



Developing an Arts, Entertainment and Education Cluster in Washington County, Maryland

Submitted by:
Sage Policy Group

Submitted to:
Washington County Arts Council

February 2012

Table of Contents

List of Exhibits.....	2
Executive Summary	3
I. Introduction	6
II. The Situation in Washington County	8
Washington County’s Arts and Entertainment Infrastructure	8
Hagerstown and Washington County Demographics	10
Public Participation in the Arts in the U.S.	15
Revealed Consumer Preferences	19
III. Summary of Stakeholder Organizations and Focus Groups	22
Organizations Involved in Promoting Washington County Arts	22
Summary of Information and Ideas Derived from Three Focus Groups	28
IV. SWOT Analysis	32
V. Recommendations	33
VI. Implementation	36
References	42
Appendix.....	45

List of Exhibits

Exhibit 1. Population profile of Hagerstown, Washington County and Maryland, 200911

Exhibit 2. Population growth in Hagerstown and other Western Maryland municipalities, 2000-201112

Exhibit 3. Income distribution of Hagerstown, Washington County and Maryland, 200913

Exhibit 4. Median household income of Hagerstown and select Western Maryland municipalities13

Exhibit 5. Education level of Hagerstown, Washington County and Maryland populations14

Exhibit 6. Population breakdown by educational attainment; Hagerstown, Washington County and Maryland, 200914

Exhibit 7. Unemployment rate of Hagerstown and other Western Maryland municipalities, July 201115

Exhibit 8. Demography of U.S. adults who participated in at least one benchmark activity in the past 12 months16

Exhibit 9. Demographic breakdown by benchmark activity, U.S. adult population; from the 2008 SPPA18

Exhibit 10. Average household spending on select leisure and entertainment items19

Exhibit 11. Average expenditures of art attendees by select items.....20

Exhibit 12. Percentage of respondents indicating participation in various artistic activities, 2008 (Adopted from Maryland State Arts Council Study)21

Exhibit 13. Summary of stakeholders22

Exhibit 14. Washington County SWOT analysis summary.....32

Exhibit 15. Building at 59 West Washington Street (old Susquehanna building).....39

Exhibit 16. Building at 13-17 South Potomac Street.....40

Developing an Arts, Entertainment and Education Cluster in Washington County, MD

Executive Summary

Purpose/Context

The Washington County Arts Council (the Arts Council), on behalf of the Arts, Entertainment & Education Taskforce, hired Sage Policy Group, Inc. (Sage) to provide analytical insight and associated recommendations related to the promotion of cultural richness in Washington County, MD. Goals of the community include economic development, income growth, increased demand for real estate, tax revenue expansion, elevation of the arts and culture, broad community participation in arts and entertainment experiences, and integration of the arts, entertainment and education for the community. In many similarly-situated communities, arts, entertainment and education revival have represented the cornerstones of successful economic development strategies.

Methodology

In conducting the research, Sage made an effort to consider the community's history, economic realities and the current arts, entertainment, and education marketplace. The study team spent a substantial amount of time researching community demographics, industry infrastructure and governance structures to understand Washington County's cultural environment. The study team also conducted three focus groups between mid-May and early June 2011, as well as other individual interview sessions with multiple key stakeholders. Participants included local merchants, bankers, business owners, professors, artists, government officials and member of their staffs.

Key Findings

Analysis of data, a SWOT analysis, the focus groups and other forms of investigation yielded several key findings. Among these were:

- Very few similarly-sized communities across the United States enjoy the concentration of cultural infrastructure that can be found in Washington County, particularly in downtown Hagerstown (e.g., Maryland Theatre, Museum of Fine Arts, Barbara Ingram School for the Arts, University of Maryland at Hagerstown, Washington County Free Library, Potomac Playmakers, Academy Theatre, Washington County Playhouse, and City Ballet School);
- There is an insufficient level of coordination between various cultural assets throughout the county and in Hagerstown, though several promising initiatives have emerged;
- The demographics of downtown Hagerstown are presently incompatible with the formation of a vibrant arts, entertainment and education cluster;
- Marketing effectiveness and coordination has been limited;

- The current supply of housing and studio space in downtown Hagerstown is not of the type necessary to attract a critical mass of artists to the community.

Recommendations & Implementation

In order to leverage the community's cultural assets and to reduce the impact of various threats and weaknesses, Sage developed the following recommendations:

1. *Art promotion should initially focus on downtown Hagerstown.* Because downtown Hagerstown possesses many of the artistic and cultural assets in the community, it is the most logical place within the county to create an industry cluster. Most focus group participants and interviewees also expressed a preference for a Hagerstown First strategy.
2. *Deconcentrate poverty in downtown Hagerstown.* Downtown Hagerstown is home to a high concentration of Section 8 housing. According to many stakeholders, the concentration of poverty downtown acts as a barrier to the formation of an arts, entertainment and education cluster in Hagerstown and Washington County. Sage recommends that the Hagerstown Housing Authority (HHA), a local non-profit organization, supply voucher recipients with better information regarding their housing options and actively participate in their housing searches. HHA should also encourage landlords outside of the central city to participate in the program by offering new or promoting existing incentives, as well as better informing them about the program. The HHA should also collaborate with the Housing Authority of Washington County (HAWC) to support the deconcentration of poverty.
3. *Create a Community Arts Commission /Downtown Partnership.* The issue of coordination, or the lack thereof, arose frequently during focus groups and during research. Sage recommends that the community create an Arts Commission (a non-governmental, non-profit organization) to develop strategies, funding, and implementation plans for community projects. The new Commission will connect arts, entertainment and educational efforts with local businesses and residents. For successful achievement, the City and County government should be supportive of the commission's actions.
4. *Create an arts incubator in downtown Hagerstown.* In its development of case studies, the study team found that arts incubators are often very successful at attracting and assisting artists. The presence of artists not only attracts visitors, but also leads to business formation, greater demand for real estate and a general sense of community vibrancy. Sage suggests that the city create an arts incubator that will be housed in a building with subsidized office supplies, studio space, and technical assistance, as well as low-cost apartments for artists. The study team identified two buildings located in the arts center that could be renovated and serve as a location for the incubator, including the building at 59 West Washington Street (old Susquehanna building), the building at 13-17 South Potomac Street (between the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts and the Maryland Theatre), and potentially the Massey building on East Baltimore

Street. It should be noted that City government has acquired a building on 36/40 North Potomac Street and is planning to renovate the property into residential/co-op unit for artists. While this project will help expand the population of local artists, the property is 0.2 miles from the Maryland Theatre and therefore not as well suited for the location of an arts incubator. The two proposed sites are immediately proximate to the Maryland Theatre.

5. *Intensive Marketing of the County's Cultural Assets.* Community leaders suggested in the focus groups that the city needs to alter its image. Sage recommends that the City/County market itself as an arts and cultural tourist destination by promoting the community's artistic and cultural assets. Internet marketing in the form of a comprehensive website represents the simplest and most affordable way to do this. This website should serve as the central repository for information regarding events, dates/complete calendar, times, ticket availability, parking, directions, proximate shopping and restaurants, reviews, etc. Ideally, the website would also allow for tickets to be sold and for reservations at area restaurants and hotels to be made.

Concluding Comments

The ultimate goal is to create a county-wide cultural cluster that has as its hub and focal downtown Hagerstown. But this cluster should encompass all significant communities within the county from Williamsport and Boonsboro to Clear Spring and Smithsburg. The study team believes that images of and events within a vibrant downtown Hagerstown will ultimately translate into more opportunity to attract visitors throughout the county.

Experiences of other arts communities presented in the Appendix of this report, including Taneytown (Maryland) and Siler City (North Carolina) suggest that elected leaders must play an important, though not necessarily overwhelming role in the process of creating an artistic and cultural hub in Washington County. There are a number of key community leaders that have emerged in recent years and who have a demonstrated passion for the arts. In the final analysis, it is up to these citizens to forge Washington County's cultural future.

I. Introduction

A. Purpose of this Study

The Washington County Arts Council (the Arts Council), on behalf of the Arts, Entertainment & Education Taskforce, hired Sage Policy Group, Inc. (Sage) to conduct in-depth research and to provide associated recommendations designed to promote arts, education, and entertainment in Washington County, MD. The goals of the community are many-fold, and include economic development, income growth, increased demand for real estate, tax revenue expansion, elevation of the arts and culture, broad community participation in arts and entertainment experiences, and integration of arts and culture in the education of the community's young people.

In conducting the research, Sage made sure to pay homage to the community's economic realities, history and the current arts and entertainment marketplace. The study team conducted three separate focus groups involving community stakeholders as well as other individual interview sessions with multiple key stakeholders, and took pains to understand the history of one of America's older communities.

Washington County was established in 1776 and has a population of nearly 150,000. The City of Hagerstown represents the commercial hub of the county, with a population of roughly 40,000. Both the county and the city are known for their rich history and heritage. Founded in 1762, the City is named after its founder, Jonathan Hager, a German immigrant and entrepreneur. Hagerstown was originally a part of Frederick County, but was incorporated into Washington County in 1813.^{1,2}

Situated at the intersection of major railroads connecting regional ports and inland cities, Hagerstown developed as a hub city in Western Maryland. Through the late 19th Century, the city developed into a center of governmental affairs as well as an important center of retail where commodities from surrounding agricultural communities were traded.

As the city created significant sums of wealth and a group of highly prosperous families, it gradually nurtured an impressive intellectual infrastructure, one that continues to influence life in the community today. The Washington County Free Library, established in 1898,³ is known as the nation's first bookmobile and was an innovation of librarian Mary Titcomb⁴ Washington County Museum of Fine Arts was founded by the Singer Family in 1931 and to this day does not charge visitors. The Maryland Symphony Orchestra, one of four professional orchestras in the

¹Hagerstown Magazine.(n.d.). *History*, Retrieved on June 29th, 2011 from <http://www.inhagerstown.com/content.asp?page=history>.

²Maryland Manual.(n.d.). *Washington County, Maryland, Municipalities: Hagerstown*. Retrieved on June 29th, 2011 from <http://www.msa.md.gov/msa/mdmanual/37mun/hagerstown/html/h.html>.

³Washington County Free Library. (n.d.). *About us*. Retrieved on June 29th, 2011 from <http://www.washcolibrary.org/aboutus.asp>.

⁴Western Maryland's Historical Library. (n.d.). Retrieved on June 29th, 2011 from <http://www.whilbr.org/bookmobile/index.aspx>.

state of Maryland, is now headquartered in Hagerstown. The city is proximate to the locations of a number of key Civil War battles including the site of Antietam, which represented the bloodiest day in American history and was a critical turning point in the North's eventual march to victory.

Two of the more recent and more important additions to the community's arts infrastructure are the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts and University of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH). The Barbara Ingram School for Arts opened in August 2009 in the heart of Hagerstown's A&E district as the first arts magnet school in Washington County and Western Maryland. Disciplines studied at the school include dance, vocal music, literary arts, theatre, and visual art. The USMH opened in Hagerstown in 2005 after undergoing a 4-year renovation of the vacant space formerly occupied by a department store. With brand-new amenities, the USMH offers seven undergraduate and five graduate programs,⁵ allowing broader access to higher education for the region. The presence of these two institutions poses huge potential for Hagerstown to grow as an arts, entertainment and education center.

B. Organization of the Report

This report is organized into four sections. The first section details the county's demographics and provides additional detail regarding the current state of arts, entertainment and education infrastructure. This section of the report also provides data regarding the spending habits of patrons of the arts that have been observed and reported in academic journals.

The second section summarizes the central points of discussion that emerged during the three focus groups that were held between mid-May and early June 2011. This section also summarizes topics covered during several subsequent interviews with prominent individuals in the community. Sage also provides a discussion of several case studies that were developed to provide the Arts Council with a set of best practices originating from other communities.

The third section of the report provides a SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat) analysis. Utilizing a quadrant diagram, the SWOT analysis identifies the elements that promote the arts and represent opportunities for cluster building while also articulating ongoing impediments and future obstacles.

The fourth and final section provides five recommendations and an accompanying implementation plan. This is the report's most important section and Sage has worked to provide stakeholders with both rationales supporting recommendations and countervailing considerations.

⁵ USMH. (n.d.). *History*. Retrieved on October 20th, 2011 from <http://www.hagerstown.usmd.edu/about.aspx?details=history>.

II. The Situation in Washington County

A. Washington County's Arts and Entertainment Infrastructure

1. Washington County Museum of Fine Arts (WCMFA)

The WCMFA opened in 1931 with the sponsorship of Anna Singer and William Henry Singer, Jr. Anna Singer was a native of Hagerstown. The museum building was designed by Hyde and Shepherd and is protected by a Maryland Historic Trust easement.⁶ The Singers invested in the museum to cover the cost of construction and donated the first pieces of art to the museum from their collection.⁷

The WCMFA has been recognized as one of the finest small museums in the United States. Located in historic City Park, the mission of the Museum of Fine Arts is to collect, to preserve, to interpret and to exhibit art of lasting quality for the citizens of Hagerstown, Washington County and the surrounding region.

Over the course of its history, the museum has acquired over 50 classical art pieces made by Renaissance artists, such as Giovanni Mazzone's *Saints Mary Magdalene and Paul* and a self-portrait of Timoteo Viti.⁸ The Museum is one of only four art museums in Maryland accredited by the American Association of Museums and its collection includes more than 7,000 pieces of art.⁹ The museum is open to the public free of admission and therefore is accessible to stakeholders of every socioeconomic status.

The WCMFA has an enduring commitment to arts education and to the support of regional artists. The Museum actively collects works of art in the fields of American Art, world cultures, and art of the region. The museum regularly offers studio art courses, free children's art classes, art historical lectures, concerts, and exhibitions from its permanent collection and traveling shows and other programs to ensure that visitors gain a better appreciation and understanding of the fine arts. Beyond exhibitions, the museum hosts a number of art educational activities for children and adults. Summer 2011 programs included painting, mural arts, sculptures, dance and yoga.

Recent years have been active ones. In FY2008, the museum approved a new capital project in its courtyard to renovate the space for functional purposes. Additionally, the museum acquired 14 new paintings, 4 drawings and prints, and 22 decorative art pieces.¹⁰

⁶Washington County Museum of Fine Arts. (2010). *2009-2010 Annual Report*, p.1.

⁷Washington County Museum of Fine Arts. [Pamphlet]. p.5-6.

⁸*Id.*, p.18-19.

⁹Washington County Museum of Fine Arts. (2010). *2009-2010 Annual Report*, p.1.

¹⁰*Brief History of WCMFA last three years.* (n.d.). [Handout].

WCMFA has participated in two research projects, including a visitor and membership analysis in FY2008 and a Museum Assessment Program (MAP) hosted by the American Association of Museums (AAM) in FY2009.¹¹

2. The Maryland Theatre

The Maryland Theatre is a historic arts venue designed by renowned cinema architect Thomas W. Lamb, designer of other architectural masterpieces such as the New York City Hippodrome, the Rialto and Madison Square Garden. The venue, first built in 1915 and later restored in 1978 after being partially destroyed by a fire, has been host to more than 95 years of entertainment. Today, the theatre welcomes approximately 120,000 patrons each year.

The theatre provides seating for 1,300 visitors for entertainment featuring comedians, orchestras, children's shows, musicians, recitals, stage shows, and many others. The present success of the theatre is attributed to strong partnerships with organizations in the community, including Washington County Public Schools, the Barbara Ingram School of the Arts, Hagerstown Community Concerts, Maryland Symphony Orchestra, the Miss Maryland Scholarship Program, and the City of Hagerstown. Additionally, The Citizens to Save the Maryland Theatre (an activist group that supported the restoration and reopening of the theatre after it was damaged by fire) continues to advocate for the theatre with a focus on preserving the venue and ensuring its prosperity in the future.

3. Maryland Symphony Orchestra (MSO)

Established in 1982, the MSO has since extended its outreach from Western Maryland to cities in south-central Pennsylvania, West Virginia, as well as throughout the Baltimore-Washington, DC region. The Orchestra is currently comprised of 70 musicians and its annual season runs from October through April. MSO is one of four professional symphony orchestras in the state and is currently in its 30th season.

In addition to annual concerts and events, MSO works to promote music education within the local community. For more than three decades the organization has been working in a strategic partnership with Washington County Public Schools to supplement classroom musical programs, including in-school performances, classes and hands-on activities for children, and music scholarships. Each year, MSO attracts more than 70,000 citizens with its cultural and educational programs.¹² MSO frequently performs at the Maryland Theatre and is widely considered one of Washington County's most valuable assets.

¹¹ *Brief History of WCMFA last three years.* (n.d.). [Handout].

¹² *Maryland Symphony Orchestra: Mission & History.* (n.d.). [Pamphlet].

In addition to these cultural venues, the city is home to art galleries, smaller museums, theatres, educational institutions, stadiums, and historical sites at various locations.¹³ These include:

- Contemporary School for the Arts;
- Just Lookin' Gallery;
- Mansion House Art Center;
- Washington County Arts Council Gallery;
- Doleman Black Heritage Museum;
- Christian Heritage Museum;
- Discovery Station;
- Hagerstown Aviation Museum;
- Hagerstown Railroad Museum;
- Jonathan Hager House & Museum;
- Bridge of Life Theatre;
- University of Maryland at Hagerstown;
- Washington County Free Library;
- Potomac Playmakers;
- Academy Theatre;
- Washington County Playhouse; and
- City Ballet School.

Beyond Hagerstown, but still within Washington County are a number of centrally important historic sites. These include:

- Antietam National Battlefield;
- C&O Canal National Historical Park;
- Historic Funkstown; and
- The Kennedy Farm.

B. Hagerstown and Washington County Demographics

This section analyzes the demographics of Washington County. Among other things, this section of the report compares the demographics of Washington County and its largest city with other regional municipalities known for their arts and cultural activity. One of the key sources of reference for this presentation is a survey conducted by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA, 2008). This rich source of research discovered diverging preferences in the types of artistic activities enjoyed by different races/ethnicities, ages, and income groups. Details regarding these findings are discussed in Section C.

¹³*Artists and Arts & Entertainment Establishments.* (n.d.). [Pamphlet].

1. How Washington County and Hagerstown Compare Demographically with other Arts and Entertainment-Centric Communities

Exhibit 1 below reflects the 2009 Census estimates of the population of Hagerstown, Washington County and Maryland. Among other things, the data reveal Hagerstown is slightly younger than the county and state overall (median age of just 35.1 years). Young adults and children accounted for approximately half of the city’s population in 2009.

