused on facilities and a cultural district. Public Cultural Trusts include examples such as the [Oregon Cultural Trust](#) and [Missouri Cultural Trust](#) that resulted from public resources dedicated to a permanent endowment that were matched or expanded by private contributions.

supporting arts and culture.<sup>5</sup>

## Strategy 2: Foster Cultural Equity And Arts Participation For All Greensboro Residents

Emerging themes from the engagement process include issues of equity, inclusion and access. Greensboro residents speak of geographic, physical, symbolic, and other barriers they face to greater arts participation. Arts professionals articulated concerns regarding equity in several areas - including affordability of spaces and access to City and other facilities; equitable funding; addressing perceptions of race, class, and income; cross-cultural audience development needs; and the need for greater collaboration and networking of artists.

These issues mirror the national cultural equity conversation, which is captured in the Statement on Cultural Equity, adopted in 2017 by Americans for the Arts. The Strategy 2 Actions provide avenues and opportunities to build trust, cross-cultural communication and cross-cultural participation in the arts, and addresses equity and access for new and emerging organizations. One primary recommendation is to develop and adopt a City of Greensboro cultural equity policy, an important first step to guide and inform efforts throughout the cultural plan.

There is a perception within the arts sector that funding, resources, and access to the Greensboro Cultural Center is focused on long-established organizations, and few resources are available for new and emerging ideas and organizations. Younger artists and organizational representatives spoke of Cultural Center as a “closed system” and where organizations are “granted space for life (at very low cost) – once you are in you are in and there is little room for others. There is no rotation or opportunity.” The recommendations address these access and inclusion issues and provide opportunities for broadening community arts participation.

Access and inclusion to the arts are improved by broadening the definition of the arts and providing more arts exposure activities in more places. In discussion groups and community forums, participants expressed the desire for more arts opportunities, with over 50% of survey participants prioritizing arts, cultural and creative events/activities available in more places throughout Greensboro. Residents want an opportunity to participate in arts, cultural, and creative activities on their own terms, and want arts and cultural programming available to them to be more collaborative, diverse, multicultural and multigenerational.

Emerging or small organizations in Greensboro neighborhoods or culturally specific communities, major cultural institutions, the for-profit creative sector, and the higher education sector have the opportunity to play a part in providing access for all. The Strategy 2 Actions offer creative options for expanding arts participation in Greensboro.

### Actions And Steps To Implementation

- 2.1: Draft and adopt a Cultural Equity Policy in relation to arts and culture functions for the City of Greensboro.
  - 2.1.1 Establish a shared local definition of cultural equity and access that addresses issues of

racial and ethnic diversity, age, and inclusion and considerations for physical and neuro diversity. Recommend the draft Cultural Equity and Access Policy to City Council for adoption.

2.1.2. Upon establishing a Cultural Affairs Commission and an Office of Arts and Culture, develop a Cultural Equity<sup>1</sup> and Access Policy guiding all programs of the Commission and Office. (cross-reference 1.1).

2.2: Identify culturally specific, and emerging arts and cultural organizations and develop an initiative supporting their organizational growth, resilience and programmatic reach.

2.2.1. Conduct a comprehensive analysis of these organizations to understand their specific operating and financial profile (cross-reference 1.5)

2.2.2. Convene professional and volunteer leadership of identified organizations to explore organizational needs and operating issues.

2.2.3. Design and launch a targeted equity initiative to address the specific resource needs and issues of organizations identified as organizations of color and/or culturally-specific by designating a portion of the newly established Grants for the Arts program (cross reference 1.3).

2.3: Examine opportunities for supporting and expanding both in-school and out-of-school arts education through strengthening a community of practice.

2.3.1 Work with ArtsGreensboro to establish and convene an arts education cohort consisting of teaching artists, professional arts education staff within arts organizations, administrators, academics in area colleges and universities, and arts educators from Guilford County schools. Review existing data on local arts education, impact and challenges, and identify priorities to strengthen arts education, both in-school and out-of-school.

2.3.2. Designate a portion of the newly established Grants for the Arts program to support and enhance the work of teaching artists and arts educators in Greensboro (cross-reference 1.3).