This finding is of enormous importance for the Arts Council and other stakeholders since it suggests that any efforts to generate more momentum in the arts, entertainment and education category must consider the disproportionate share of young families that populates Hagerstown. The balance of Washington County is associated with demographics along the dimension of age that look more like the balance of the state. Nonetheless, the Washington County demography is generally associated with a younger population base relative to many Maryland jurisdictions.

Many of these families likely arrived in Washington County during the housing boom of the mid-2000s. During this period, gasoline prices were relatively low and home prices, particularly in closer-in suburbs like Montgomery and Frederick County, Maryland were higher. This induced many budget-conscious families to relocate to Washington County, trading off lower home prices for longer commutes.

Exhibit 1. Population profile of Hagerstown, Washington County and Maryland, 2009*

	Hagerstown City		Washington County		Maryland	
Total population	39,273	100.00%	144,158	144,158	5,637,418	5,637,418
Male	19,072	48.60%	73,310	50.90%	2,730,367	48.40%
Female	20,201	51.40%	70,848	49.10%	2,907,051	51.60%
<i>POPULATION BY RACE:</i>						
Caucasian	29,959	76.28%	124,919	86.65%	3,433,516	60.91%
Caucasian & Other Race(s)	1,023	2.60%	2,142	1.49%	71,642	1.27%
African American	6,896	17.56%	13,272	9.21%	1,625,880	28.84%
African American & Other race(s)	130	0.33%	182	0.13%	10,698	0.19%
American Indian & Alaska Native	76	0.19%	301	0.21%	15,394	0.27%
Asian	442	1.13%	1,817	1.26%	277,732	4.93%
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	77	0.20%	86	0.06%	3,010	0.05%
Others	670	1.71%	1,439	1.00%	199,546	3.54%
<i>POPULATION BY AGE GROUP:</i>						
< 15	7,980	20.32%	27,434	19.03%	1,121,643	19.90%
15 – 24	5,151	13.12%	18,005	12.49%	777,171	13.79%
25 – 35	6,476	16.49%	19,150	13.28%	738,127	13.09%
35 – 44	5,225	13.30%	22,312	15.48%	845,785	15.00%
45 – 65	8,982	22.87%	37,150	25.77%	1,491,513	26.46%
65 >	5,459	13.90%	20,107	13.95%	663,179	11.76%
Median age (years)	35.1		38.6		37.3	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey *Data presented are based on 5-year averages.

The population of Hagerstown expanded 8.1 percent over the past decade, comparable to overall population growth within the state. Though Washington County’s population grew faster than the city’s, other municipalities known for their art and cultural assets in the region lost population. Exhibit 2 provides relevant statistical detail.

Exhibit 2. Population growth in Hagerstown and other Western Maryland municipalities 2000-2010

	<i>2000 Population</i>	<i>2010 Population</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Hagerstown	36,687	39,662	8.1%
Washington County	131,923	147,430	11.8%
Maryland	5,296,486	5,773,552	9.0%
Berkeley Springs, WV	663	624	-5.9%
Cumberland	21,518	20,859	-3.1%
Frederick	52,767	65,239	23.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Exhibit 3 shows the income distribution and median household income of Hagerstown, Washington County and Maryland. The City’s median household income is lower than that of both the county and state. In Hagerstown, nearly 50 percent of households are living below an income of \$35,000. More than four in five Hagerstown households are associated with annual incomes of less than \$75,000. This is a remarkable finding and presents a key challenge to the formation of arts, education and education in Hagerstown. As will be shown below, these low incomes are also associated with low levels of educational attainment, which at least arguably creates an additional impediment to support for the arts and high quality entertainment in Washington County’s largest community.

Average income in the balance of the county is 61 percent higher than in Hagerstown (approximately \$77,000). In fact, if one subtracts Hagerstown from Washington County, the balance of the county boasts incomes that are closer in magnitude to the balance of Maryland than to Hagerstown. That said, incomes in the balance of Washington County are roughly 14 percent below those associated with the statewide average and Washington County incomes overall are roughly 24 percent lower.

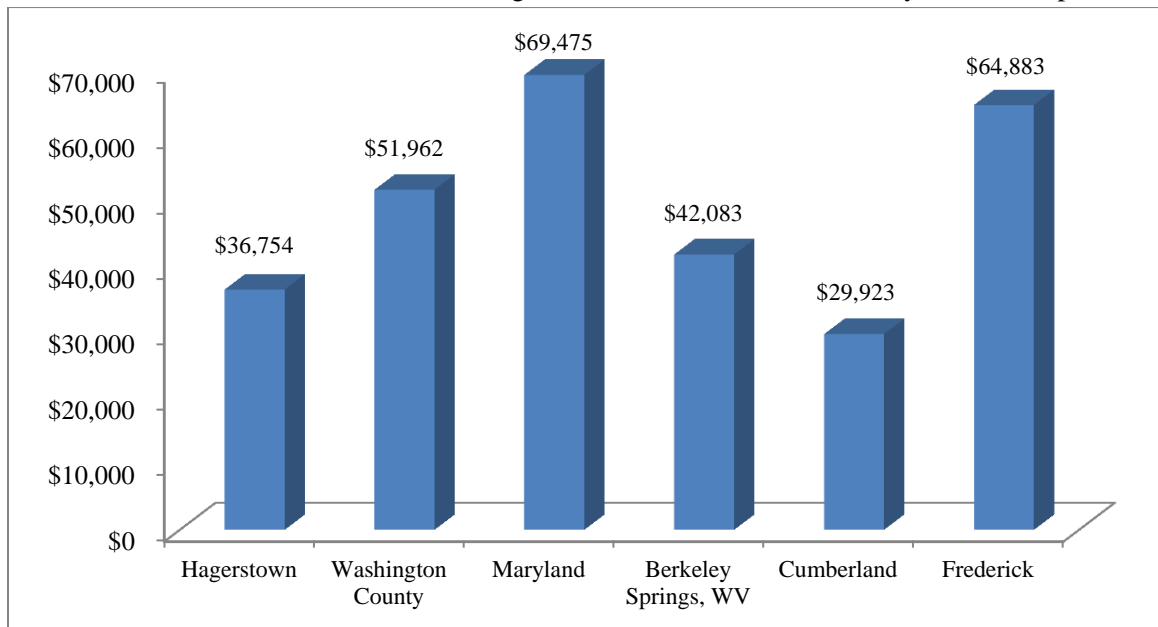
Exhibit 3. Income distribution of Hagerstown, Washington County and Maryland, 2009*

	Hagerstown	Washington Co.	Other Washington Co.	Maryland
Total households	17,183	55,524	38,341	2,092,538
Median household income	\$36,754	\$51,962	<i>n.a.</i>	\$69,475
Mean household income	\$47,901	\$67,973	76,969	\$89,803
Less than \$10,000	10.47%	5.65%	3.49%	4.94%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	7.84%	5.22%	4.05%	3.45%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	15.73%	10.67%	8.41%	6.94%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	13.17%	10.65%	9.53%	7.95%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	16.84%	16.17%	15.87%	12.11%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	18.58%	20.33%	21.12%	18.39%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	8.57%	13.81%	16.16%	14.33%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	6.36%	11.65%	14.01%	17.53%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1.35%	3.39%	4.30%	7.57%
\$200,000 or more	1.09%	2.45%	3.06%	6.79%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey *Data presented are based on 5-year averages.

Exhibit 4 casts additional light on the low median household incomes that characterize Hagerstown. In this comparison group, only Cumberland is associated with lower incomes. It is worth noting that Hagerstown’s median household income is roughly 43 percent below Frederick’s, which is a community known for its vibrant downtown merchant district and 13 percent below Berkeley Springs, WV, which is known for its well developed artistic community and elevated levels of visitation.

Exhibit 4. Median household income of Hagerstown and select Western Maryland municipalities



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009. *Data presented are based on 5-year averages.

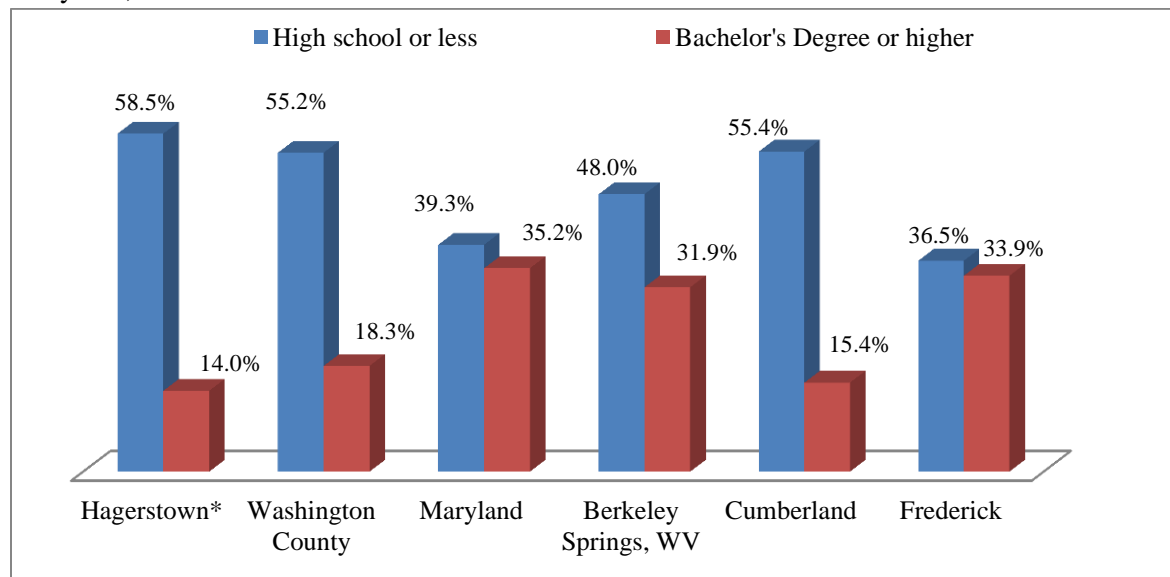
There is typically a high degree of correlation between incomes and educational attainment in any given community, and Washington County and Hagerstown are no exceptions. Exhibit 5 provides statistical detail regarding education levels in Hagerstown, Washington County and Maryland, respectively. According to Census data, nearly three in five Hagerstown residents aged 25 or older has achieved a high school degree or less. Only 14 percent possess a bachelor's degree or better. Washington County statistics also reflect a relatively low level of educational attainment, with fewer than 20 percent of residents with a bachelor's degree or better compared to a statewide level approaching 36 percent. As Exhibit 6 below reflects, along this dimension, Cumberland, MD appears relatively more advanced than Hagerstown with more than 15 percent of those aged 25 and above possessing a bachelor's degree or better.

Exhibit 5. Education level of Hagerstown, Washington County and Maryland populations

	Hagerstown		Washington County		Maryland	
Population 25 years and over	26,142	100.00%	100,132	100.00%	3,797,739	100.00%
High school graduate or less	15,301	58.50%	54,486	55.20%	1,467,948	39.26%
Associate's degree or college dropouts	7,186	27.50%	26,176	26.50%	955,811	25.57%
Bachelor's degree	2,166	8.30%	11,231	11.40%	732,692	19.60%
Graduate or professional degree	1,489	5.70%	6,826	6.90%	582,153	15.57%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey *Data presented are based on 5-year averages.

Exhibit 6. Population breakdown by educational attainment; Hagerstown, Washington County and Maryland, 2009



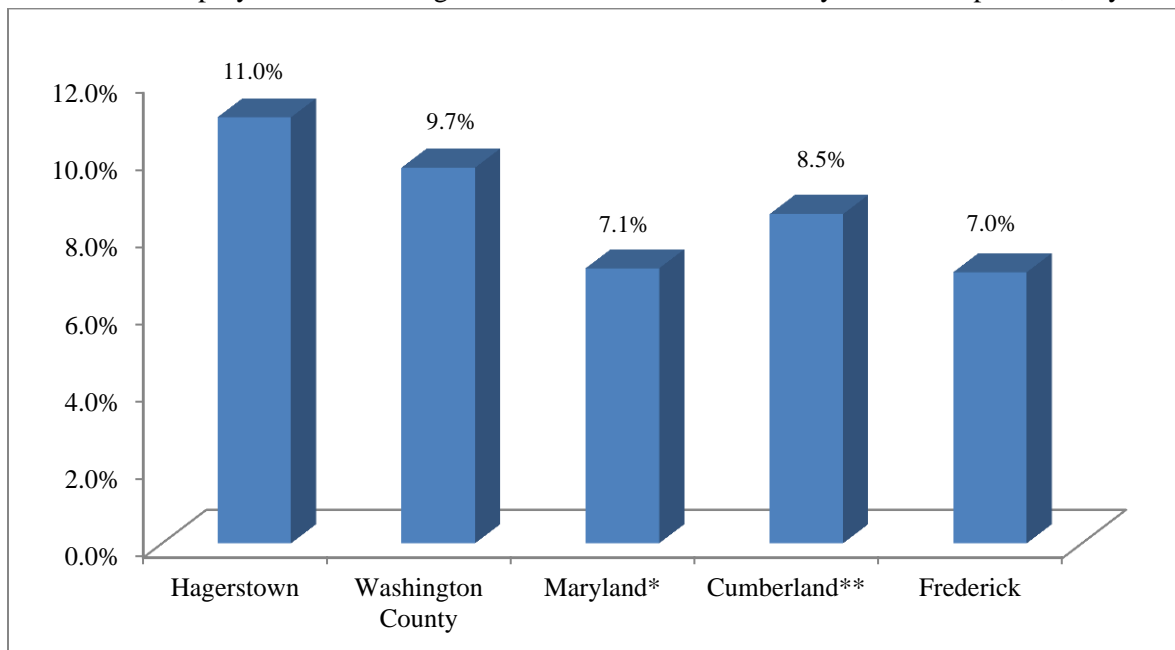
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009 *Data presented are based on 5-year averages.

NOTE: Percentages exclude those with associate's degrees or who attended college without attaining degrees.

Not only does low educational attainment in the city correspond with lower incomes, but there is also an inverse relationship with unemployment. In other words, the lower educational attainment, the higher unemployment rates all things being equal. Exhibit 7 provides detail regarding unemployment in several Western Maryland jurisdictions, Washington County and Maryland. As of July 2011, Hagerstown was associated with an unemployment rate nearly 2 full percentage points more than the national average and 4 full percentage points above the statewide average.

There are a number of important implications associated with elevated unemployment. The first is that those who suffer unemployment or even a high degree of job insecurity are unlikely to have the incomes or confidence necessary to vigorously support the arts and entertainment industry. Moreover, the elevated level of unemployment underscores the importance of the economic development aspect of the arts and entertainment, which has the potential to create a number of entry-level employment opportunities, including in the retail, facility maintenance and hospitality categories.

Exhibit 7. Unemployment rate of Hagerstown and other Western Maryland municipalities, July 2011



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (NSA) *Seasonally adjusted ** Cumberland MSA data

C. Public Participation in the Arts in the U.S.

The Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA)¹⁴ published by NEA and conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau collects art participation data from 18,000 adults across the nation. The survey sample consisted of adults who participated in “benchmark” art activities during the 12-

¹⁴National Endowments for Arts. (November 2009). *2008 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts*. Retrieved on September 1st, 2011, from <http://www.nea.gov/research/2008-SPPA.pdf>.

months ending in May 2008. Benchmark activities include jazz/classical music concerts, performing arts and festivals, operas and musicals, plays and ballet performances, and art museums and galleries.

The study discovered the following:

- Nearly 50 percent of adult art participants possessed a college degree or higher;
- More than 50 percent of the art participants were between the age of 25 and 55 years;
- Nearly 70 percent of art participating adults reported annual income greater than \$50,000.

The present demographics of Hagerstown are not fully compatible with the typical profile of the arts patron. The typical arts patron is likely to be more educated, have higher incomes and to be older. However, demographics in the balance of the county are quite consistent with a typical arts-lover profile.

Exhibit 8. Demography of U.S. adults who participated in at least one benchmark activity in the past 12 months

	<i>Demographic Distribution</i>		<i>Demographic Distribution</i>
RACE		EDUCATION	
Hispanic	8.2%	High school or lower	21.7%
Caucasian*	78.9%	Some college	30.1%
African American	7.0%	College grad.	30.4%
Other*	5.9%	Graduate school	17.8%
Total	100.0%	Total	100.0%
AGE GROUP		INCOME	
18-24	12.1%	Less than \$30K	13.4%
25-34	18.5%	\$30K to \$40K	8.5%
35-44	20.0%	\$40K to \$50K	8.3%
45-54	20.4%	\$50K to \$75K	20.5%
55-64	15.8%	\$75K to \$100K	17.5%
65-74	8.5%	\$100K to \$150K	16.4%
75 and over	4.7%	\$150K and over	15.2%
Total	100.0%	Total	100.0%

Source: National Endowments for Arts. 2008 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts. Figure 3-2, p.14.

*Does not include Hispanic ethnicity

There are a number of key implications associated with this. One is that the city’s demographic profile needs to change substantially if the current arts and entertainment cluster is to expand significantly over the decades ahead. Another important implication is that the families associated with relatively higher incomes in the balance of the county must be deeply engaged

with the local arts, entertainment and education community. Without their engagement, the local arts, entertainment and education community simply will not have the economic fuel necessary to move forward. Finally, it should be noted that while those with lower incomes and less educational attainment are less likely to patronize the arts, participation among these groups is still apparent. Therefore, part of the goal of any effort to bolster the arts, entertainment and education must take into consideration those households with lower socioeconomic status that seek cultural enrichment. One could argue that from a social perspective, it may be even more important to engage those who have yet to demonstrate an interest in the arts.

While a significant number of Hagerstown residents are young, there exists an older population as well; one that is primarily low-income. It will also be important to engage these individuals and households in the effort to form a socially meaningful artistic cluster. New York City's Seniors Partnering with Artists Citywide (SPARC), a community arts engagement program that places artists-in-residence at senior centers across the five boroughs of New York City, serves as a model. The program provides artists with access to workspace in senior centers and a stipend in exchange for the creation and delivery of arts programming to seniors. The objective is to positively impact the well-being of seniors through arts-based activities.¹⁵

Washington County organizations could also provide theater tours, transportation or discounted/free tickets to residents of senior housing. This would also serve to expand engagement and elevate quality of life.

Preferences by Demography

Exhibit 9 reflects more granular SPPA data regarding “benchmark” activities. Among the key findings are that:

- Cohorts of population 35 and older account for a disproportionate share of those attending events focused upon classical music, opera, jazz, and ballet. By contrast, Latin music, festivals and musicals are more likely to be attended by younger cohorts. Nonmusical plays and dance (other than ballet and musical) are attended nearly equally by various age cohorts.
- In terms of race/ethnicity, the non-Hispanic Caucasian population represents the dominant attendees of most benchmark activities with the prominent exception of Latin music.
- Most of the benchmark activities attendees had at least high school degrees (or some college) except for those attending Latin music and performing arts/festivals. These

¹⁵ Brooklyn Arts Council. (n.d.). SPARC. Retrieved November 3, 2011 from <http://www.brooklynartscouncil.org/documents/1751>.

performances/events are more likely to be attended by populations with less than high school degrees.

- Most of the benchmark art activities are attended by a population with higher income, with again the noteworthy exception of Latin music.

Exhibit 9. Demographic breakdown by benchmark activity, U.S. adult population; from the 2008 SPPA (All numbers are percentages.)

	<i>Jazz</i>	<i>Classical music</i>	<i>Opera</i>	<i>Latin music</i>	<i>Performing music</i>	<i>Musical plays</i>	<i>Nonmusical plays</i>	<i>Ballet</i>	<i>Other dance</i>
Hispanic	6.8	5.5	7.2	48.7	9.5	6.5	6.1	10	8.2
Caucasian*	77.5	83.3	82.3	43.9	76.7	82.5	83.2	81.9	79
African	12.5	5.2	3.9	3.7	8.3	5.8	6.6	4.2	6.5
Other*	3.2	6	6.7	3.7	5.5	5.1	4.1	3.9	6.2
18-24	11.9	9.5	7.4	18.2	13.2	11.1	11.2	10.8	14.0
25-34	17.4	13.3	13.9	21.8	19.4	16.9	17.2	14.1	15.9
35-44	17.1	17.8	21.9	24.0	21.7	20.2	17.7	21.8	17.0
45-54	24.4	21.4	21.6	17.5	22.0	20.3	18.1	21.2	19.8
55-64	18.4	18.5	16.6	13.8	14.7	17.3	19.5	15.4	19.0
65-74	6.9	11.6	12.1	3.6	6.6	9.5	10.3	13.0	10.5
75 and over	3.9	8.0	6.5	1.2	2.5	4.5	6.0	3.7	3.8
High school graduates or lower	19.1	13.8	12.5	40.7	28.3	18.2	16.1	12.6	18.5
Some college	28.4	26.8	21.3	22.5	30.7	28.0	26.1	28.2	30.6
College	32.2	32.9	35.3	26.0	27.0	33.1	34.2	33.6	28.4
Graduate	20.4	26.6	31.0	10.8	14.0	20.7	23.6	25.6	22.5
< \$10K	3.1	2.4	0.8	7.6	3.5	2.2	2.5	1.7	2.1
\$10K - \$20K	4.3	3.9	3.8	6.1	5.0	3.5	3.8	1.9	4.5
\$20K - \$30K	5.9	5.3	8.0	12.3	7.6	5.2	5.0	5.5	5.6
\$30K - \$40K	9.9	8.0	5.9	13.4	9.8	7.2	8.0	9.5	7.9
\$40K - \$50K	10.3	8.4	6.9	10.6	9.0	8.4	7.3	5.1	7.2
\$50K - \$75K	19.0	20.1	20.1	18.5	21.1	18.1	18.3	22.2	20.2
\$75K - \$100K	14.6	16.5	13.2	11.3	17.8	17.1	19.0	16.5	17.2
\$100K - \$150K	17.7	16.5	16.5	12.1	14.1	19.8	15.9	17.3	16.6
\$150K<	15.3	18.9	24.9	8.1	12.0	18.5	20.3	20.3	18.7

Source: NEA, 2008 SPPA, Figure 3-9 (p.20) *Does not include Hispanic ethnicity

D. Revealed Consumer Preferences

Consumption Patterns in Art-related Entertainment in the United States

NEA¹⁶ published a study regarding consumption patterns relating to arts utilizing data from the 2009 Consumer Expenditure Survey compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the National Income and Product Account. According to the 2009 CES, the average American household spent \$2,693 on entertainment activities that year. It is estimated that approximately 4.8 percent of the entertainment budget of an average household was spent on arts and crafts (including toys and games), roughly 2.2 percent on photographic equipment, supplies and related services, and 4.5 percent went towards admissions to movies, theaters and amusements parks. Exhibit 10 provides relevant statistical detail.

Exhibit 10. Average household spending on select leisure and entertainment items

<i>All entertainment</i>	\$2,692.66	100.0%
Admissions to movies, theaters, and amusement parks	\$120.38	4.47%
Admissions to sporting events	\$50.86	1.89%
Video game hardware and software	\$53.32	1.98%
Musical instruments	\$23.30	0.87%
Toys, games, and arts and crafts	\$139.07	5.16%
Sports, recreation, and exercise equipment	\$129.98	4.83%
Photographic equipment, supplies, and services	\$59.08	2.19%

Source: NEA, BLS. 2009 Consumer Expenditure Survey

Spending Patterns of the Nation's Art Audience

Americans for the Arts, a non-profit organization for promotion of the arts, initiated a rigorous study of the economic impact of the nonprofit arts and cultural industry since 1994. The study, titled Arts & Economic Prosperity was most recently conducted in 2007.¹⁷ The 2007 study collected data from more than 6,000 nonprofit arts cultural organizations and 94,478 of their attendees across the U.S. The study found that 94,478 art and cultural event attendees spent an average of \$27.80 per visit on food, shopping, lodging, child care, transportation, and other miscellaneous items in addition to admission fees. Among spending items, food spending accounted for the largest portion of the budget (46.8%) followed by gifts and souvenirs (14.0%). Furthermore, average nonlocal attendees spent approximately twice as much as local attendees due to spending on food and lodging. Exhibit 11 provides relevant statistical detail.

¹⁶ NEA. (April, 2011). *Time and Money: Using Federal Data to Measure the value of Performing Arts Activities*. Retrieved on September 1st, 2011 from <http://www.nea.gov/research/Notes/102.pdf>.

¹⁷ Americans for the Arts. (2007). *Arts & Economic Prosperity III*. Retrieved on September 1st, 2011 from http://www.artsusa.org/pdf/information_services/research/services/economic_impact/aepiii/national_report.pdf.

These data are important because they highlight how economic impact of the arts and entertainment is maximized. Specifically, to maximize impact, a community must create reasons for people to stay overnight and must support sufficient retail and eateries to provide people with sufficient opportunity to spend during their stay.

Exhibit 11. Average expenditures* of art attendees by select items

	<i>Resident Audiences</i> (61% of sample)	<i>Nonresident Audiences</i> (39% of sample)	<i>All Audiences</i> (% Distribution)
Meals/Refreshments	\$10.77	\$16.35	\$13.00 (46.8%)
Gifts/Souvenirs	\$3.32	\$4.78	\$3.90 (14.0%)
Lodging	\$1.08	\$10.91	\$5.01 (18.0%)
Child Care	\$0.34	\$0.33	\$0.34 (1.2%)
Transportation	\$1.62	\$4.37	\$2.72 (9.8%)
Other	\$2.40	\$3.45	\$2.82 (10.0%)
Total	\$19.53	\$40.19	\$27.79 (100%)

Source: American for the Arts. (2007). *Arts & Economic Prosperity III*

*Dollar amount in the table does not include the amount spent on admission to the art & cultural venues.

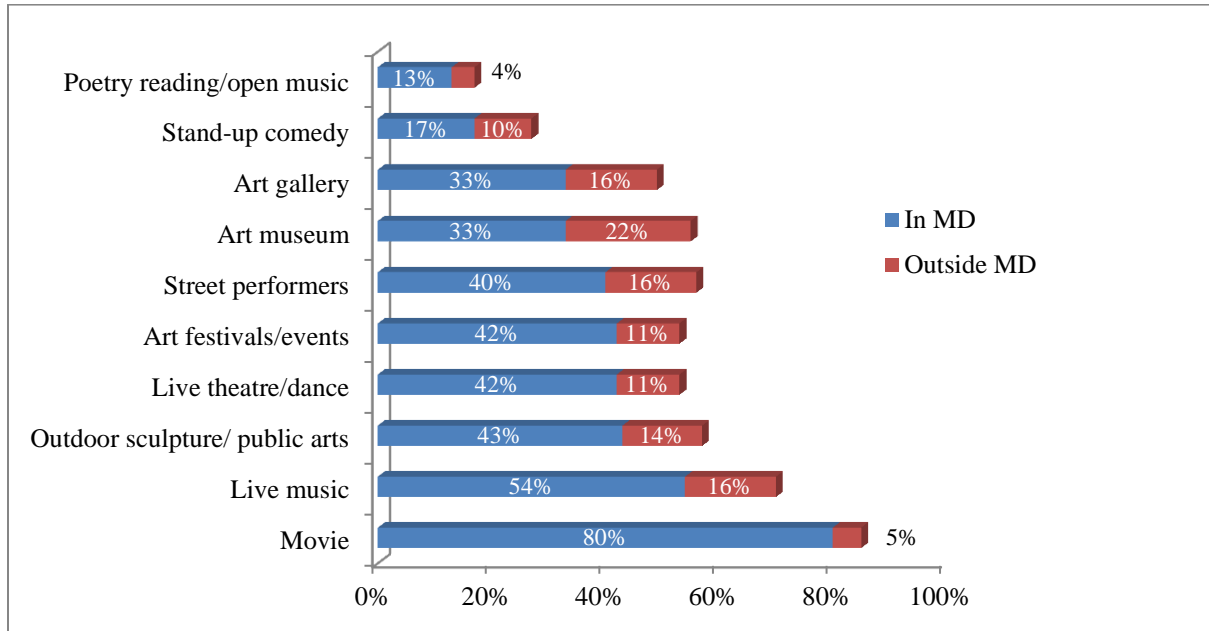
The Revealed Preferences of Marylanders

For the fiscal year 2008, the Maryland State Arts Council hosted a study on Maryland residents’ engagements in art activities. A telephone survey was conducted of 805 randomly-selected Maryland adults in September 2008. Among various in-state artistic activities, a large proportion of the respondents indicated engagement in live music attendance (54%), outdoor sculpture/public arts (43%), live theatre/dance (42%), art festival/events attendance (42%), and street performance (40%). Thirty-three percent of respondents indicated that they visit art museums and galleries.

These data are also important, because they reveal that people are willing to travel long distances for certain types of entertainment. For instance, this survey found that 22 percent of Marylanders visiting art museums leave the state to do so. There were also high proportions of Marylanders leaving the state to patronize art galleries and live music. What is true for Marylanders is likely true for Pennsylvanians, Virginians and others.

Therefore, this represents a very strong indicator of opportunity for Hagerstown and Washington County. Two of downtown Hagerstown’s key venues (the museum of fine arts and the Maryland Theater) are positioned to attract large number of out-of-state visitors based upon these patterns. To a certain extent, this already occurs. However, if these offerings were packaged in conjunction with local hotels, economic impact could be substantially bolstered.

Exhibit 12. Percentage of respondents indicating participation in various artistic activities, 2008
(Adopted from Maryland State Arts Council Study)¹⁸



Source: Maryland State Arts Council; NOTE: Interpretation of the results should take into account margin of error within +/-3.5% at a 95% confidence level.

¹⁸Maryland State Arts Council. (2008). *Maryland Statewide Survey of the Arts*. Retrieved on September 2nd, 2011 from http://www.msac.org/docs_uploaded/Statewide_survey.pdf.

III. Summary of Stakeholder Organizations and Focus Groups

A. Organizations Involved in Promoting Washington County Arts

This section provides information on various Washington County stakeholder organizations. Key stakeholders include the Washington County Arts Council, Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC), the A&E District, City of Hagerstown, the Hagerstown-Washington County Chamber of Commerce, the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts, the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts (WCMFA), the Maryland Symphony Orchestra (MSO) and the Maryland Theatre. Exhibit 13 provides pertinent details regarding the activities of these identified stakeholders.

Exhibit 13. Summary of stakeholders

Washington County Arts Council

The Washington County Arts Council, Inc. has worked to enrich the cultural, social and economic life of the community through nurturing the arts since 1968. The WCAC is funded in part by an operating grant from the Maryland State Arts Council, (MSAC), an agency dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive. Additional funding is also provided by Washington County Government and generous businesses, organizations and individuals. The WCAC distributes funds provided through the Maryland State Arts Council Community Arts Development (MSAC/CAD) to local artists and art organizations each year.

The WCAC provides a wide variety of programming; technical assistance; funding opportunities; and encouragement to arts organizations and individual artists, developing connections between them and those who desire to have art in their lives. The WCAC Gallery offers exhibiting opportunities for local artists and “The Gallery Shop” at the Washington County Arts Council supports local artists’ efforts to make a living with their work while providing the community with a retail venue for shopping.

Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC)

MSAC, established in 1967, is a State agency operating under the authority of the Department of Business and Economic Development, Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts. With the mission of cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive, the Council awards grants to not-for-profit, tax-exempt organizations for ongoing arts programming and arts projects, as well as to individual artists and groups. Technical and advisory assistance are also made available to individuals and groups.¹⁹ The Council is comprised of an appointed body of 17 citizens, of whom, 13 are named by the Governor to three-year terms. Two other members are selected from private citizens and two legislators are appointed by the President of the Senate and by the Speaker of the House. Counselors serve without salary.²⁰ The Council annually receives its funding through appropriation from the State of Maryland and grants from the National Endowment for Arts, a federal agency in conjunction with contributions from private and non-governmental sources.²¹

Every year, the MSAC awards grants to non-for profit tax-exempt organizations, as well as government units for arts programs. The Grants for Organizations (GFO) program provides operating support in support of the vitality and sustainability of the state’s arts organizations. In FY 2011, MSAC awarded grants to 240 organizations throughout Maryland totaling \$8,895,979.²²

¹⁹Maryland State Arts Council. *About*. Retrieved on July 29th, 2011 from <http://www.msac.org/about>.

²⁰ Id.

²¹Maryland State Arts Council. (2010). *Fiscal Year 2010 Annual Report*, p.20.

²² Information is provided by Ms. Carla Dunlap of Maryland State Arts Council through personal communication on November 1st, 2011.

Furthermore, MSAC's Community Arts Development program (CAD) provides funding and technical assistance to each county arts council in all 23 of Maryland's counties and Baltimore City. In FY 2011, MSAC awarded a total of \$2,138,134 in CAD grants. Another MSAC program is Arts in Education (AiE), a program that promotes and strengthens the arts in Maryland's elementary and secondary schools. This program awarded \$600,266 in grants that supported 5,844 performances and workshop sessions in 504 Maryland schools in FY 2011. Other programs include the Maryland Artist/Teacher Institute and Building 21st Century Schools through Arts Integration and the Teaching Art Institute. Last year, MSAC contributed \$3,932 for AiE, \$85,654 for CAD, and \$131,438 for GFO, and a \$1,000 Individual Artist Award in Washington County, totaling \$222,024.²³

Arts & Entertainment District

The A&E District program was initiated in 2001 through State legislation and is administered as a program of DBED.²⁴ Hagerstown obtained its designation as an A&E District in 2002. In 2008, the area was re-designated to a Smart Growth A&E District that covered a larger area than the original designation.²⁵ The group is composed of representatives from tourism, the arts and downtown development professionals. Its Board is composed of local bankers, wealth management professionals, marketers, artists, and school board representatives. Current incentive programs include:

- *Sign & Façade Grant Program:* Provides \$300 grants for signs and \$5,000 grants for façade work;
- *Hagerstown Business Development Loan Program:* This \$500,000 revolving loan fund was created in 2000 to provide gap financing for commercial start-ups and expansions within the City;
- *Downtown Residency Initiative:* New residents who are recent college graduates, recent military discharges, government employees, USM students and employees, professionals in a targeted downtown area are eligible for \$150 per month rental subsidy for one year or \$2,500-\$5,000 down payment and closing cost assistance.
- *Real Property Tax Credit for renovation of existing buildings.*

In order to take advantage of the tax credits, the activities or renovation must comply with the organization's definition of "art-related" activity. As of 2011, there were 19 Arts & Entertainment Districts in Maryland, of which 5, including Hagerstown, are located in the Washington D.C. suburbs.²⁶

According to the FY 2010 annual report, no occupancy rates were reported for Hagerstown A&E District. Also, no grants were received by the Hagerstown A & E District in FY2010.

City of Hagerstown

City government represents an incredibly important stakeholder in the effort to transform Hagerstown into an increasingly vibrant city. With assistance from the Mayor and five other Council members,²⁷ Hagerstown created Hagerstown Advance and implemented incentive programs such as the Partnership in Economic Progress Incentive Program (PEP). The PEP's objective is to encourage private investment using tax incentives provided to targeted zones. There are several benefits available from under the PEP program, including:

- *Utility benefit program:* Free EDUs valued at \$13,800 for insufficient existing water and wastewater allocation -- offered by the Utilities Department
- *Upper Floor Commercial Space Rent Relief:* A 50 percent matching grants program for incoming or

²³ Information is provided by Ms. Carla Dunlap of Maryland State Arts Council through personal communication on November 1st, 2011.

²⁴MSAC. (n.d.). *Maryland's Arts & Entertainment Districts*. Retrieved on June 30th, 2011 from <http://www.nasaa-arts.org/Learning-Services/Past-Meetings/B-A&E-Presentation.pdf>.

²⁵*Hagerstown Arts & Entertainment*. (n.d.). Retrieved on June 30th, 2011 from <http://www.hagerstownmd.org/ae.html>.

²⁶MSAC. (n.d.). *Arts and Entertainment Districts*. Retrieved on June 30th, 2011 from <http://www.msac.org/artsandentertainment>.

²⁷Hagerstown Advance. (n.d.). *Meet the Team*. Retrieved on June 30th, 2011 from <http://www.hagerstownadvance.com/meet-the-team/>.

existing businesses seeking to expand their offices in the PEP zone.