2.4: Create a comprehensive leadership program for both professional and lay leadership in the arts and culture community.

2.4.1 Partner with existing local leadership development and training programs to create targeted professional and civic leadership initiatives for emerging and executive leaders in arts and culture organizations.

2.4.2. Develop a training program aimed at recruiting and training from all sectors of the community for participation on boards and in lay leadership positions for arts and cultural organizations.

2.5: Examine existing policies and procedures for residency and usage of space in the Greensboro Cultural Center and refine to create opportunities for more equitable access.

2.5.1. Set aside a percentage of square footage in the Greensboro Cultural Center for a designated residency program with a defined period of use and that includes access to co-working facilities and the arts incubator (cross-reference 2.4).

2.5.2. Dedicate, design and build a co-working space providing a working environment, technology

<sup>6</sup> In addition to the Americans for the Arts statement cited in the introduction, numerous cities and organizations across the country are developing and adopting policies, statements and initiatives on equity. Additionally, there is a growing body of literature and research to inform developing equity policies and statements. Key resources include the Cultural Equity Initiative of [Los Angeles County](#) and their [literature review](#) that informed initiative development; and the seminal research by [Helicon Collaborative](#).

<sup>7</sup> Potential collaborators include the seven colleges and universities in Greensboro, The Center for Creative Leadership, Leadership Greensboro and other initiatives that may be identified.

<sup>8</sup> There are numerous arts center residency programs across the country that can provide models and criteria on attracting and supporting a variety of artists and increasing access. These range from short-term, local through international programs, to extended programs supporting local and regional artists. [Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts](#); [Baryshnikov Arts Center](#); [The Foundry Arts Center](#)

and support systems for small and emerging arts organizations and individual artists.

2.5.3. Establish an arts incubator to provide technical assistance and professional expertise in support of new, emerging, alternative and growing arts organizations. The incubator would provide access to tools, knowledge and expertise in creating and improving accounting, legal, financial, development, governance and general management functions.

## 2.6: Launch a Citywide Culture Pass

2.6.1. Develop a low-cost or free, low-entry/low barrier cultural pass collaborating and/or expanding upon existing programs to encourage participation and attendance at arts events and venues across the city and throughout neighborhoods. The Culture Pass would emphasize available programs, events and venues, encouraging pass-holders to explore a broader range of cultural experiences in Greensboro.<sup>9</sup>

2.6.2. Develop a low-cost or free youth culture pass to provide access and encourage participation by middle and secondary age youth in the city.

2.6.3 Collaborate with Action Greensboro's Campus Greensboro program to develop a culture pass and related access program for students at colleges and universities.<sup>10</sup>

2.6.4. Launch an Access (EBT) Admission program built on the Museums for All model emerging across the country to provide low-cost admissions to cultural venues, performing arts, museums, and more for individuals that are served by EBT/Food Stamp programs.<sup>11</sup>

2.6.5 Research approaches for a culture pass that considers physically and neuro diverse populations and develop a program for lessening barriers to participation.

## 2.7: Support neighborhoods to broaden and diversify arts experiences.

2.7.1. Develop and launch a community-initiated small grant program (\$500 to \$1,000 range) for neighborhoods as an element of the newly established Grants for the Arts program (cross-reference 1.3) to invite artists to develop participatory programming for neighborhoods and public places.<sup>12</sup>

2.7.2. Sponsor or facilitate artist-conceived projects in the community to encourage broad participation, civic dialogue, and cross-pollination of audiences for organizations involved. These may be conceived as modest, small-scale neighborhood projects to larger community-wide efforts or explorations.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> A recent version of a Culture Pass was launched in New York, providing access to numerous organizations, museums and events for free with a library card. Demand has been high and in some cases exceed capacity.

<sup>10</sup> A model program for reference is the Open Arts program of Campus Philly.

<sup>11</sup> [Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh](#) (see Discounts and Offers for each museum); [Access Philly](#); [Museums for All Initiative](#)

<sup>12</sup> [The Neighborhood Public Art initiative](#) in Tempe, AZ is an example of robust community-based, neighborhood initiated program to engage artists in addressing specific neighborhood issues.