- *Fee Free Zone program*: Fee waiver program for the projects within the targeted area. Once approved, the fee associated with building, plumbing, electrical, mechanical, plan review, occupancy, and zoning fees would be waived on approved development projects.
- *Free two-hour teaching sessions* provided by a local architectural historian for property owners on how they could take advantage of Federal and State tax credits on historic properties.²⁸

The City of Hagerstown is also undertaking numerous initiatives to improve City Center. Recent projects include the construction of parking lots, streetscape projects along Potomac Street, transfer of McBare's building to the Maryland Theatre, a \$1.5 million investment to beautify University Plaza, and funding contributions toward the construction of a new library.²⁹

Hagerstown–Washington County Chamber of Commerce

The Hagerstown-Washington County Chamber of Commerce, Inc., established in 1919, is a non-profit organization with a mission to assist local small businesses who are dedicated to improving the community. The organization supports promotion and supplies information to member businesses as well as to members of the local community and is run by an elected volunteer Board of Directors and salaried workers. The Chamber is financially supported through membership dues and program revenues. The Chamber holds a membership at U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Maryland Chamber of Commerce. However, the Chamber functions autonomously from these organizations.³⁰

Most local arts organizations are members of the Chamber, including the Maryland Theatre, the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts, and Washington County Arts Council. These organizations benefit from the promotion and local networking opportunities the Chamber provides.

Barbara Ingram School for the Arts

Opened as a magnet school in August 2009, Barbara Ingram School for the Arts offers six specialized programs for high school students in grades 9 through 12 in the Washington County region. Disciplines now include theatre, visual arts and vocal music. Upon completion of their individual programs, students can earn an arts certificate from the school. In FY 2010, total of 193 students were enrolled, with the vast majority being from the Washington County Public School system.

Funding for the school comes from the Washington County Public Schools annual budget. However, because of the unique needs of the school, local arts organizations such as WCAC, MSO, Washington County Free Library, and USM also contribute.³¹

Washington County Museum of Fine Arts

Established in 1931, the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts is dedicated to collecting, preserving and interpreting works of art for the people of Washington County and citizens from the four-state region. Located in historic City Park, the Museum's mission is to collect, to preserve, to interpret and to exhibit art of lasting quality for the citizens of Hagerstown, Washington County and the surrounding region.

Accredited by the American Association of Museums, admission to the Museum is free and its collection includes over 7,000 works of art. The Washington County Museum of Fine Arts has an enduring commitment to arts education

²⁸Hagerstown Advance. (n.d.). *PEP Program*. Retrieved on June 30th, 2011 from <http://www.hagerstownadvance.com/doing-business/incentives/pep-program/>.

²⁹City of Hagerstown, Maryland. (October 20th, 2011). Hagerstown City Center. [Memorandum].

³⁰Hagerstown-Washington County Chamber of Commerce. (n.d.). *Who We Are*. Retrieved on July 20th, 2011 from <http://www.hagerstown.org/whoweare/index.html>.

³¹Barbara Ingram School of the Arts. (n.d.). *Welcome Class of 2015*. Retrieved on July 1st, 2011 from http://www.barbaraingramschool.com/uploads/2011_New_Student_Orientation.pdf, p. 3,7,12.

and to the support of regional artists. The Museum actively collects works of art in the fields of American Art, world cultures, and art of the region. The Museum regularly offers studio art courses, free children's art classes, art historical lectures, concerts, and exhibitions from its permanent collection and traveling shows and other programs to ensure that visitors gain a better appreciation and understanding of the fine arts. The Museum is funded through support from museum membership and annual fund donations by the public, grants from the business and corporate communities, and support from Washington County, the City of Hagerstown, private foundations, and the Maryland State Arts Council. In 2010, the museum's total operational revenue was in excess of \$1.5 million.³²

Maryland Symphony Orchestra (MSO)

Observing its thirtieth annual season in 2012-2013, the Maryland Symphony Orchestra's (MSO) annual operating budget of nearly \$1.2 million is supported through ticket sales, contributions from individuals and businesses, concert sponsorships and grants from foundations as well as City, County and State government agencies.

As Western Maryland's only fully-professional orchestra the MSO serves an annual audience of over 70,000 through 15 concerts presented in the historic Maryland Theatre and in other venues throughout the region including the July Fourth "Salute to Independence" at Antietam National Battlefield.

With a mission to "educate and entertain" the MSO offers music education outreach programs and initiatives in partnership with Washington County Public Schools impacting nearly 25,000 children each season. These enriching educational services are presented in schools and classrooms by MSO musicians.

Through the generous support of individuals the MSO provides free tickets to its concerts in the Maryland Theatre for students in Grades 1 to 12. Students and adults can also learn about concert programming by attending free lectures offered by Music Director Elizabeth Schulze and guest artists.

Using the Americans for the Arts Economic Impact calculator, the annual economic impact from all of the MSO's programs and its audiences in the region is currently estimated at \$2.9 million. This event-related spending supports jobs creation and revenues for local and state government, as well as local and regional businesses, organizations and vendors.

Maryland Theatre

The Maryland Theatre provides seating for 1,300 at performances of a variety of artists and entertainers, and shows entertain approximately 120,000 visitors each year.³³ The Theatre has partnerships with many organizations throughout the community, including the Maryland Symphony Orchestra, Washington County Public Schools, Washington County Free Library, and the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts.

Maryland Theatre's Board is composed of 14 members who are invited and elected to run. Slots on Board members are distributed by the type of occupations held by the potential candidates.

Bridge of Life Theatre

The Bridge of Life Theatre, presently home to a non-denominational evangelical church, was built in 1914 as the "Colonial Theatre." The church offers free movies, popcorn, and drinks for members of the community every other Saturday night.³⁴

University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH)

³² Washington County Museum of Fine Arts. (2010). *2009-2010 Annual Report*, p.32.

³³ Maryland Theatre. (n.d.). *History of the Maryland Theatre*. Retrieved on July 20th, 2011 from <http://www.mdtheatre.org/history.php>.

³⁴ Bridge of Life. (n.d.). *Home*. Retrieved on October 20th, 2011 from <http://www.bridgeoflife.org/>.

The University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH) is a regional higher education center that offers undergraduate and graduate academic programs of the universities within the University System of Maryland at its facility in downtown Hagerstown.³⁵ USMH opened in January 2005, and there are presently five universities offering 13 undergraduate and eight graduate programs (Frostburg State University; Towson University; University of Maryland, College Park; University of Maryland University College and Salisbury University).³⁶

Washington County Free Library

The Washington County Free Library system (WCFL) has been serving the county, Maryland, and the Cumberland Valley since 1898.³⁷ WCFL promotes community enrichment and economic vitality by providing information and library materials in a variety of formats. WCFL was the founder of America's first bookmobile and is the second oldest county-wide library system in the United States.³⁸

The WCFL operates 7 branches all over the County, and its Central branch, as well as the Administrative division is located in Hagerstown.³⁹ The Library's major financier is the County and the State government, who provided over 90 percent of the annual revenue during the year 2009-2010. The Library is governed by a 9-member Board of Trustees.⁴⁰ A major capital project to renovate and expand the Central branch building in Hagerstown is currently underway, with a new building to be opened in 2013. The new building will include exhibition space for historic collections, expanded computer training labs and expanded patron parking.⁴¹

Potomac Playmakers

The Potomac Playmakers, Inc. is a community-based non-profit organization that provides entertainment and an opportunity for members of the community to participate in theater. Founded in 1926 in Hagerstown, Potomac Playmakers is one of the nation's oldest community theater groups. Their productions represent an all-volunteer effort, from costuming, set design and construction to lights and sound.⁴²

Since October 2008, the group has been housed in the Academy Theater in Hagerstown.

Washington County Playhouse

The Washington County Playhouse, first opened in 1985, is a dinner theatre located in Hagerstown. The theater provides guests with entertainment and a full buffet and bar. Performances include classic Broadway, comedies, dramas, revues, and other theatrical productions.⁴³

City Ballet School

The City Ballet School, located in Hagerstown, provides dance instruction to students throughout the region. Classes include ballet, tap, jazz, and modern dance.⁴⁴

³⁵ University System of Maryland Hagerstown. *About*. Retrieved on October 20th, 2011 from <http://www.hagerstown.usmd.edu/about.aspx>.

³⁶ Id.

³⁷ Washington County Free Library. (n.d.). *About Us*. Retrieved on October 20th, 2011 from <http://www.washcolibrary.org/aboutus.asp>.

³⁸ Id.

³⁹ Washington County Free Library. (2010). 2009-2010 Annual Report. Retrieved on October 20th, 2011 from http://www.washcolibrary.org/assets/Documents/Annual_Report_2009-2010.pdf.

⁴⁰ Id.

⁴¹ Id.

⁴² Potomac Playmakers. (n.d.), Retrieved on October 20th, 2011 from http://www.potomacplaymakers.com/page-0-copy1#!_page-0-copy1.

⁴³ Washington County Playhouse. (n.d.). *About Us*. Retrieved October 20th, 2011 from <http://www.wcpdt.com/>.

⁴⁴ The City Ballet School. (n.d.). *Home*. Retrieved October 20th, 2011 from <http://www.cityballetschool.com/>.

The Importance of Coordination

Successful arts communities are most often the product of coordinated and community-wide support. This involves coordination of local government, an arts agency, financial institutions and local businesses among others.

Most successful arts efforts are led by a single, prominent arts council responsible for coordinating the efforts of all pertinent organizations. Additionally, many jurisdictions seeking to attract artists form an “arts incubator,” which is often conveniently housed or run by the arts council. An arts incubator is similar to a business incubator in that the purpose is to help a business/organization survive and grow during the start-up process. Arts incubators focus specifically on the needs of artists, typically offering studio and workspace, office supplies and services, technical advice, and other types of subsidized or low-cost assistance. The end goal is for the artists or organizations to be self-sustaining and contribute back to the community.

Government or quasi-government agencies typically involved in the arts include the local visitor’s bureau, the tourism department, public schools, and the economic development department (planning). According to Americans for the Arts, in 1997, 71 percent of local arts agencies partner with their Convention and Visitors Bureaus.⁴⁵ This coordination is essential since government can help market the community as an “arts destination” and provide necessary funding. The local government can also assist with dissemination of information to local businesses, including the restaurants and shops that stand to benefit the most from visitation. Additionally, the arts council and government partnership can help with coordination of arts efforts in the public schools.

While there is ongoing communication and a certain degree of coordination among various stakeholders in Hagerstown, the City has not formed an official partnership to develop and implement a coordinated arts, education and entertainment strategy. This type of partnership is often in the form of a Downtown Partnership, but it certainly does not need to take that form. In order to connect business revitalization, arts, entertainment and education in Washington County and Hagerstown, an Arts Commission should be formed involving local business leaders, educational institutions and prominent artistic venues (see Exhibit 13 above for list of key stakeholders and artistic venues).

⁴⁵Americans for the Arts. (January 1997). Cultural Tourism: Bridging America through Partnerships in Arts, Tourism and Economic Development. *Monograph*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Retrieved on July 28th, 2011 from <http://www.americansforthearts.org/NAPD/files/7995/Bridging%20America%20Through%20Partnerships%20in%20Arts.pdf>.

B. Summary of Information and Ideas Derived from Three Focus Groups

This section provides information and details obtained from three focus groups featuring key Washington County stakeholders. Though these focus groups were intended to be open-ended and freewheeling, the study team sought information in a couple of key categories. First, the study team sought a better understanding of the roles of key stakeholders and the present level of coordination between them. Second, the study team sought to identify a broadly shared vision of arts, entertainment and education in Washington County. Third, the study team wanted an improved understanding of the key impediments to industry cluster formation in Washington County and Hagerstown.

The three focus group sessions were held on May 25th, May 31st, and June 1st. Each lasted almost precisely 2 hours. All comments made by individual participants are held in the strictest confidence, though participants were told that summaries of discussions would be made public. The focus groups collectively included local merchants, bankers, business owners, professors, artists, local government officials, City Council members, County Commissioners, and their staffs. Despite the fact that these three sessions were held separately, similar viewpoints and suggestions were offered. Principal findings that emerged from the focus groups included the following:

1) Hagerstown should form the heart of Washington County's arts, education and entertainment community

Each of the focus group discussions were initiated with a question regarding the vision of the arts and entertainment in Washington County. Sage facilitators specifically asked participants about the desired geography of the arts, entertainment and education cluster to be formed in Washington County. All three focus groups agreed that the cluster should be aggressively promoted in downtown Hagerstown because of a pre-existing critical mass of venues, architecture, education, and events. However, there was also unanimous agreement that arts and entertainment are of importance to every Washington County community, including Boonsboro, Clear Spring, Funkstown, Hancock, Keedysville, Sharpsburg, Smithsport or Williamsport.

Though arts and cultural infrastructure exists in other Maryland municipalities, including in Frederick, MD, many participants expressed the view that few places of Hagerstown's size offer infrastructure like the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts, Maryland Theatre, Maryland Symphony Orchestra, as well as other regional attractions including Hagerstown Suns Municipal Stadium, Prime Outlets, and City Park. Additionally, Hagerstown benefits from a high volume of young artistic people coming into the city/community thanks to the formation of the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts and the presence of USM Hagerstown as well as the county's community college. Given these factors, each focus group concluded that the cultural hub in

Washington County is and should be downtown Hagerstown, though there was also a broadly shared view that artistic vibrancy should be apparent and promoted throughout the county.

2) The arts, education, and entertainment cluster desperately needs better coordination in Hagerstown and Washington County to fulfill its potential

Though there are individual efforts targeting arts and entertainment citywide, they generally lack synergy because of the lack of a prime mover and coordinator of activities. A substantial majority of focus group participants agreed that the City needs an “arts and entertainment coordinator” who would connect and consolidate many of the individual efforts now taking place. This could take the form of a Downtown Partnership that focuses intensely on the arts and entertainment, streetscaping, and related issues.

Frustratingly, there have been efforts to generate a higher level of coordination in the community than presently exists, but most focus group members agreed that these efforts have effectively faltered. The City of Frederick was mentioned repeatedly as a model for Hagerstown along this dimension among others, with many participants referring to the role of Frederick City government as an effective coordinator over the past three decades. That said, most focus group participants believe that coordination in Hagerstown need not be led by City government itself.

In addition to the need for a coordinator, the existing arts and entertainment community lacks a consistent vision regarding the appropriate direction of its own future. Sage’s report has been developed in part to help fashion such a vision based upon economic realities, what has been observed in other successful arts and entertainment communities, upon the local base of assets and upon the ongoing input of key stakeholders.

3) Successful development of artistic & cultural assets requires rejuvenating the local retail environment

A number of focus group members argued that an ongoing shortage of visitors is partly attributable to the truncated operating hours of local retailers and eateries. A typical shop and restaurant in Hagerstown closes their business before the evening. This lack of nocturnal life frustrates visitors. Also, the mix of retail and business establishments fails to offer a good balance of entertainment to meet the varied preferences of visitors, who range from small children to adults. As a result, it is difficult to promote the City as a family destination.

Along with this issue of limited local retail and business activity is a perceived lack of availability of parking spaces, though focus group members often disagreed sharply with respect to the extent that parking is an issue. Some suggested that while parking exists, even charging small amounts for spaces represents a powerful deterrent.

The study team notes that City government has already accomplished much in terms of improving downtown Hagerstown's appearance. Since 1996, City government has invested more than \$5.5 million upon numerous improvement projects, including refurbishing buildings in the Arts and Entertainment District, bricking sidewalks, improving streetlights and signage, and construction of public squares.⁴⁶ However, more beautification needs to occur to adequately promote a fully sustainable artistic cluster capable of attracting repeat visitors.

4) Arts and entertainment district would benefit from improved marketing and branding

Hagerstown possesses a treasure trove of artistic and cultural offerings. However, Hagerstown has yet to be branded as a cultural center. Part of this is due to a lack of coordination between venues - a source of enormous frustration for certain focus group members. Some focus group members indicated that the City should focus on its cozy and unique atmosphere, while others thought that Civil War themes should emerge as a way to attract more interest. Therefore, consolidation among local retailers as well as involvement of the municipality in this effort would be preferable.

5) Target visitors with higher income

Several focus group members indicated that the low incomes associated with much of the downtown area represent a barrier to the formation of a vibrant arts and entertainment cluster. To compensate, the community should target visitors with higher incomes. Interest in the arts and culture is arguably more common among high-income, educated populations. That said, the focus of this endeavor is not merely upon the arts, but also upon entertainment; the demand for which cuts across demographic groups. Some focus group members agreed that there should be more housing opportunities for well-heeled individuals and families downtown and that an improvement in income dynamics could serve as a catalyst for retail and business revitalization, which in turn would create a more attractive context in which the arts could thrive.

6) Alter the City's image

In all three focus groups, the issue of the perception of Hagerstown emerged as a key discussion topic. Many agreed that visibly distressed areas, concentration of low-income households, and presence of informal businesses conspire to create an environment that is not conducive to elevated visitation, particularly among those with deep pockets. Crime and parking issues/perceptions were mentioned as the top two things about which people complain in a Hagerstown context. The intensely negative attitude among some local residents and business owners regarding their own community does not help. With respect to incidence of crime, some

⁴⁶ City of Hagerstown, Maryland. (October 20th, 2011). Hagerstown City Center. [Memorandum].

viewed perception as being divorced from reality. According to statistics provided by the City of Hagerstown's Chief of Police, the incidence rate of robbery, murder, rape, serious assaults and burglary in Hagerstown is far lower than in Cumberland and in Baltimore City, home to the state's most active arts, entertainment and education cluster. It should be noted, however, that the chance of being victimized by various crimes in Hagerstown is still 71 percent higher than in Washington County.⁴⁷

7) Active involvement of government is critical

Many focus group members expressed disappointment regarding the lack of a visible City government role in terms of creating an environment more conducive to the formation of an arts and entertainment cluster. City efforts could take the form of small streetscaping investments downtown, enhanced police presence, and greater support for businesses and investors.

⁴⁷ Information obtained through personal communication with Hagerstown Chief of Police on October, 2011. Computation is completed by Sage.

IV. SWOT Analysis

The quadrant below summarizes the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the ongoing cluster promotion efforts. Attributes characterized as weaknesses and threats represent those items that could potentially prevent Washington County from achieving its objectives of increasing income, visitation and elevating culture. Additional detail is provided in Appendix 2. This can be viewed in part as a summary of the report to this point. Recommendations offered below are intended to address threats and weaknesses, accentuate the community’s strengths and leverage opportunities.

Exhibit 14. Washington County SWOT analysis summary

Internal Attributes	
<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Art infrastructure Affordable housing Historic properties Ambience Parks Accessible location via major highways Wealth in suburbs and in proximate communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of identity Low educational attainment High unemployment rate Low income households High vacancy rates in the City Lack of variety in retail options/night life Lack of synergies between arts venues and events
<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civil War sites Arts & cultural education Arts & Entertainment (A&E) District Various developments in downtown area/ PEP Incentive Program Events Local merchants passionate about building vibrant downtown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative images, including regarding safety in Hagerstown Closure of businesses downtown Nearby arts towns Lack of support for artists Public unwillingness to pay for parking Ongoing lack of coordination Underinvestment in streetscaping and general community appearance
External Influences	

V. Recommendations

1) *Art promotion should initially focus on downtown Hagerstown*

Hagerstown is the core of Washington County both in terms of government administration and population density. Furthermore, the density of art and cultural assets around the City is greater than anywhere else in the County. According to the Visitor Bureau's website, of the 35 arts and cultural sites located in Washington County (excluding parks, cemeteries, and markets), at least 11 are located around the City of Hagerstown. Considering the density of development and mass of art infrastructure concentrated in downtown Hagerstown, the County's art promotional efforts should initiate from the City and expand outward into the County.

The challenge is to transform downtown Hagerstown into more of a tourist destination. Despite the arts and cultural heritage nearby, the City suffers from negative factors such as a concentration of poverty, perceived crime rates, and dilapidation of buildings. Private investment in the city is needed in order to reclaim under-performing areas.

2) *Deconcentrate poverty in downtown Hagerstown*

Hagerstown's downtown area is home to a high concentration of poverty, which often resides in the form of subsidized Section 8 housing. Virtually all key stakeholders agree that the concentration of poverty in downtown Hagerstown represents a formidable barrier to the formation of an arts, entertainment and education cluster in Hagerstown and Washington County. This concentration of poverty serves as a disincentive for merchants, at least some proportion of visitors and investors. Correspondingly, concentrated poverty prevents the community from leveraging its most critical artistic assets.

Research indicates that clusters of Section 8 households can destabilize neighborhoods, contribute to criminality, drugs, and other forms of antisocial behavior. This dynamic perpetuates a cycle of neighborhood disinvestment and decline.⁴⁸ In other words, concentrated poverty is not good for the impoverished. Therefore, a deconcentration of poverty can help lift living standards for low-income residents while creating a better environment for the arts, education and entertainment cluster to flourish.

3) *Create a Community Arts Commission/Downtown Partnership*

To build greater momentum and sustainability, it is critical to create an entity with significant powers that specializes in connecting a multiplicity of current endeavors. Sage recommends that

⁴⁸Turner, Margery A., Susan J. Popkin, and Mary K. Cunningham. (April 2000). Section 8 Mobility and Neighborhood Health. *Urban Institute*. Retrieved on September 15th, 2011 from <http://www.urban.org/publications/309465.html>.

this coordinating role be played by a non-governmental group that works closely with municipal and County government.

Sage recommends that Hagerstown and Washington County develop a Community Arts Commission (Downtown Partnership). The Commission will develop strategies, funding, and implementation plans for community projects. Sage further recommends that this board should consist of a representative(s) of all stakeholder groups, including the City, County, public school system, Washington County Arts Council, Chamber of Commerce, local banks, local media and others.

In the past, there has been skepticism among community leaders regarding the expansion of artistic and cultural efforts, so the Commission should take on this role of legitimizing art/cultural revitalization as a driver of future downtown vitality. For instance, in Arlington County, VA, the Arlington Commission for the Arts advises the County on policy and program development, oversees the grants and public art programs, advocates for the arts in Arlington and acts as a liaison between the arts community and the County.⁴⁹ This type of organization would have the authority and capacity to command a broader view of activities and events taking place in the City/County. It is also recommended that this organization oversee ticket sales, collect data and provide other services that ensure constant contact with member organizations as well as a high profile.

4) *Create an arts incubator*

In reviewing the case studies of well-known arts communities, including Arlington County, VA, Sage found that arts incubators are often very successful at attracting and assisting artists. The presence of artists not only attracts visitors, but also leads to business formation, greater demand for real estate and a general sense of community vibrancy.

Ideally, this arts incubator will consist of not only office and work space, but low-cost apartments for artists as well. It is recommended that the Washington County Arts Council provide technical and educational services to resident artists.

Though the proposed incubator would largely be geared toward the artists themselves and their professional requirements, there is no reason that there could not be a significant component of the development accessible to the broader public. Similar to the highly regarded Torpedo Factory in Alexandria, VA, the Hagerstown incubator could offer space available for the public to interact with artists, watch artists at work, or directly participate in creative activities. This

⁴⁹*Arlington Commission for the Arts*. (n.d.), Retrieved on September 15th, 2011 from <http://www.arlingtonarts.org/>.

could also serve as a way for artists to market their art, producing more sales and more reason for artists to locate their activities to the incubator.

5) *Intensive Marketing of the County's Cultural Assets*

To become recognized as a travel destination, Washington County must significantly expand its marketing, with an emphasis upon cultural assets, upcoming events and old world charm. The City of Pittsburgh among others has effectively utilized the Internet to accomplish much of this type of marketing. Online advertising is a relatively affordable method by which to disseminate information. The key is to be noticed, and that has everything to do with keywords. For instance, a Google search that includes the words "Mid-Atlantic things to do" should point squarely at Washington County and Hagerstown.

Toward this end, there should be a multi-faceted website that contains all information relating to the arts and culture of the county and city. This website should serve as the central repository for information regarding events, dates/complete calendar, times, ticket availability, parking, directions, proximate shopping and restaurants, reviews, etc. Ideally, the website would also allow for tickets to be sold and for reservations at area restaurants and hotels to be made. Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council manages ticket sales through their website. Their website and fee sharing arrangements may provide an attractive model for Washington County, but there is no reason that Washington County could not improve upon their model.

Nothing in these recommendations is inconsistent with a previously proposed plan to develop an Arts and Entertainment District in downtown Hagerstown. The concept of such a district was introduced in the Hagerstown-Washington County Chamber of Commerce's 1996 Downtown Enhancement Plan. In 1999, the City retained LDR International and architects from GWWO to assist it in creating the vision for the Arts and Entertainment District. The district could be bounded by East and West Franklin Streets, North and South Locust Streets, Jonathan Street and Summit Avenue, and East and West Antietam Street.

This was and is a noble vision. However, given a scarcity of public resources, the demographics of downtown Hagerstown and the lack of momentum in the local economy, developing such a district will be challenging in the near-term. Moreover, the study team believes that conditions necessary for the district to flourish will not be in place until the recommendations offered to the community have been faithfully implemented.

VI. Implementation

The previous section discussed five recommended actions to be taken to reinforce Hagerstown's cultural promotion effort. This section details a plan of action designed to help implement those recommendations. However, for one of the study team's five recommendations, an implementation plan is not required. The study team has indicated that it believes, based upon interviews, focus groups and other considerations, that downtown Hagerstown should form the epicenter of the county's cultural cluster. Though this requires consensus on the part of government and a broad array of community stakeholders, there is not an associated set of implementation items. Below is some guidance from the study team regarding implementation of the other four recommendations.

1) Create a Community Arts Commission/Downtown Partnership

The County Council should authorize and charter the Commission, spelling out powers, responsibilities, limitations, organizational structure and formal relationship to County and City government (if any). It would help if the County Council would invest seed money to initially support the organization, identify space within a public building that could be utilized on a pro bono basis, and provide the organization with a certain level of ad hoc staff support if needed.

A Community Arts Commission leader should be selected. This should be a member of the community who has demonstrated a willingness to participate on non-profit boards, has links to the Washington County cultural community and a demonstrated capacity to lead. The study team has identified several individuals who could be selected, but prefers to leave the selection process to Washington County residents/stakeholders.

This leader would immediately select their board, establish a required budget, create a mission and vision, articulate rules of engagement and voting processes, and begin to work with City and County government to identify possible synergies and opportunities for collaboration. Based on the study team's experience, the Board should not be overpopulated, probably with a maximum of nine members and a minimum of five.

It is important that this leader and his/her board establish links with existing organizations and maintain productive relationships with City and County officials. One of the most critical first steps is that this board and its broader stakeholders agree on a plan of action. The study team has worked to provide certain key aspects of that plan of action, but of course a dedicated board of engaged Washington County residents would be positioned to refine, augment and improve upon the study team's insights.

2) Deconcentrate Poverty in Downtown Hagerstown

Encouraging the dispersal of poverty beyond the center city will not only improve the vitality of downtown, but will also ensure that Section 8 voucher recipients among others live in safe, healthy neighborhoods with appropriate role models. It is critical that the City reconsider its zoning policies. In Hagerstown, downtown is zoned predominantly as Downtown-Mixed use (D-MU) and Moderate Density Residential (R2). However, much of the area outside of the city is zoned as Low Density Residential (R1). Stepped-up code enforcement also can serve as a vehicle by which to improve property conditions, increase investment and induce landlords to pursue non-Section 8 opportunities.

The Hagerstown Housing Authority (HHA) would be primarily responsible for implementing this recommendation. Additionally, the City of Hagerstown can enhance these efforts by allowing affordable housing in parts of the community currently zoned for low-density residential development. It may be that a certain number of current Section 8 voucher recipients may choose to move beyond the boundaries of Washington County, which is acceptable from a public policy perspective so long as their living conditions improve in the process.

In this effort, HHA would cooperate with the Housing Authority of Washington County (HAWC), its County-level counterpart. HAWC administers the Section 8 rental program for the balance of the County outside and serves approximately 500 families.⁵⁰ The HAWC operates public apartments for families located at 24 sites throughout the county⁵¹ and 6 senior communities, one of which is located in Hagerstown.⁵² According to published agency information, as part of its 2010-2014 five-year plan, the Authority has submitted an application to HUD to enable conversion of its senior and family public housing community units into Section 8 voucher-eligible units.⁵³ This could serve as the basis of a broader effort to deconcentrate poverty in Washington County, with the goal of generating better social outcomes in and around Hagerstown.

It is worth noting that Section 8 location patterns often mirror the geographic distribution of affordable rental housing. The formation of a successful cultural cluster would have the impact of raising housing costs, which itself would serve to deconcentrate poverty. Of course, as this report has suggested, the demographics of downtown Hagerstown are not presently aligned with support for such a cluster.

⁵⁰ HAWC. (n.d.), Retrieved on November 5th, 2011 from <http://www.hawcmd.org/>.

⁵¹ HAWC. (n.d.). Family Units, Retrieved on November 5th, 2011 from <http://www.hawcmd.org/index.php/renting/family-units>.

⁵² HAWC. (n.d.). Senior Communities, Retrieved on November 5th, 2011 from <http://www.hawcmd.org/index.php/renting/senior-communities>.

⁵³ HAWC. (n.d.). *Annual Plans*, Retrieved on November 5th, 2011 from <http://www.hawcmd.org/index.php/reports/annual-plans>.

3) Intensive Marketing of the County's Cultural Assets

The Internet has emerged as the primary medium of communication among American adults. Statistics compiled by the Pew Research Center for 2009 shows that 74 percent of U.S. adults use the Internet,⁵⁴ implying how important this medium has become in disseminating information.

The study team recommends that a website be developed under the watchful eye of the proposed Arts Commission and actively managed by the Commission. To serve as a central information distribution center, the website shall at a minimum include a regularly updated calendar listing all identifiable cultural events as well as offer the ability to purchase tickets and render payment. The study recommends that website development be put out for bid by the Commission, with the goal of securing a local vendor. A local vendor is far more likely to understand the community, be aware of various cultural organizations and be positioned to support website updates. This endeavor also represents an opportunity to engage students at local educational institutions, including students at the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts who are specializing in graphic design.

4) Create an Arts Incubator

Implementation begins with a commitment by County and City government to a downtown arts incubator in Hagerstown and the identification of a building. The incubator would be largely oriented around studio space, but ideally there would be living arrangements for artists.

As reflected in the case studies developed by Sage on behalf of the Washington County Arts Council, art incubators range in size and in terms of the range of services offered. Sage suggests that Washington County's incubator provide subsidized office supplies and technical assistance. Of course, there is a cost associated with this endeavor and the County and City will need to determine how much they are willing to invest in capital upgrades and ongoing operational expenditures.

In many instances (e.g., Frederick, MD), an arts council manages the incubator activities. In other cases (Arlington County, VA), the County Arts Commission takes on this role. However, there is currently no existing arts commission or partnership to take over management, which represents another reason to create one.

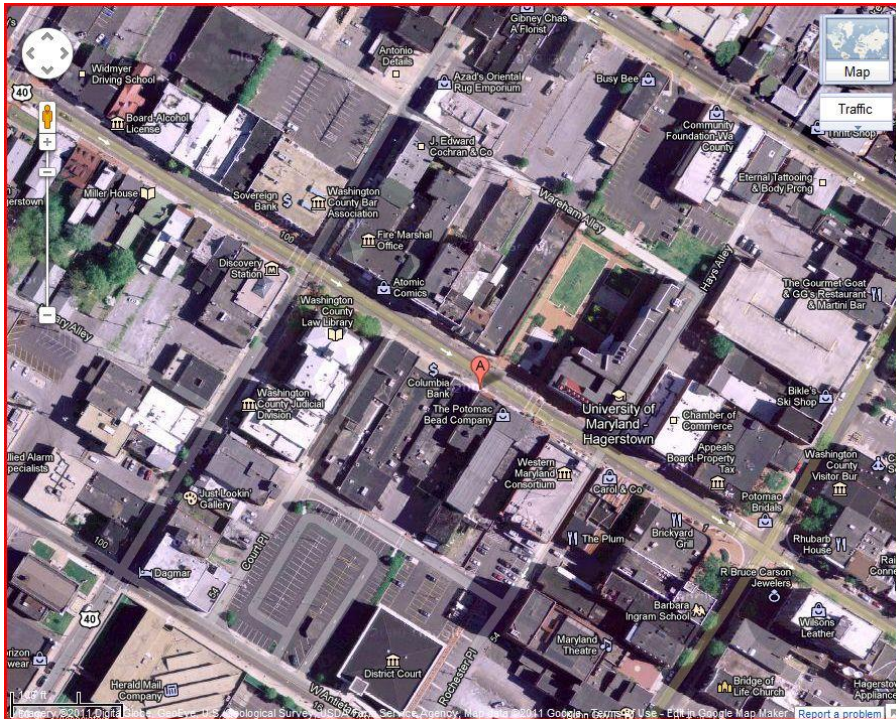
⁵⁴ Mills, Elinor. (January, 5th, 2010). Study: Three-quarters of U.S. adults use Internet. *Cnet*. Retrieved on September 20th, 2011 from http://news.cnet.com/8301-1023_3-10425965-93.html.

The study team has identified two existing buildings that could be renovated and transformed into artists' work/living space. Each of these buildings appears to be located in the Downtown-Mixed Use (D-MU) zone, which would be necessary for this type of development.⁵⁵ These include:

- The buildings at 59 West Washington Street (old Susquehanna building): Two two-story structures provide more than 26,000 square feet of space. Parking is available in the rear. (Exhibit 16)
- Building at 13-17 South Potomac Street: This building is 26,000 square feet and includes a basement. This represents a prime location for an arts incubator since the building is located at the heart of downtown Hagerstown and is situated between the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts and the Maryland Theatre. According to Hagerstown Advance, the building is currently available for \$10-\$12 per square foot.⁵⁶ (Exhibit 17)

Key stakeholders also recommended the former Massey Auto Body Shop on East Baltimore Street to serve this purpose. However, though this building covers a significant amount of acreage (2.7 acres) and encompasses 20,000 square feet, it is only a one-story building and therefore may not be suitable to serve multiple purposes (commercial, educational, residential).

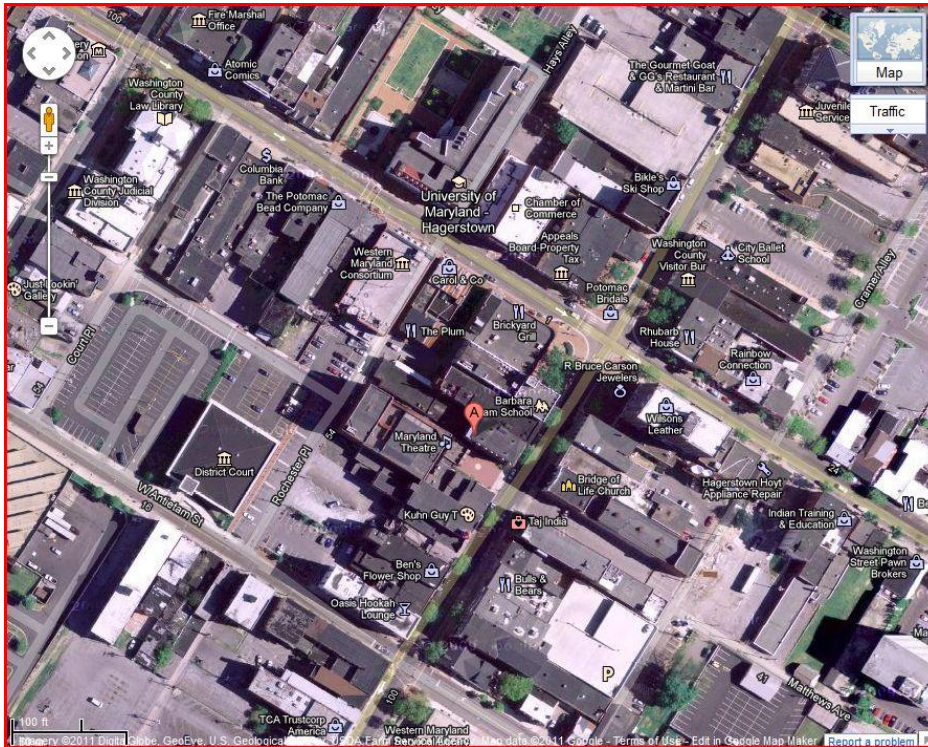
Exhibit 15. Building at 59 West Washington Street (old Susquehanna building)



⁵⁵City of Hagerstown. (n.d.). *Zoning Map*. Retrieved on September 20th, 2011 from http://www.hagerstownmd.org/Assets/Plan_Dev/Zoning-Map.pdf.

⁵⁶Hagerstown Advance. (n.d.). *13-17 South Potomac Street*. Retrieved on September 15th, 2011 from <http://www.hagerstownadvance.com/real-estate/city-center/13-17-south-potomac-street/>.