<sup>13</sup> [Community Arts Engagement \(NEA\)](#) provides examples and a toolkit for communities.

# Strategy 3: Create A Prosperous Environment For Artists And Arts And Cultural Organizations

At the core of a community's vibrancy is a robust group of artists, cultural organizations, and creative workers. All play a significant role in the creative life of residents, provide important services and programs for youth and community groups, work with the community on other important issues, and contribute to the local economy. The Creative Vitality Index (CVI), a tool for measuring creative economy, indicates there are over 8,000 creative workers in Greensboro, with approximately 31% of these workers identifying as individual artists - illustrating the strong presence of individual artists in the community. Although, only 10% of total creative industry sales in the city are attributed to independent artists<sup>14</sup>. Overall, strengthening the market for artistic and creative work will provide a pathway for success so artists stay in Greensboro.

Artists articulate the need for affordable and accessible spaces for performing, exhibiting, participating, and rehearsing. They want to see professional development opportunities, collaborative marketing opportunities, and more artist studios. Networking and connections with other local artists would help facilitate collaborations – not only with fellow artists, but higher education institutions, the City government, and local businesses and corporations. Strategy 3 Actions present substantive support mechanisms for artists, creating opportunity for growth, development and market success as well as approaches to integrating artists into the work of Greensboro.

More than 80 nonprofit arts and cultural organizations offer a broad range of experiences for professionals and volunteers, in visual and performing arts, in community-based and culturally-specific, and in arts education and social action. The 2017 study Arts and Economic Prosperity V<sup>15</sup> indicates that Guilford County's arts and culture sector generates \$162.2 in economic activity annually. The cumulative expenditures for the 80 nonprofit organizations is approximately \$30 million.<sup>16</sup>

Strategy 3 Actions focus on expanding access for new, emerging organizations; and support systems for strengthening leadership with the goal of building stronger, more agile and adaptive organizations to serve the residents of Greensboro and visitors from the region and beyond.

Convening is a function included in several of the steps to implementation. Each instance is focused on a particular constituency relevant to the specific action. However, there are numerous opportunities for collaboration and partnership between a newly-established Office of Arts and Culture within the City and ArtsGreensboro in convening artists, creative workers and businesses and arts leaders.

## Actions And Steps To Implementation

3.1: Provide individual artists and creative entrepreneurs with professional support systems and programs for networking, professional practices training and technical assistance.

3.1.1. Regularly convene artists and creative entrepreneurs to facilitate networking within and

<sup>14</sup> Definition of independent artists: Photographers; Musicians and singers; Writers and authors; Fine artists, including painters, sculptors, and illustrators; Music directors and composers; Craft artists; Multimedia artists and animators; Actors; Artists and related workers, all other; Choreographers

<sup>15</sup> [AEPV](#)

<sup>16</sup> Based on a review of the most recently available IRS 990 data (2016).

among disciplines and to foster a stronger sense of community and to build a cohesive professional environment.

3.1.2. Establish an ongoing series for professional practices training for artists and creative entrepreneurs and improve access to high quality and affordable business and career training.

3.1.3. Augment the ongoing series through coordination and sponsorship of an annual artists and creative economy workshop that builds a sense of community and focuses on professional practices, trends in creative economy and creative placemaking, and the role of artists in community.

3.2: Create an artist-in-residence program to embed artists into departments across the functions of the municipality.

3.2.1 Design an artist-in-residence program to integrate Greensboro artists into municipal functions, addressing a broad range of community issues<sup>17</sup>.

3.2.2. Design a review system that ensures a rotation of artists from different disciplines and awards a professional-level residency stipend.

3.3: Design and implement programs that build the capacities of the arts and cultural sector to be more resilient, agile and adaptive.

3.3.1. Develop a technical assistance and professional development program through dedicating a portion of the Grants for the Arts program (cross-reference 1.3) in collaboration with ArtsGreensboro to strengthen a culture of capacity building for arts and culture organizations in Greensboro with a focus on Elements leadership development (for board members, staff and artists).