Exhibit 16. Building at 13-17 South Potomac Street

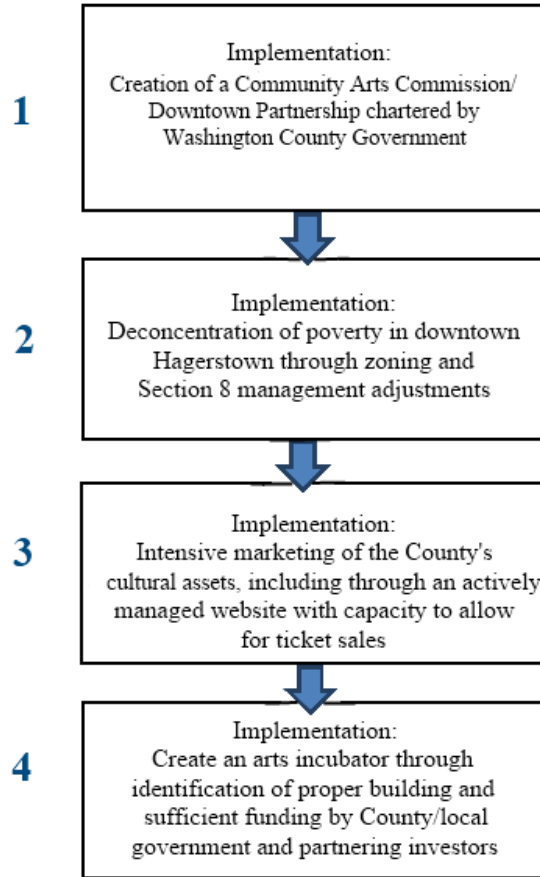


Based upon the selection of the site, the City and County should commit to an elegant streetscaping program in the area adjacent to the incubator. This area, after all, will serve as the epicenter of the Washington County arts, entertainment and education cluster, and its visual appeal should be elevated.

It should be noted that the City government has already acquired a building on 36/40 North Potomac Street and is planning to renovate the property into a residential and co-op unit for artists. The project is funded through a community development block grant offered through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.⁵⁷ This project will help support growth in the population of artists, but it will not necessarily translate neatly into a place for visitors to engage artists. The property is 0.2 miles from the Maryland Theatre while the two proposed sites are immediately proximate. Therefore, despite the City's strategic purchase of the building at 36/40 North Potomac Street, a separate site must be identified for the arts incubator.

⁵⁷ City of Hagerstown, Department of community & Economic Development. (October 13, 2011). *Development Plan Update/36-40 North Potomac Street*. [Memorandum].

Implementation Summary



References

AIA Center for Communities by Design. (2006). *Southside Revival: Changing the Market Dynamics in an Early Mid-Atlantic Downtown*.

Americans for the Arts. (April 1997). *Hatching Art: Creating a Vital Arts Presence in Your Community*. *Monographs*. Vol. 1, No. 4.

Americans for the Arts. (2007). *Arts & Economic Prosperity III*. Retrieved on September 1st, 2011 from http://www.artsusa.org/pdf/information_services/research/services/economic_impact/aepiii/national_report.pdf.

Americans for the Arts. (January 1997). *Cultural Tourism: Bridging America through Partnerships in Arts, tourism and Economic Development*. *Monograph*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Retrieved on July 28th, 2011 from <http://www.americansforthearts.org/NAPD/files/7995/Bridging%20America%20Through%20Partnerships%20in%20Arts.pdf>.

Arlington Commission for the Arts. (n.d.). *Arlington Arts*. Retrieved on September 15th, 2011 from <http://www.arlingtonarts.org/>.

Artists and Arts & Entertainment Establishments. (n.d.). [Pamphlet].

Barbara Ingram School for the Arts. (n.d.). *Welcome Class of 2015*. Retrieved on July 1st, 2011 from http://www.barbaraingramschool.com/uploads/2011_New_Student_Orientation.pdf. p. 3,7,12.

Brief History of WCMFA last three years. (n.d.). [Handout].

Bridge of Life. (n.d.). *Home*. Retrieved on October 20th, 2011 from <http://www.bridgeoflife.org/>.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2010). *Occupational Outlook 2010 – 2011*. Retrieved on June 30th, 2011 from <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos092.htm#earnings>.

Callahan, Art. (August 27, 2011). *Is there a vision for City's downtown?* *Herald-mail.com*. Retrieved on September 15th, 2011, from herald-mail.com/opinion/hm-is-there-a-vision-for-citys-downtown-20110826,0,7952896.story.

The City Ballet School. (n.d.). *Home*. Retrieved October 20th, 2011 from <http://www.cityballetschool.com/>.

City of Hagerstown, Maryland. (October 20th, 2011). *Hagerstown City Center*. [Memorandum].

City of Hagerstown. (n.d.). *Zoning Map*. Retrieved on September 20th, 2011 from http://www.hagerstownmd.org/Assets/Plan_Dev/Zoning-Map.pdf.

City of Hagerstown, Department of community & Economic Development. (October 13, 2011). *Development Plan Update/36-40 North Potomac Street*. [Memorandum].

City of Hagerstown & Hagerstown/Washington County Chamber of Commerce. (1996). *Downtown Hagerstown Enhancement Plan: A Proposal by the Hagerstown/Washington County Chamber of Commerce in Cooperation with the City of Hagerstown*. [Pamphlet].

Hagerstown Advance. (n.d.). *13-17 South Potomac Street*. Retrieved on September 15th, 2011 from <http://www.hagerstownadvance.com/real-estate/city-center/13-17-south-potomac-street/>.

Hagerstown Advance. (n.d.). *Meet the Team*. Retrieved on June 30th, 2011 from <http://www.hagerstownadvance.com/meet-the-team/>.

Hagerstown Advance. (n.d.). *PEP Program*. Retrieved on June 30th, 2011 from <http://www.hagerstownadvance.com/doing-business/incentives/pep-program/>.

Hagerstown A & E. (n.d.), Retrieved on June 30th, 2011 from <http://www.hagerstownmd.org/ae.html>.

Hagerstown Magazine.(n.d.). *History*. Retrieved on June 29th, 2011 from <http://www.inhagerstown.com/content.asp?page=history>.

Hagerstown-Washington County Chamber of Commerce. (1996). *Downtown Hagerstown Enhancement Plan*. [Handout].

Hagerstown-Washington County Chamber of Commerce. (n.d.). *Who We Are*. Retrieved on July 20th, 2011 from <http://www.hagerstown.org/whoweare/index.html>.

HAWC. (n.d.), Retrieved on November 5th, 2011 from <http://www.hawcmd.org/>.

HAWC. (n.d.). Family Units, Retrieved on November 5th, 2011 from <http://www.hawcmd.org/index.php/renting/family-units> .

HAWC. (n.d.). Senior Communities, Retrieved on November 5th, 2011 from <http://www.hawcmd.org/index.php/renting/senior-communities>.

HAWC. (n.d.). *Annual Plans*, Retrieved on November 5th, 2011 from <http://www.hawcmd.org/index.php/reports/annual-plans>.

Brief History of WCMFA – Last Three Years. (n.d.). [Handout].

Keels, Heather. (August 10, 2011). Two longtime Hagerstown businesses to move. *Herald-mail.com*.

Maryland Association of Realtors. (2011). *Housing Statistics: August 2011*. Retrieved on August 30th, 2011 from <http://www.mdrealtor.org/HousingStatistics/HousingStatistics>.

Maryland Manual. (n.d.). *Washington County, Maryland, Municipalities: Hagerstown*. Retrieved on June 29th, 2011 from <http://www.msa.md.gov/msa/mdmanual/37mun/hagerstown/html/h.html>.

Maryland State Arts Council. *About*. Retrieved on July 29th, 2011 from <http://www.msac.org/about>.

Maryland State Arts Council. (2010). *Fiscal Year 2010 Annual Report*.

Maryland State Arts Council. (2008). *Maryland Statewide Survey of the Arts*. Retrieved on September 2nd, 2011, from http://www.msac.org/docs_uploaded/Statewide_survey.pdf.

Maryland Symphony Orchestra: Mission & History. (n.d.). [Pamphlet].

Maryland Symphony Orchestra. (n.d.). *Corporate Sponsorship*. Retrieved on July 20th, 2011 from <http://www.marylandsymphony.org/support/corporate-sponsorships>.

Maryland Theatre. (n.d.). *History of the Maryland Theatre*. Retrieved on July 20th, 2011 from <http://www.mdtheatre.org/history.php>.

Mills, Elinor. (January 5, 2010). Study: Three-quarters of U.S. adults use Internet. *Cnet*. Retrieved on September 20th, 2011 from http://news.cnet.com/8301-1023_3-10425965-93.html.

MSAC. (n.d.). *Maryland's Arts & Entertainment Districts*. Retrieved on June 30th, 2011 from <http://www.nasaa-arts.org/Learning-Services/Past-Meetings/B-A&E-Presentation.pdf>.

Museums & Historical Sites Guide. (n.d.), Retrieved on September 15th, 2011 from <http://www.marylandmemories.com/museum/#>.

National Endowments for Arts. (November 2009). *2008 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts*. Retrieved on September 1st, 2011 from <http://www.nea.gov/research/2008-SPPA.pdf>.

NEA. (April, 2011). *Time and Money: Using Federal Data to Measure the value of Performing Arts Activities*. Retrieved on September 1st, 2011 from <http://www.nea.gov/research/Notes/102.pdf>.

Potomac Playmakers. (n.d.), Retrieved on October 20th, 2011 from http://www.potomacplaymakers.com/page-0-copy1#!_page-0-copy1.

Proposal by the Hagerstown-Washington County Chamber of Commerce. (1996). *Downtown Hagerstown Enhancement Plan*. [Handout].

Responses to Survey Questions to New Technical Businesses. (n.d.). [Handout].

Turner, Margery A., Susan J. Popkin, & Mary K. Cunningham. (April 2000). Section 8 Mobility and Neighborhood Health. *Urban Institute*. Retrieved on September 15th, from <http://www.urban.org/publications/309465.html>.

University System of Maryland Hagerstown. *About*. Retrieved on October 20th, 2011 from <http://www.hagerstown.usmd.edu/about.aspx>.

Washington County Free Library. (n.d.) *About Us*. Retrieved on June 29th, 2011 from <http://www.washcolibrary.org/aboutus.asp>.

Washington County Free Library. (2010). 2009-2010 Annual Report. Retrieved on October 20th, 2011 from http://www.washcolibrary.org/assets/Documents/Annual_Report_2009-2010.pdf.

Washington County, Maryland. (n.d.). *Welcome to Washington County*. Retrieved on September 15th, 2011 from <http://www.washco-md.net/washco.shtm>.

Washington County Museum of Fine Arts. (2010). *2009-2010 Annual Report*, p.1.

Washington County Museum of Fine Arts – Long Range Plan. (n.d.). [Handout].

Washington County Museum of Fine Arts. (n.d.). [Pamphlet], p.5-6.

Washington County Playhouse. (n.d.). *About Us*. Retrieved October 20th, 2011 from <http://www.wcpdt.com/>.

Western Maryland's Historical Library. (n.d.). Retrieved on June 29th, 2011 from <http://www.whilbr.org/bookmobile/index.aspx>.

Appendix

1. Successful Arts Communities – Case Studies

Town/Population:	Asheville, North Carolina (pop. 76,636/'09)
Endeavor:	Maintain sense of community and “small-town feel,” promote its architecture and tourist attractions
Context:	<p>The city of Asheville is located in Western North Carolina in the Blue Ridge Mountains, an hour and a half away from Charlotte. Like other arts towns, the City has experienced population growth over the past decade, growing over 8 percent since 2000. Major industries in the city include private education and health services, government, manufacturing, retail, and leisure and hospitality. The largest employers include Buncombe County Public Schools, Mission Health System and Hospital, the City of Asheville, and the Biltmore Company. There are also several colleges and universities in the Asheville area. Some of these are Western Carolina University, University of North Carolina at Asheville, and Warren Wilson College.</p> <p>The population of Buncombe County, of which Asheville is a part, is comprised of majority whites (88.9 percent) and African Americans (7.3 percent). Hispanics make up 1.3 percent. The median age is 40.6 years, and as of 2010, 32.5 percent of Buncombe County residents had a bachelor’s or advanced degree.</p> <p>John Villani, author of “The 100 Best Art Towns in America” describes the city as “a bucolic community that is part history exhibit, part college town, and part urban-renaissance showcase.” He continues, “Asheville has retained the walkable, neighborhood type of environment that defines the local lifestyle as something lived on a human scale.” Asheville has been an “arts-focused” town since the Arts & Crafts movement of the early 20th century due to local interest in architecture and design vernaculars developed during that time (Villani, 127).</p>
Description:	<p>While many cities saw a decline in their downtowns and are now experiencing downtown revivals, Asheville never allowed national chains to take over. Citizen activists and the city council organized a community-wide effort to keep local businesses downtown, and the city did not have the money to invest in urban renewal projects. Consequently, Asheville has been able to maintain a strong sense of community while many other cities are now struggling to gain theirs back.</p> <p>Since the city did not have capital to invest in urban renewal, old historic buildings are still in use. These buildings are of Neoclassical, Romanesque Revival, and Art Deco styles, bringing recognition to the city for its extensive Art Deco architecture. One of the biggest attractions in Asheville is the home built by George W. Vanderbilt. The Biltmore Estate, America’s largest private residence, was designed by the famous architect Richard Morris Hunt, and contains massive French Renaissance chateaus surrounded by acres of gardens. This is a major tourist attraction.</p> <p>The blend of beautiful geography, “the community” atmosphere, and historic architecture attracted many artists and tourists, as well as new residents seeking a higher quality of life.</p>

Impact: Asheville has been successful at maintaining its sense of community, establishing itself as an arts town, and attracting tourists. According to the Asheville Convention and Visitors Bureau, the economic impact of tourism to the city and county is about 1.9 billion each year, and the city attracts 2.9 million overnight travelers. The Visitor Center of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce welcomed 197,941 visitors to Asheville in 2010. According to the CVB, Hotel sales in Buncombe County totaled approximately \$164.5 million in year 2010.

The city has also been recognized for its arts scene, including being voted one of the “25 Small City Arts Destinations” by American Style magazine in 2011, and being rated as one of the top ten art towns in John Villani’s “The 100 Best Art Towns in America.”

Art-related museums and attractions include the Pack Square Education, Arts, and Science Center, the Asheville Art Museum, the YMI Cultural Center, the Colburn Gem & Mineral Museum, Asheville Area Arts Council Galleries, the Diane Wortham Theatre, and the list goes on. Downtown is home to the region’s largest concentration of art galleries outside of Charleston, SC (Villani, 128). Furthermore, local artists display their artwork in local shops scattered throughout the downtown area. Popular events include the City Center Art Walks and a bluegrass and folk music summer series called Downtown After Five.

Relevance/Lesson: Asheville’s consistent vision among community leaders enabled the development of the city while maintaining traditional architectures.

Town/Population: **Frederick, MD** (pop. 59,644/’09)

Endeavor: Cultural revival of downtown (Arts and entertainment)

Context: The city is located in Western Maryland, less than one hour away from Baltimore, MD and Washington D.C. There has recently been significant population growth in Frederick, with the population growing by nearly 20% from 2000 to 2010. Major industries in the city include bioscience, technology, manufacturing, professional services and tourism, which are also the largest employment sectors. In the 1970s, retailers in the city followed the nation-wide trend and moved into malls, leaving the Downtown empty and rundown. The city also experienced a large flood, often referred to by locals as “the Great Carroll Creek Flood,” which caused even more damage to the downtown area. While the city was home to many historical properties, including the Weinberg Center for the Arts, most had been damaged.

Description: Unhappy with what the downtown area had become, business owners, the local government and Frederick residents came together to revitalize the city’s downtown, which would in turn be a new home to many local retailers and a center for artists and cultural events. According to the city’s economic development department, revitalization of Downtown Frederick has been the result of “broad-based, coordinated community support.” In the late 1970s, local business owners and residents organized a plan “called Operation Town Action” to revitalize Downtown. The plan included a \$65 million city flood control project, and residents worked together to bring the history and business back to the downtown area. Today, the organization has been renamed the Downtown

Frederick Partnership, and manages Frederick’s Main Street Program, which is part of a state-wide program aimed at preserving and revitalizing main streets in Maryland. In 1976, The Tourism Council of Frederick County was established to help promote the area as a tourist destination. The Tourism Council is now charged with several responsibilities, including operating the Frederick Visitors Center and marketing the city and county. In 1977, the Frederick Historic District was established to help preserve the many historical features that are located within the city.

The Frederick Arts Council, a nonprofit organization, was also established in 1976 after the flood, and was initially responsible for restoring the Weinberg Center for the Arts, the city’s historic performing arts center. Today, the Frederick Arts Council seeks to “foster an environment where the arts may flourish in the community through grants and scholarships, arts advocacy, and links to essential resources.” The Council organizes and assists with programs, services, activities, and events in the community.

Impact: The City of Frederick has been tremendously successful at revitalizing the city’s downtown, as well as transforming the city into an arts and entertainment tourist destination. A study by Global Insight in 2009 revealed that the economic impact of spending by visitors from at least 50 miles away resulted in \$367.2 million. The study reported that the tourists spent the majority of their money on food (\$149.1 million); shopping (\$93.9 million); entertainment (\$64.3 million); lodging (\$39.3 million); and transportation (\$20.4 million). According to the Tourism Council of Frederick County, 70 percent of tourists that stop into the Frederick Visitor Center come from within a 200-mile radius, including other parts of Maryland, and adjacent states (PA, VA, WV) followed by New Jersey and New York. The Council also reports that Frederick attracts a wide range of age groups, but those that travel the furthest tend to be “heritage travelers” visiting the local historic sites and museums.

In 2003, the Maryland Department of Economic Development designated Downtown Frederick an Arts and Entertainment district. In 2011 American Style Magazine rated the city as the 8th best small arts city in the United States. The Weinberg Center remains a prominent arts center in the city and is a key venue for artists to display their talents and residents to enjoy.

Relevance/Lesson: Frederick is a great example of how community organizations and residents can work together to really make an arts movement successful. As stated earlier, this was a result of “broad-based, coordinated community support.” The advocacy organizations as well as the Tourism Department and local government all worked together to market the city’s existing arts scene and local venues. Downtown revitalization was also extremely important in this case.

Town/Population: **Charlottesville, VA** (pop. 43,475/’10)

Endeavor: Promote historical roots and encourage art culture

Context: The city is located in west Central Virginia, in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains and about 100 miles southwest of Washington, DC. Population growth has remained steady in the past decade, increasing approximately 7.8 percent from 2000-2010,

according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The University of Virginia, one of Virginia’s largest and most highly recognized institutions, is the largest employer in the city and has played a central role in the area’s growth and stability. Other major employers include two regional banks (Stellar One and Virginia National Bank), GE Fanuc, Inova Corporation, Lexis-Nexis, SNL Financial, Sperry Marine, the City of Charlottesville, and the federal government. Major industries are education and health services. Agriculture also remains a prominent industry.

The population of Charlottesville is comprised of about an equal number of males and females, with the majority about 20-60 years old. Furthermore, an overwhelming 73 percent of the population is white, while African Americans make up 21 percent and Asians 4 percent. Half hold a Bachelor’s or post-graduate degree. The large proportion of young adults and higher educational attainment is largely attributed to the location of the University.

Charlottesville, VA is a historic community, and the city and Albemarle County have been home to three American presidents (Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe). The homes of these presidents, now museums, attract millions of tourists from around the world every year, including Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello. Monticello is included on the World Heritage List long with other famous architectures, like the Great Pyramids and TajMahal. John Villani, author of “The 100 Best Art Towns in America” describes the city as “a blend of laid-back Southern charm, along with the vitality of a college town.”

Description:

The preservation of the City’s historical treasures has been a key driver of cultural development within the city. According to the city’s planning department, “safeguarding the heritage of the City promotes pleasure, education, and a sense of well-being among its citizens. Protecting the city’s unique resources also fosters civic pride, contributes to an understanding of the City’s past, and serves as a guide for future development.” While Charlottesville did not have a “cultural movement” as other cities have due to its existing historical roots, there are many organizations charged with preservation of the city’s history as well as promoting all forms of art. The Historic Resources Committee was charged by City Council in 1998 “to advocate for historic preservation and promote an appreciation of local historic resources.” The Convention and Visitors Bureau is responsible for marketing the city and attracting and assisting tourists. Art organizations include the Piedmont Council for the Arts and New City Arts Initiative.

Impact:

Charlottesville has been able to build upon its historical roots, preserving past treasures while encouraging development of more modern structures. The unique culture of the city thrives due to the appreciation of the city’s history, and the University brings in thousands of new young, aspiring professionals each year. Its proximity to Washington, DC also attracts “urban castaways,” whose spending largely drives the local arts economy. Charlottesville is home to many visual art venues, including the McGuffey Art Center, University of Virginia Art Museum, and the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection. Entertainment venues include the City Center for Contemporary Arts, Live Arts volunteer theater, the newly-restored Paramount Theater, the Charlottesville Amphitheater, and the John Paul Jones Arena. As you can see, the city offers a wide

variety of venues for its artists and residents. Popular events include the Ash Lawn Opera Festival and Fridays After 5 free concert series.

In 2007, the Virginia Tourism Corporation estimated that tourist spending in Charlottesville amounted to \$167,314,352. The city gained \$5,835,670 in local tax receipts and tourism supported 2,025 jobs. Payroll from tourism was approximately \$35,110,218. The City has received widespread recognition and awards, including “the 4th Best Place to Live in the U.S.” by Kiplinger’s Magazine in 2009, “One of the 30 Coolest Neighborhoods” by Men’s Health in 2009, The “9th Best Place to Do Business” by Forbes in 2009, and has been recognized as one of the best places to retire by both the AARP and Kiplinger’s Magazine.

Relevance/Lesson: Historical preservation has been a key driver of cultural development and brings millions of tourists to Charlottesville every year. Preserving local historical treasures and promoting appreciation for these treasures was extremely important in establishing this city as an “arts city.” Additionally, proximity to urban centers as well as being home to a college or University seems to be important to attracting a continuous flow of young professionals and “urban castaways” who don’t mind spending their money on local art. The mix of Charlottesville’s rich history and preservation of this history along with the University has allowed the city to gain recognition as a small arts town.

Town/Population: **Berkeley Springs, WV** (pop. 692/’09)

Endeavor: Maintaining its art culture

Context: The town is located in the foothills of the Allegheny Mountains, about 90 minutes from the Washington/Baltimore metro area. Berkeley Springs, as its name implies, is best known for its natural mineral springs that flow year-round into pools scattered throughout the area. Berkeley Springs State Park is a major recreational site within the city and Morgan County, of which the city is a part. The population has remained very small, with a -6.4 percent decline in population since year 2000, though this has not been a constant decline.

John Villani describes the town in his book as, “part new age paradise, part weekend retreat for frazzled urbanites, and part ongoing experiment to see exactly how far one community’s group of artists and arts promoters can drive a town’s economic destiny.”

Description: Berkeley Springs draws on arts and culture from its past. The town’s success with art is largely attributed to its ability to attract artists from surrounding urban areas and really provide them with a home that strives on creativity. The town’s Chamber of Commerce says that, “art, culture and history are routinely part of daily life, considered essential for the community's well-being.” A major driver of the arts scene and award-winning leading organization is the Morgan Arts Council, an organization that has been established since 1977. The arts council has recently moved into the Ice House Arts Center, a renovated fruit-storage building, that provides a venue for thousands of people to make, buy, and practice art. According to their website, “MAC has produced more than a thousand programs with nearly 2400 artists, benefitting thousands of visitors and residents including students in all county schools.” MAC has been the key in making the most of the town’s talent.

Impact: The Berkeley Springs Chamber of Commerce writes, the extensive community of working artists linked with MAC, has earned Berkeley Springs state, regional and national recognition. It is West Virginia's first certified arts community, is listed among the 100 best small art towns in all four volumes of the book by that name, and reliably places among the top 10 art destinations among small cities and towns in America.”

Relevance/Lesson: The importance of a strong, well-organized arts council which leads to success in nurturing artists

Town/Population: **Siler City, North Carolina** (pop. 7,887/'10)

Endeavor: Leadership education

Context: The city is located within an hour’s drive of Raleigh and Greensboro. Population growth has been due to Hispanic immigrants recruited to production lines at meat processing plants. Formerly, the primary industry in the town was textile and furniture manufacturing and these have historically been the largest employers. Although there are a large number of artists and craft entrepreneurs in the county, there had not been any promotional venues for them. The possibility to expand the arts industry in the town was neglected until the town was visited by leaders from the Central Carolina Community College (CCCC), who were searching for a potential site for a new business incubator.

Description: Recognizing its significant population of artists and traditional craft makers, CCCC’s project managers worked to create a business incubator targeting artists and craft makers. The incubator project started in 2001. First, the CCCC created a non-profit organization, the North Carolina Arts Incubator (NCAI), to raise funds for buying and renovating buildings for the incubator. The incubator provides programs wherein artists receive training for specific skills and entrepreneurship instruction. In 2001, \$125,000 was granted to the NCAI. With additional funding from the town government the following year, the incubator was constructed and opened in November 2003.

Impact: The North Carolina Arts Incubator was successful in hosting notable artists, such as world-famous guitar maker Terry McInturff. Intense focus is paid to the requirements for operating galleries.

Relevance/Lesson: Public support provided to local artists which nurture their skills.

Town/Population: **Beacon, New York** (pop. 13,800/'00)

Endeavor: Dia: Beacon

Context: Located about 90 miles north of New York City, Beacon is a former manufacturing town in New York’s Hudson River Valley. Until 2003, the arts scene in Beacon was limited to organizations such as the Howland Cultural Center and the Tallix foundry which serviced the local community. In 2003, however, the Dia Art Foundation, an esteemed national contemporary arts institution, took over a 300,000-square-foot cookie packaging plant owned by Nabisco.

Description: City of Beacon itself had a reputation as a “gritty, forsake city,” populated with flophouses, crack dens and brothels. However, the former Nabisco plant, the 1920s industrial architecture on the shore of the Hudson River, possessed a number of favorable

conditions to be repurposed for an art and cultural venue. Its high ceilings and hardwood maple floors were deemed to be perfect for exhibitions. Its geographical proximity to New York City was a plus. In 1998, before Dia Foundation took over the property, it was for sale for \$2 million. Dia's officials, however, persuaded the owner to donate the building for free as long as Dia Foundation pay for a \$1 million environmental cleanup. Partnering with National Trust community Investment Corporation (NTCIC), the Foundation raised a \$50 million historic rehabilitation by registering the property into the National Register of Historic Places. NTCIC in turn partnered with Bank of American to purchased \$6.6 million federal historic tax credits to cover the cost.

In the end, the 1929 building became Dia: Beacon, home to 240,000 square feet of gallery space including a permanent collection and changing exhibitions of premier international contemporary art.

Impact: Following the opening of the museum, the town enjoyed further arts-related investment including chic coffeehouses and varied new galleries. The Beacon Project Space, another contemporary art effort that was established in the wake of Dia: Beacon, helps round out the arts in Beacon with music, dance, and theatre programs around town. Together, these offerings have made Beacon an arts tourism destination. According to an impact study, average annual attendance to Dia:Beacon is little over 68,000, 95 percent of which are non-local visitors. Dia: Beacon's \$4.7 million annual expenditure generates \$8.4 million worth of benefits to the local economy.

Relevance/Lesson: Dia: Beacon's experience provides an example where an old building is rehabilitated under public-private collaboration.

Town/Population: **Black Mountain, North Carolina** (pop. 7,848/'10)

Endeavor: Opening a local artist center

Context: Black Mountain is set in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The community has a rich history as a center for arts, music and drama. Black Mountain College opened in 1933 as an experimental school in interdisciplinary education. After World War II, many of the college's students and faculty moved to the West Coast, but in 1956, the college closed. During the 1960s and 70s, the town struggled. In 1980, the small downtown was largely comprised of a boarded up strip of dilapidated buildings. During the 1980s, funding from the governor's Community of Excellence program allowed Black Mountain to bring energy back to its downtown corridor and by the 1990s its downtown was reinvigorated. However, the arts culture, which had been a prominent part of the community through the 1950s, was yet to enjoy its own resurgence.

Description: In 1993, Black Mountain sold its old town hall to a member of an ad-hoc group of artists and business people. In 1995, the sale prompted the arts group to become a formal non-profit organization known as the Black Mountain Center for the Arts. Over the next four years, the Center campaigned for donations to renovate the building. The town government provided a low-interest loan and an \$88,000 donation. The group raised a total of \$1.2 million and in the fall of 2000, the new Black Mountain Center for the Arts opened. In 2002, the town paid off the \$200,000 the center owed for the building's renovation in exchange for the title to the center's land. This ensured the Center's long-term financial sustainability.

Impact: A recent study estimated the economic impact of Black Mountain and Asheville’s artists to be over \$200 million annually, which averages \$66,000/artist. Many of these artists live in Black Mountain.

Relevance/Lesson: Consolidated efforts of the local artists, businesses as well as the willingness of government in assisting building the art center.

Town/Population: **Nelsonville, Ohio** (pop. 5,392/’10)

Endeavor: Downtown rejuvenation through art schools

Context: Nelsonville is a small town surrounded by thousands of acres of national and state forests that attract millions of visitors annually. Its largest employer is Hocking College, a two-year college with an international student body located on the outskirts of town. At the turn of the 20th century, Nelsonville was the center of the region’s coal industry. The wealth and affluence that characterized Nelsonville during the early 1900s helped to create a charming downtown square.

However, the collapse of the region’s coal industry and the economic downturn of the 1930s were significant contributors to the economic and cultural demise of Nelsonville. Although Stuarts Opera House reopened to the public in the late-1990s, the downtown occupancy rate was 25 percent, buildings desperately needed repair and several historic storefronts had been converted into student housing rental units.

Description: In 2000, the Foothills School for American Crafts moved into a downtown storefront and provided an outgrowth for creativity stemming from Ohio University and Hocking College. The school teaches craft skills to students across all ages and (importantly) supplements this instruction with lessons in business management.

Furthermore, the town introduced a program to attract artists by subsidizing student rent for downtown spaces. In exchange for rent support, artists have been required to invest their sweat equity into rehabilitating storefront spaces, which has given new life to several historic buildings. Starbrick Clay (gallery and pottery classes) moved downtown and rehabilitated a Victorian storefront and Hocking College offered classes for credit at this location. Between 2002 and 2006, civic leaders who provided initial support for the artist retailers identified and developed additional ways to boost local commerce. For example, one group helped raise funds for a marketing brochure that is distributed to tourism agencies throughout the region. Downtown artist retailers worked with town officials to produce improved signage to attract visitors from the highway passing through town. The town also created a logo based on its history as a famous brick-producing region in the early 1900s.

Impact: Downtown occupancy rates went from 25 percent to 85 percent in four years. The Nelsonville public square was recently added to the National Register of Historic Places.

Relevance/Lessons: Nelsonville’s experience is an example where housing assistance and assistance for artists’ businesses bear fruit.

Town/Population: **New York Mills, Minnesota** (pop. 1,200/’09)

Endeavor: Regional cultural center for artists

Context: Nearly 80 miles from any major city, the small town of New York Mills demonstrates the potential for translating rural arts and culture into economic development. Finnish

immigrants settled the town in the 1880s. In 1885, New York Mills was incorporated and named for the large number of timber mills in town. After all the trees were cleared, the residents turned to farming in the 1900s, making corn and dairy farming an important aspect of the local economy. The town's largest employer is Lund Boats, a boat manufacturer, employing 575 people. During the 1990s, the town embarked on art-based economic development strategy, which is represented by the foundation of New York Mills Regional cultural Center in 1992.

- Description:** The endeavor to construct the New York Mills Regional Cultural Center was primarily led by an art school graduate and philanthropist, John Davis. With a clear vision to establish more art and cultural base in the town, he initiated the artist-in-residency program, which provides artists housing and exhibition spaces in an exchange for their contribution in supporting the community using their skills and talents. Capturing the momentum, John's next project was to build a center that could host various events and exhibitions for artists. After acquiring an old dilapidated property from local businessman, John obtained \$35,000 matching grant from the New York Mills Village Council and received an additional \$50,000 grant from McKnight Foundation in order to renovate the property. The rest of the renovation work was completed using parts obtained from closing buildings nearby plus 3,000 volunteer work hours supplied by local craftsmen. The artist-in-residency program evolved over time to include theater productions and musical performances, including international events, all of which make the arts accessible to rural residents. Through today, the Center has put on more than 80 exhibits and hosted 50 visiting artists since opening.
- Impact:** Between the cultural center's opening in 1992 and 1998, 17 new businesses opened in town, creating 350 jobs and increasing employment by 40 percent. The center has attracted media attention from the Today Show, the *New York Times* and National Public Radio.
- Relevance/Lessons:** Creation of New York Mill Cultural Center teaches a lesson that capital project could be accomplished without sizable investment if it is done wisely. Also, the success of the Center would not be possible without the start-up investment from the Village council and the McKnight Foundation. Perhaps, the government could put their faith in potential of an idea suggested by the entrepreneur as was the case with John Davis.
- Town/Population:** **North Adams, Massachusetts** (pop.15,586/'00)
- Endeavor:** Catalyze and support the creation of new art
- Context:** Founded in 1745, North Adams was established as a mill town, manufacturing a variety of industrial products most notably textiles in the 1860s. The Arnold Print Works Co. supplied textiles to the Union Army and eventually grew to be the largest employer in North Adams until its collapse after economic downturn of the 1930s. In 1942 Sprague Electric Company bought the old textile mill and converted it into an electronics plant. Sprague became a major research facility for the nature of electricity and semi-conducting materials and grew to employ over 20% of the North Adams community by 1966. The company closed in 1985 succumbing to foreign competition. The same property was then purchased in 1986 and became the home to the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art.

Description: The Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (Mass MoCA) opened in 1999 and is the largest center for contemporary arts in the United State receiving 120,000 visitors annually. The Mass MoCA features over 80 major new works of art and 50 performances. It features film screening and musical performances as well, hosting the Solid Sound Music Festival each year.

Due to the fact that the museum site was occupied by industrial factory, the making of Mass MoCA involved a massive scale demolition and hazardous material that lasted over 18 months. The museum was successful in raising fund to cover the construction cost through private-public partnership. Joseph Thompson, one of the founders of the Mass MoCA initiated the campaign connecting myriad of cultural institutions in the region. The founder obtained the state’s legislative support as well as form private sector assistance, which pledged more than \$8 million grants. In the end, the project was awarded \$35 million construction grant from the state, of which \$25.5 million was spent for the initial phase of the project, leaving \$9.5 million for the future facility built-out.

Impact: Since the opening of Mass MoCA, the annual payroll increased by \$24 million between 1998 and 2001. The museum was also responsible for \$9.4 million growth in 2002, \$5.6 million of which came directly from museum spending. The presence of Mass MoCA has increased North Adams residential land value by \$13,963,633. Four years after the establishment of Mass MoCA, 230 new jobs have been created and 44 new businesses established.

Relevance/Lesson: Making of a Mass MoCA is a success of the private-public partnership.

Town/Population: **Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania** (pop. 305,704/’10)

Endeavor: Downtown Cultural District

Context: In the nineteenth century, Pittsburgh enjoyed an industrial boom, becoming a center for steel, iron, aluminum and glass production. At the same time, the city’s image became associated with smoke and pollution leading writer James Parton to describe it as “Hell with the lid off.” In an effort to improve its reputation, public and civic leaders joined together to clean up the air and water and create inviting public spaces and architecturally sophisticated office buildings. By the 1980’s, however, Pittsburgh—like many cities in the so-called rust-belt—experienced significant industrial decline. The economic downturn took its toll on the city’s downtown neighborhoods and roused the concern of Jack Heinz and others who aimed to revitalize Pittsburgh’s cultural identity.

Description: Led by Heinz, and arts lover himself, the group formed the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust in 1984 as both an arts agency and a real estate and economic development catalyst. With Heinz Hall, the new home of the Pittsburgh Symphony, already in place, the Trust began with the restoration of the former Stanley Theater into the Benedum Center for the Performing Arts. The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust’s plan for development was a holistic approach that has included streetscaping programs, facade restorations, new cultural facilities, public open spaces and art projects.

Impact: Yesterdays’ Pittsburgh downtown, with only two cultural facilities, pales in comparison to the downtown of today which has been reinvigorated by a Cultural District that encompasses a fourteen-square block area with over a dozen arts venues as well as a vibrant dining and commercial scene.

In 2008, Pittsburgh celebrated its 250th anniversary while using the occasion to simultaneously draw attention to the city as a tourism destination. Behind both objectives was a marketing effort, called Pittsburgh 250, which did not exclusively rely on traditional print and electronic media but also broke ground with unconventional tactics. Among them was an initiative to attract travel writers from major news outlets so they may provide Pittsburgh with valuable (and presumably positive) exposure. Another novel approach involved the dissemination of a list of Pittsburgh-based experts to national news organizations. The promotion resulted in ABC World News Tonight showcasing the Carnegie Museum of Natural History's dinosaurs exhibit.

Relevance/Lesson: Similar to New York Mills, Pittsburgh's arts and cultural base was built around the momentum created by one organization. Also, Pittsburgh 250 provides an example where an art town focuses on advertising its arts and culture.