3.3.2. Collaborate on establishing a platform for shared organizational services. Services may include centralized accounting and management services, shared technology platforms, cooperative purchasing of advertising in print, broadcast and social media, box office services, coordinated and/or cooperative fundraising services, and more.<sup>18</sup>

3.3.3. Regularly convene the Greensboro arts and cultural sector to facilitate learning about trends in the professional arts field and current professional practices, addressing topics that connect art and culture to other sectors such as technology, innovation, economic and workforce development.

3.3.4 Support development of partnerships of artists working with non-arts organizations for community events, arts learning, and to expand opportunities for artists' market.

3.4: Support greater access to facilities for artists, creative businesses and arts organizations for rehearsals, performances, exhibitions and work space (cross reference 2.5)<sup>19</sup>.

3.4.1. Convene artists, creative businesses and creative entrepreneurs to understand and document the barriers of establishing and/or operating an artistic practice or business in Greensboro.

3.4.2. Examine policies and ordinances governing creative businesses and spaces utilized for artistic practices to lower barriers and ease navigation of the regulatory environment in Greensboro.

3.4.3. Develop incentives to encourage local developers to include artist live/work space as an essential component in the mix of multi-unit commercial and residential development. Include artist live/work space as an element in any public and affordable housing projects or requirements.

3.4.4. Seek to become the first North Carolina city to utilize SpaceFinder, a robust platform through Fractured Atlas that currently serves cities, counties and states across the country.

<sup>17</sup>. See the section in the Appendix on Artists in Municipalities

<sup>18</sup>. Collaborative services for arts and culture are emerging in many different iterations nationally. Conceptually the idea is to aggregate services and support for efficiency, effectiveness and in supporting artists and arts organizations in their work. Examples and models include: [CultureWorks Philadelphia](#), [Fractured Atlas](#);

<sup>19</sup>. There are several existing facilities in Greensboro where artists can create work, sell their work or apply for residencies. Existing facilities and programs are operated both commercially and through non-profit organizations. A list of these spaces, facilities and programs is included in the Appendix.

# Strategy 4: Support Development Of A Vibrant City Through The Arts

Elevating Greensboro as a place recognized for arts, culture and creativity emerged as a priority. Strategy 4 Actions focus on building greater awareness through more effective communication; strengthening the ability of arts producers to expand their audiences and increase participation through the use of knowledge and data; and enhancing the built environment through public art and creative placemaking.

Although Greensboro has an abundance of arts and cultural offerings, participants in the planning process and respondents to the survey expressed difficulty in learning about opportunities. People want better communication channels about arts events, performances, places, arts learning opportunities (workshops, classes), and offerings from community arts groups. Forty-eight percent (48%) of survey respondents do not hear about happenings, and only 32% of respondents find it easy to access information about happenings in Greensboro.

Additionally, participants want to see cultural competency in marketing communications and to reflect the channels and ways different groups (based on age, background, and other characteristics) access information. Programs promoting different cultures of Greensboro, encouraging people to experience arts and cultural events and activities they may not be familiar with, and to discover different parts of Greensboro reflect participants' aspirations for the plan and their true belief that cross-cultural experiences provide a platform to audience diversity and development. While there are current arts marketing channels in Greensboro, they are not considered comprehensive, well-advertised, nor effective in reaching diverse audiences. Artists and organizations welcome collaborative opportunities for more effective marketing, advertising, and building community awareness of the arts.

Public art serves many roles. Beyond beautifying the urban landscape, public art enhances the experience of the city for residents and visitors and projects a positive image of the city to the world. It commemorates history and traditions and showcases outstanding artists in a community. Currently, public art in Greensboro is limited to the efforts of a few generous donors who select art for public spaces. A City public art program will ensure art is incorporated into City facilities. More than 728 American cities and counties have passed percent for art requirements that place public art in municipal projects. Public art is the most visible manifestation of a city's commitment to the arts and quality design. Around the country, percent for art programs allocate between one and two percent of capital budgets for the purchase or commissioning of public art. Most recently enacted programs have allocated two percent for art, allowing the commissioning of art on a scale that is commensurate with the capital projects with which it is associated.

Strategy 4 Actions provide an approach for residents, artists, and City government to work together to raise awareness of the significant resources Greensboro offers, while building new programs and opportunities.

<sup>20</sup> Examples include a small performance venue, artist live/work and/or studio space, an exhibition space, or a rehearsal space. An existing development in Greensboro that has successfully integrated arts use and space is [Revolution Mill](#) with artist studios, exhibition and multi-use arts space.

<sup>21</sup> Similar initiatives have been undertaken [Syracuse, NY](#), [St. Louis, MO](#), [Raleigh, NC](#), [Memphis, TN](#), and [Kansas City, MO](#) and other communities.

# Actions And Steps To Implementation

4.1 Create a program to establish and develop cultural districts and cultural hubs as both an approach for promotion and economic development.

4.1.1. Create a formal designation for cultural districts. Begin with establishing a designated downtown cultural district that encompasses the Greensboro Cultural Center, LeBauer Park, the Greensboro History Museum, the Tanger Performing Arts Center, the Central Library and the Children's Museum.

4.1.2 Review the Smart Initiative program through the North Carolina Arts Council and explore neighborhoods, commercial corridors and other areas that would benefit from an arts and creative community-based approach to economic development and promotion.

4.1.3 Explore possible collaborative efforts with Neighborhood Development and the Planning Department in identifying and investing in establishing, promoting and investing in neighborhood-based cultural and creative hubs.

4.2: Expand the role of public art as a key element to enhance and celebrate Greensboro's built environment, identity and sense of place.

4.2.1. Enact a percent-for-art ordinance mandating funding for City capital improvement projects.

4.2.2. Extend the percent-for-art requirement to new private commercial, industrial and multi-family residential development to encourage art in public places in locations throughout the City. The requirement should allow for options ranging from installation of public art in and around their projects; inclusion of an arts-related venue within their development and the option of giving the City a public art in-lieu fee.

4.2.3. Invest in a public art master plan that examines existing policies, procedures and ordinances for revision and restructuring as appropriate; identifies and recommends curatorial approaches for both temporary and permanent public art programs in both public works and private development; examines existing maintenance protocols and programs and updates as appropriate for both future acquisition and the current collection; reviews and articulates updated guidelines for offers of donations from private collectors; catalogues best practices across the region and relevant national best practices; and results in a framework to expand public art in Greensboro.

4.3: Explore options for creative placemaking throughout the city as an integrated element in economic and community development.

4.3.1. Work with the City planning and zoning office to identify areas of the city suitable for creative placemaking projects and programs.

4.3.2. Augment the emerging grants program of the Office of Cultural Affairs to include a dedicated creative placemaking initiative that seeks to activate areas across the city through arts, culture and creativity (cross-reference 1.2).

4.4: Initiate a coordinated audience development initiative to increase and diversify audiences and expand participation across all sectors of the community.

4.4.1. Sponsor/facilitate a collaborative audience development initiative that encourages participation from a broad range of local arts and cultural organizations and includes an analysis of known arts audiences (household characteristics, organizational affiliation and overlaps, data useful for marketing and outreach); an analysis of market area potential for broadening and diversifying arts and cultural audiences; an estimate of market penetration and identification of market saturation and gap; and training and workshops for participating organizations to utilize the results of the analysis.

4.4.2. As part of the audience development initiative, conduct a comprehensive review or audit of communications methods and channels to strengthen communications and marketing for a broader, deeper reach across the community.

4.4.3. Develop approaches to building broader community awareness of arts, culture and creativity in Greensboro with distinct efforts focused on the residents of Greensboro and complementary efforts focused on visitors to Greensboro.

4.5: Coordinate a centralized effort to strengthen existing arts, culture and event promotion and communication tools serving Greensboro and the surrounding region for greater reach and impact.

4.5.1. Establish a calendar and promotions task force to explore overlaps in existing promotional outlets<sup>22</sup> for events, arts programming and related activity both in Greensboro and surrounding communities.