Town/Population: **Taneytown, Maryland** (pop. 5,128/'00)

Endeavor: Artists' Venue for Entrepreneurial Efforts

Context: The Tuscarora Indians were the earliest known people in what is known today as Taneytown. Before the arrival of European settlers, this Indian tribe had already dispersed into the South Mountain in the Cumberland Valley. After this tribe left, Taneytown was occupied by Germans from Germany and Pennsylvania. In 1754, Taneytown was founded. In that same year, the Resurvey of Brothers agreement came into effect, giving 7900 acres of land to Edward Diggs and Raphael Taney, who helped design the town, but who did not live in the area. Given the high degree of historic rural settlement in this area, a part of the city has been designated as a Historic District by the National Register of Historic Places.

Impact: As the economy dries up and there are fewer sources of income for artists nationwide, artists in the city of Taneytown are finding profitable opportunities by selling their crafts at larger retail stores such as Pristine Antiques, Collectibles & Gifts. Artists in this city are also becoming more business literate as they run mini-businesses at Pristine and get advice from Shoap. In addition, Taneytown's economic development office provides business workshops that can be advantageous to these new entrepreneurs. The rental space provided by Priscilla Shoap provides her with income ranging from \$25 to \$100, depending on the amount of space provided. In short, the most salient impacts of this new venue for artists to sell their crafts are that they can start their mini businesses at low cost, become more business literate, and generate more income.

Relevance/Lesson: Micro-level government support is needed for Hagerstown in order to build or reinforce its internal artistic capacity.

Town/Population: **Prescott, Arizona** (pop. 33,938/'00)

Endeavor: State-wide art and local history destination

Context: Founded in 1864, Prescott was established as the Territorial Capital and was the dominant political center for the area until 1889 when the capital was moved to Phoenix. Historically, the economy was based in the mining and railroad industries. After the Fire of 1900, which devastated several blocks of downtown property, the city was revamped

with new era architecture boosting Prescott's popularity in the summer housing and tourism areas.

- Description:** Established in 1928, the Sharlot Hall Museum is located in Historic Prescott and features several historic buildings and gardens and is also home to the Blue Rose Theatre. In 1943 the museum created the associated Prescott Historical Society. It was later established as an Arizona state agency in 1964. The museum's key attraction is the historical exhibitions and various period buildings. The museum annually hosts The Prescott Indian Art Market, the Folk Music Festival and the Annual Western History Symposium. Other touristic attractions make vibrant art scenes in the City, including many weekend events, performances at the Yavapai College and Elks Opera House in downtown Prescott, as well as and farmers' markets. In particular, Villain (2000) praises the Farmers' Market as "one of the best" in the state.
- Impact:** In 2008, approximately 40% of all Prescott tourists visited the Sharlot Hall Museum. In 2009, visitors to the museum and its sponsored events added approximately \$4 million to the local economy.
- Relevance/Lesson:** Hagerstown could have similar vision as Prescott where art scenes and events are built around museum exhibiting historic theme.
- Town/Population:** **Arlington County, VA (pop. 207,627/'10)**
- Endeavor:** Establish a vital arts presence with limited public funding
- Context:** Arlington County is located in Northern Virginia, minutes away from Washington, DC. Arlington has been a place of substantial population growth over the past decade, growing by about ten percent since year 2000. The region has also undergone great transformation due to its proximity to the nation's capital and enjoys a highly diverse and heterogeneous population.
- While there has been a government-supported community arts program in the County since the 1960s, local government leaders realized that new infrastructure requirements and a diversified population would impose new challenges. In 1987, the County Board appointed the Arts and Humanities Advisory Committee to develop a new policy that would increase access for artists/art organizations in Arlington to county-supported grants. In 1990, the Arlington Commission for the Arts, a citizen's advisory group, was appointed to implement the policy. The group came up with the idea of an arts incubator to attract artists who could support the artistic needs of the community. The arts incubator consisted of assistance to artists (in the form of subsidized studio space, gallery space, etc.), programs to meet the marketing needs of the artists and development assistance by trained staff.
- Impact:** Arlington's arts incubator has become a model for other communities seeking to attract artists and create an arts community. The incubator won the Innovations in American Government award in 1996 because of its success as an effective way to strengthen the arts without substantially increasing funding. Through restructuring the partnership between the local government and artists, the county was able to help them become self-

sufficient and contribute to the local economy. Since, the County has transformed itself into an arts entertainment zone.⁵⁸

Relevance/Lesson: The arts incubator is a model that can be adapted to all communities. General guidelines for the arts incubator are as follows:

1. Mobilize untapped resources;
2. Remove impediments to growth;
3. Court artists strategically;
4. Connect artists to the community;
5. Create win-win partnerships.

Arlington's arts incubator success was measured by the overall growth of the arts. In 1996, Arlington hosted over 1,300 arts events attracting over 300,000 people. 22 exhibitions were mounted and 96 artists were assisted. The county has also gained new recognition for all types of art forms, including visual arts and theatrical productions. While prior to the arts incubator program 10 of 11 arts groups were supported by the county, year later 6 of the groups have their own facilities and are self-sufficient. Because of this, the arts industry expanded from over \$1 million to \$5 million from 1990-1996.⁵⁹

2. SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Art infrastructure

- More than 10 percent of Maryland's 300+ museums are located in Washington County.⁶⁰ Various arts venues represented by the Washington County Museum of Arts, Maryland Theatre, Maryland Symphony Orchestra and dozens of other small arts galleries and museums are assets for the City of Hagerstown and Washington County. In conjunction with various historical sites themed in Civil War sites and exhibitions located around the County, these should be recognized as strength. Artistic elements concentrate in the City of Hagerstown thanks to the presence of the Arts & Entertainment District, which creates a likable atmosphere in the City. Taking advantage of the density of arts in the City, touristic development for the County should start from Hagerstown.

Affordable housing

- According to the Maryland Association of Realtors,⁶¹ the counties in the Western Maryland generally enjoy lower median home prices. Washington County's median home price in August 2011 was 48.3 percent lower than the state's median home prices.

Cozy Ambience

- Various stakeholders in arts and cultural industry believe that promotion effort should starts from the City of Hagerstown. Visitors to Hagerstown can enjoy the small-town atmosphere. Residents view the town as

⁵⁸Americans for the Arts. April 1997. *Monographs*. Hatching Art: Creating a Vital Arts Presence in Your Community.

⁵⁹Refer to footnote 63.

⁶⁰*Museums & historical Sites Guide*. (n.d.). Retrieved on September 15th, 2011 from <http://www.marylandmemories.com/museum/#>.

⁶¹Maryland Association of Realtors. (2011). *Housing Statistics: August 2011*, Retrieved on August 30th, 2011 from <http://www.mdrealtor.org/HousingStatistics/HousingStatistics>.

a place for “urban escapers” who are tired of the busy city lifestyle. According to the survey conducted by the Partnership in Economic Progress Incentive Program (PEP), workers in the city enjoy the friendly atmosphere of the city.⁶² Historic buildings standing throughout the City, which enhances the cozy atmosphere.

Historic properties

- The City had retained most of the buildings and structures build through the 1930s. As a result of this, downtown area is populated with antique buildings that are rare for various modern cities in America. The visitors can enjoy various types of structures including four- to eight storied Victorian and Beaux Arts buildings at the core of the City, legacies of urban rowhouses and genteel mansion houses from industrial era as well as houses used by earlier German Settlers during the pre-Civil War time.⁶³ Old churches scattered around downtown, such as St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, are also important properties of the City.

Parks

- Natural beauty is another asset of the city and the County. There are 3 National Parks, 7 State Parks, and 14 County parks in the County in addition to various city and town parks.⁶⁴ Most representative park attractions located in the city include: Pangborn Park and Fairgrounds on the South rim of the City, City park on the west side, and Park place near North Potomac Street.

Junction of public transportation

- The location of Washington County is optimal as it is accessible from other major cities in the region. Hagerstown, in particular, is an intersection I-70 and I-81. It is about 71 miles away from Washington D.C. and Baltimore, and 175 miles away from Pittsburg.⁶⁵ The City is within a 45 minute drive from Civil War sites of the Antietam, Gettysburg battlefields and Harpers Ferry.⁶⁶

Weaknesses

Lack of identity

- As a number of participants in focus group indicated, City of Hagerstown lacks established identity recognizable to out-of-town visitors. As a result, the city does not have a staple product to sell. It has become clear from the focus group that one reason is that the city does not have a common vision as to which direction the city’s development efforts should be directed.

High vacancy rates in the City

- The focus group, as well as a study by the PEP, find that vacancy is visible around downtown Hagerstown. The existence of severely damaged buildings and properties also deteriorates the atmosphere of the downtown, even in A&E District.

Lack of variety in retail options and variety

- Both in PEP study and focus group, it was found that 1) retailers and restaurants in downtown close too early; and 2) the retail availability in downtown is very limited. Focus group suggested that shortage of retails and restaurants operating until late actually deprives night-time entertainment, and therefore, making the city less attractive place for visiting. In the PEP study, the respondents suggested that more live

⁶²Responses to Survey Questions to New Technical Businesses. (n.d.). [Handout]

⁶³Proposal by the Hagerstown-Washington County Chamber of Commerce. (1996). *Downtown Hagerstown Enhancement Plan*. [Handout].

⁶⁴Washington County Maryland.(n.d.).*Welcome to Washington County*, Retrieved on September 15th, 2011 from <http://www.washco-md.net/washco.shtm>.

⁶⁵Calculated by Google map.

⁶⁶Proposal by the Hagerstown-Washington County Chamber of Commerce. (1996). *Downtown Hagerstown Enhancement Plan*. [Handout].

entertainments and boutique shopping is suggested as improvement to the city's entertainment experience.⁶⁷

Low educational attainment

- Over half of the population living in Hagerstown, as well as Washington County, has at most high school degrees. Population with Bachelor's degrees or higher account only for less than 20 percent of the population. In comparison, over one third of the population in Maryland has educational attainment surpassing college level.

Low income household

- The median household income in Hagerstown is lower than that for Washington County and statewide.

High vacancy rates in the City

- Underutilization and vacancy is frequently observed around downtown Hagerstown. As of March 2011, 71 properties are listed in the City's Vacant Structure Program. Taking into account upper levels and residential vacancy, 50 of them are clustered around the City's main corridors - Franklin, Potomac, and Washington Streets.⁶⁸

High unemployment rate

- Various western Maryland municipalities suffer from high unemployment. Hagerstown unemployment rate, however, remains higher compared with other municipalities in the region. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the July unemployment rate in Hagerstown was 11%, above County rate 8.5%. Cumberland and Frederick, other representative western Maryland cities, had unemployment rates of 8.5% and 7% respectively.

Lack of synergies between arts venues and events

- During the focus group, civic leaders articulated that the on-going art promotion efforts lack coordinating body that inter-relates each small effort to bring about a large collective action. Lack of coordination results in failure to maximize direct and indirect benefits from holding events. For instance, according to an experience of one local merchant, her store lost weekend sales due to the road closure associated with the event held that weekend. Had this business owner been informed of the event, she would have taken different approach by holding outlet on the event. Also, focus group participants pointed out a lack of geographical synergy between the venues and city center.⁶⁹ The 2006 study on Marsh Run project calls for dense mix use development that connects the neighborhoods to the park and downtown life while preserving the natural and cultural resources in and around the site area.⁷⁰

Opportunities

Civil War sites

- Opportunity for Washington County, as well as for the City of Hagerstown, is to take advantage of the proximity to Civil War sites, such as Antietam Battlefield. Hagerstown, as a center of the art and cultural promotion efforts, should emphasize its aspect as a gateway community to the Civil War travel. In 1997, representatives from public and private entities involved in marketing of the city formed a committee in order to outline the strategy plan on the Civil War promotion strategy and had assembled a \$125,000 budget to implement the promotional project.⁷¹

⁶⁷Responses to Survey Questions to New Technical Businesses.(n.d.).[Handout].

⁶⁸ Information is provided by Ms. Christy Blake via personal communication on November 2nd, 2011.

⁶⁹Washington County Museum of Fine Arts – Long Range Plan (n.d.) [Handout].

⁷⁰AIA Center for Communities by Design. (2006). *Southside Revival: Changing the Market Dynamics in an Early Mid-Atlantic Downtown*.

⁷¹Hagerstown-Washington County Chamber of Commerce. (1996). *Downtown Hagerstown Enhancement Plan* [Handout].

Arts and cultural education in Hagerstown

- Arts and cultural education is a new frontier in art promotion efforts with establishments of educational institutions in the City of Hagerstown. Barbara Ingram School of Arts, for instance, is a primary educational institution specializing in arts and theatres. In addition to the art school, arts venues located in the City are constructively engaged in educating the locales. For example, WCMFA offered 53 arts education courses that are taught by 19 instructors in FY 2009. The number of students who participated in the course surged to 375 students ranging from toddlers to adults.⁷² MSO is committed in musical education by building permanent partnership with the Washington County public Schools (WCPS) for almost 3 decades.⁷³

Hagerstown A & E District

- Established in 2002, Hagerstown A & E District assisted development of the business establishments around the designated area around core corridors of downtown, including Washington and Potomac Streets.⁷⁴ According to the survey conducted by PEP, many workers in the city stated that they enjoy general friendly atmosphere of the city.⁷⁵ The study conducted by the Hagerstown Neighborhood Development Partnership and the WCAC identified needs for re-construction and renovation of the existing facility, affordable housing for artists, as well as effective marketing strategies to attract more financial investments in the District.

Various developments happening in the City of Hagerstown

- Opportunity for Hagerstown to become the center of the County wide art promotion effort is some of ongoing infrastructural development in the City. In particular, establishments of Barbara Ingram School for Arts and University of Maryland at Hagerstown had rejuvenated downtown by bringing in youth into the city. Further improvements could entail from these developments.

Partnership in Economic Progress Incentive Program (PEP)

- In conjunction with the ongoing developments, the City of Hagerstown has created public policy incentives to spur further growth in the City. Initiated by the Hagerstown City staff, the objective of the Partnership in Economic Progress Incentive Program (PEP) is to encourage private investment in downtown area by providing tax incentives. Most recent exemplary project supported by the PEP includes University Plaza, renovation of Public Square, the new A&E Parking Deck, and widening of the South Potomac sidewalks.⁷⁶

Events

- The City of Hagerstown hosts various events through the year. Popular events include the Western Maryland Blues Fest, the June Fest, and Augustoberfest, which celebrates Hagerstown's German heritage. The annual Alsatia Mummies' Halloween Parade is the largest nighttime parade on the East Coast.⁷⁷ Various small events are held in the City, such as Downtown Live!, Wind Down Friday, and City Center Jazz Nights.⁷⁸ These events are attended by people from the local as well as nonlocal residents.

Group of local merchants passionate about building vibrant downtown

⁷²Brief History of WCMFA last three years. (n.d.). [Handout].

⁷³Maryland Symphony Orchestra mission & History. (n.d.) [Handout].

⁷⁴Hagerstown Neighborhood Development Partnership, Inc., City of Hagerstown, & Washington County Arts council. (December, 2007). Arts & Entertainment Strategy.[Handout].

⁷⁵Responses to Survey Questions to New Technical Businesses.(n.d.). [Handout]

⁷⁶Hagerstown Advance.(n.d.).PEP Program, Retrieved on July 1st, 2011, from <http://www.hagerstownadvance.com/doing-business/incentives/pep-program/creation-of-city-center-amenities-for-residents-and-employees/>.

⁷⁷Hagerstown Advance.(n.d.).Entertainment. Retrieved on July 1st, 2011 from <http://www.hagerstownadvance.com/experience-downtown/entertainment/>.

⁷⁸Hagerstown Advance.(n.d.).Entertainment. Retrieved on July 1st, 2011 from <http://www.hagerstownadvance.com/experience-downtown/entertainment/>.

- Local merchants, as well as representatives from arts venues, have already recognized the arts and cultural assets in Hagerstown. They also share the view that the efforts should be initiated from the City and expand to the County.

Threats

Closure/relocation of downtown retailers.

- In addition to observable vacancies in the downtown Hagerstown, lack of footwork to the corners the operational capacity of businesses established in downtown. More recently, the city has lost two of the iconic businesses in downtown, R. Bruce Carson Jewelers and Lena's of Hagerstown. These stores had announced that they will be relocating their main businesses to shopping-center locations in the outskirts of the city.⁷⁹ More recently, it was reported that Susquehanna Bank chose to build a new headquarters on the eastern rim of the city rather than expanding its building in downtown.⁸⁰

Success of nearby arts towns

- Hagerstown is competed by other growing arts and cultural towns with similar traits, namely, Cumberland in Allegany County and Frederick in Frederick County. Arts in Frederick, in particular, are becoming recognized nationally. In FY 2010, the City of Frederick was selected as one of top 25 Small Arts City by the American Style Magazine. In the same year, the city won MSAC's Outstanding Arts and Entertainment District Award.⁸¹

Negative image of the city

- Because of observable negative elements, such as untreated properties and poverty, downtown Hagerstown is viewed as "distressed area" by local residents rather than an entertainment center. In PEP survey, respondents have stated that the downtown is flocked by wrong type of clientele. Also, the survey respondents stated that they rarely visit downtown during the weekend.⁸² Concentration of low-income residences creates uncomfortable environment, discouraging to pedestrians. Regarding this issue, some view that the authority should take a draconian strategy by relocating the poor residents to elsewhere.

Lack of supports for artists

- In conjunction with the lack of event coordination, the issue of financial assistance to artists was discussed during the focus group. In particular, it has been pointed out that the artists seeking to work in Hagerstown do not have rent subsidies and housing supports. Artists, however, are financially unstable occupation. According to Occupational Outlook Handbook for 2010 – 2011, about 60 percent of artists and related workers are self-employed with salary level of varying degree depending on occupation. In 2008, the median income for salaried craft artists was \$29,080; fine artists, including painters, sculptors, and illustrators, was \$42,650, and multimedia artists and animators was \$56,330. Only few successful fine artists can support their living solely by selling their art. Therefore, these artists typically have at least one other job.⁸³

⁷⁹Keels, Heather. (August 10, 2011). Two longtime Hagerstown businesses to move. *Herald-mail.com*.

⁸⁰Callahan, Art. (August 27th, 2011). Is there a vision for city's downtown? *Herald-mail.com*.

⁸¹Maryland State Arts Council.(n.d.). *FY 2010 A&E Districts Annual Report Accomplishments*. [Handout]

⁸²Responses to Survey Questions to New Technical Businesses (PEP).

⁸³Bureau of Labor Statistics (2010) Occupational Outlook 2010 – 2011. Retrieved on June 30th, 2011 from <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos092.htm#earnings>.