4.5.2. Examine and implement options and methods for enhancing and expanding calendar and promotional websites to reflect emerging national trends for date, type of event, and areas of special interest and artistic discipline (e.g., music, dance, theater, spoken word, family, free, discount, LGBTQ, etc.).<sup>23</sup>

4.5.3. Seek to establish a single on-line portal that feeds all event calendars, eliminating inconsistencies in listings, reducing the burden on producers of entering numerous listings, and increasing access.

4.5.4. Create a mechanism for a weekly summary of programs and events subscription email delivery to residents in Greensboro and the region. Explore weekly or monthly promotional mechanisms, such as last-minute ½ price opportunities in collaboration with surrounding communities.

<sup>22</sup> Existing arts calendars include [ArtsGreensboro](#), [The News & Record \(Greensboro.com\)](#), [Downtown Greensboro](#), [Explore Greensboro](#), [Greensboro Convention and Visitors Bureau](#).

<sup>23</sup> [South Florida's Culture Guide](#) acts as a calendar of events and storyteller of the culture of place.



# Additional Considerations

## Greensboro Cultural Center

The planning process included an examination of the City of Greensboro's current allocation of resources to arts and culture. This examination indicated the resources are embedded in several departments and areas of the City, including Parks and Recreation, Facilities, the Coliseum, the Community Partners Program, and others. Many budget line-items are part of ongoing, annual departmental expenditures while others are more episodic, responding to immediate needs in the city or requests from a range of cultural organizations, often for significant capital projects.

In several respects, the City is generous in its support of the arts. The actions in Strategy 1 reflect on this generosity and build from the current means of support. For more than 25 years, the City has provided \$1/year rent for 15 arts and cultural organizations at the Greensboro Cultural Center. The Cultural Center is under Parks and Recreation and all operating and facility costs are borne by the City. Throughout the planning process artists, arts organizations, civic and community leaders expressed concerns about the current use and configuration of the Cultural Center. At the core of the issue with the Center are a series of questions to consider within the context of this plan:

- After twenty-five years, is the current operating model the most relevant, appropriate and sustainable? What is the highest and best use of the Greensboro Cultural Center in relation to this cultural plan?
- Are there opportunities to increase usage of the facility through an examination of the current tenant mix while addressing issues of access and equity?
- Are there opportunities to increase usage of the facility through an examination of the current tenant mix while addressing issues of access and equity?
- The facility is likely to require an investment of capital into the physical plan to update systems at the least and possibly to reconfigure and expand space. What is the best method to determine priorities for investment and what are the alternatives to be considered?
- Are there opportunities to reconfigure the facility to achieve broader access, increase usage, and expand the mix of tenants while generating operating revenue to support cultural arts programming and updates to the facility? Are there opportunities to partner with commercial developers to expand the facility for cultural uses while creating a broader mix of commercial and/or residential spaces?

## Alternative Approaches To Revenue

The exploration on identifying sources of revenue to support sustainability of the arts and culture sector included several alternatives worth noting and considering for further research. Strategy 1 outlines several approaches that were consistently identified through the engagement process. Other ideas that emerged later in the process included:

- Establish an incentive program for private developers to support arts and culture through an opt-in 1% fee on projects. Alternatives include developing a streamlined process for regulatory filings and permit reviews for those developers that opt-in.
- Explore other in-lieu of fees, incremental fees or assessments across City services (e.g., special events permitting) that would contribute to a permanent fund for arts and culture, perhaps as part of establishing a Cultural Trust.
- Arts and culture organizations consider pooling resources through an opt-in program that may include \$1 per ticket/admission or similar mechanisms that contribute to a permanent Cultural Trust or other community-wide fund.

## Partnerships

Greensboro is a community that prides itself on the depth and breadth of partnerships in addressing a range of social and community issues. Opportunities for private/public partnerships, networks and coalitions are essential to the success of achieving the vision for Creative Greensboro.

## Planning Methodology

In recognition of the important role the arts play in the local economy and culture, the Greensboro City Council created a task force to lead the effort to create a Greensboro Cultural Arts Master Plan (GCAMP). The GCAMP task force is a 21-member group consisting of local artists, art educators, and business and nonprofit community leaders co-chaired by Councilwoman Nancy Hoffmann and Jacquie Gilliam, a community volunteer.

The mission of the task force is to work with the consulting firm, The Cultural Planning Group (CPG), to create an inclusive, sustainable and comprehensive road map that capitalizes, enhances and supports the arts in Greensboro. The City hired CPG to help create this plan called Creative Greensboro.

The central questions framing the planning process are: What is the current state of arts and culture in Greensboro? What do residents want the future to be? How do we get there?

The Creative Greensboro process began in January 2018 with a task force meeting led by the Cultural Planning Group. In the last ten months, the team conducted over 45 stakeholder interviews, 10 arts and cultural discussion groups, 12 community events, and an online survey.





The planning methodology, designed to answer these questions and many others, is based on a triangulation approach, using qualitative and quantitative methodologies, subject matter experts, and secondary data sources. This method provides a holistic view of the issues, providing a higher credibility of the research by drawing on multiple viewpoints. The results, as presented in this document, are an integrated summary of all research, highlighting common themes, issues, opportunities, and solutions.



The community engagement process sought to ensure broad-based input from a cross section of community members and stakeholders in Greensboro to bring together multiple points of view to inform the planning process; create legitimacy and a sense of shared responsibility for the cultural arts master plan; identify priorities of Greensboro residents; cultivate new partners/allies and collaborations and identify funding alternatives; and stimulate broad awareness and momentum for the planning process and cultural arts master plan.

## Summary Of Key Findings

### The Creative Cultural Life Of Greensboro

Green spaces, public parks, the ever-improving downtown, the developing Downtown Greenway, and Greensboro's neighborhoods are shared residential and visitor assets. Greensboro is sometimes described as a college city, with seven universities and colleges playing a big part in the cultural life of the area. Places and spaces around the City provide a glimpse of the creative life of its residents and its artists—The Greensboro Cultural Center and all its diverse tenants, Triad Stage, Elsewhere, The International Civil Rights Center and Museum, Casa Azul, The Weatherspoon Art Museum, The Greensboro Science Center, Revolution Mill, LeBauer Park, Union Square Campus, Hamburger Square, HQ Greensboro, 205 Collaborative, and many more. Significant and popular events in Greensboro showcase the diverse creativity of the city including, although not limited, to the Folk Festival, Eastern Music Festival, Día de los Muertos, the National Championship of Body Painting Artists, Fun Fourth, and others. The depth and breadth of arts and

cultural organizations and the remarkable community of individual artists provide the foundation of creativity for Greensboro to build upon.

While many participants believe there are an abundance of arts and cultural offerings in the City, others want more. According to the survey results, slightly over 50% of all respondents think arts, cultural, and creative activities available in more places across Greensboro is a top priority. Younger residents, those under the age of 35 years, rank it significantly more important than other age groups. Fifty percent (50%) want to utilize the arts to attract more business, tourists, and residents to the area, while almost 40% want to see more diversity among people involved in the arts and cultural community.

The plan's survey and community engagement create a context for several important issues:

- Residents express a desire for affordable arts programs and services outside the city center. This is especially important for low-income residents (nearly 20% of the residents are below the federal poverty level);
- Fifty percent (50%) of survey respondents recognize the importance of the arts in economic development, specifically business attraction and tourism;
- Forty percent (40%) cite the need for greater diversity in the arts offerings in the city and 37% wanted greater diversity among the people involved in the arts and cultural community;
- Artists express a desire for the arts to reflect the genuine history and people of the city and to celebrate the African American, Latino, Asian, Jewish, Quaker and others' contributions to the city;
- Participants want local cultural organizations to recruit staff and board members that reflect the community in background, ethnicity, age, gender and lifestyle;
- Arts professionals raise concerns about the affordability of venues and access to City facilities, and equity in funding. They also desired greater opportunities for networking and collaboration.
- Barriers to arts participation include affordability, time availability and transportation.

*Note: The complete Creative Greensboro Research Brief is available in the plan appendix.*





creativegreensboro