



## **RESOLUTION**

**RELATIVE TO THE ADOPTION OF THE NASHUA ARTS AND CULTURAL PLAN**

### ***CITY OF NASHUA***

*In the Year Two Thousand and Fourteen*

***RESOLVED*** by the Board of Aldermen of the City of Nashua that the attached Nashua Arts and Cultural Plan produced by the Nashua Arts Commission is hereby adopted.

**LEGISLATIVE YEAR 2014**

**RESOLUTION:** R-14-094

**PURPOSE:** Relative to the adoption of the Nashua Arts and Cultural Plan

**SPONSOR(S):** Alderman-at-Large Jim Donchess

**COMMITTEE  
ASSIGNMENT:**

**FISCAL NOTE:** The fiscal impact depends on if there are any subsequent expenditures to implement any of the actions found in the plan.

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**ANALYSIS**

This legislation adopts the Nashua Arts and Cultural Plan produced by the Nashua Arts Commission.

This plan is a strategic plan and is not part of the master plan, although the board may still wish to refer this legislation to the Planning Board.

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**Approved as to form:** Office of Corporation Counsel

By: Dorothy Clarke

Date: November 19, 2014

Arts Commission FINAL  
Submitted to the Planning Board  
and Board of Aldermen  
November 2014  
-change adopt date back cover  
-website address update back cover/interior



# nashua arts and cultural plan summary

find this executive summary or our full plan at [www.nashuanh.gov/awesomeartplan.html](http://www.nashuanh.gov/awesomeartplan.html)

## Produced by the Nashua Arts Commission

Mayor Donnalee Lozeau

Arts Chair Liz Racioppi

Arts Commissioner Tina Cassidy

Arts Commissioner John Egan

Arts Commissioner Bonnie Guercio

Arts Commissioner Paul LaFlamme

Arts Commissioner Charles Matthews

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Aldermanic Liaison Jim Donchess

Aldermanic Liaison Ken Siegel

Facilitator Katherine Hersh

Contributor Mark Cookson

Research and Text Erin Moriarty

Research, Text, Design, and Layout Renee Reder

Text Editing Nina Stylianos

Cover Art Nashua Historical Society, 1987

Thank you to the New Hampshire Creative Community Network for their CCN Toolkit which contributed to the plan framework.

Thank you to Mark Cookson for his four years of dedication to the arts. Special thanks to our arts community for their work, survey response, and feedback for this plan.

# NASHUA

## arts and cultural plan summary

produced by: *Nashua Arts Commission*

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# PLAN SUMMARY



## VISION

**Introduction:** In the Summer of 2013, the City's Community Development Department and the Nashua Arts Commission came together to create an Arts and Culture Plan intended to act as a roadmap to the future of arts and culture in Nashua. This plan is the result of that collaboration. In this document, we have identified a Five Year Plan, Goals, and a series of actions that we feel will serve our community well going into the future.

**Vision Statement:** In five years, Nashua will be a vibrant community, nationally recognized for its numerous diverse arts offerings that cater to all members of the community. Arts and culture are being integrated into all physical, social, economic, and educational aspects of the community. Because we are a well-rounded community that invests in the integration of art into every aspect of our city, our quality of life is enhanced and we attract businesses and residents who add to its future success.

## GOALS

**Identity** Create a unique brand to represent Nashua's culture that distinguishes the city within the region. The identity will be visible and engage both residents and visitors, recognizing their collective importance to the long-term viability of arts in Nashua.

**Centralization** Develop a collaborative citywide association of arts and culture by understanding and leveraging digital networks and existing venues and spaces within the city.

**Education** Engage residents of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities in arts and culture by raising awareness from a young age and integrating culture into educational, recreational, and social activities.

**Marketing** Attract visitors and residents to local events by publicizing the Nashua cultural brand through strategic outreach and promotion of the arts to both local and broader audiences.

**Commerce** Produce new economic opportunities for the city by integrating the arts into public and business policies, stimulating Nashua to evolve as a sustainable, resilient, and livable community.

**Growth** Encourage proliferation, prosperity, and visibility for both existing and emerging organizations in the arts.

## PRIORITY ACTIONS

**Five Year Action Priorities:** While each goal has an action matrix to guide priority implementation, the following items should remain the highest priority for successful implementation of the plan:

1. Define, strengthen, and align collaboration between the Nashua Arts Commission and City Arts Nashua to create one face for the arts community (IDENTITY).
2. Partner with the Chamber of Commerce and city departments to integrate Nashua's new brand and tagline (Dare to Begin) with branding for the arts community (IDENTITY + MARKETING).
3. Create a marketing plan for the arts in Nashua and implement the plan (MARKETING).
4. Develop partnership opportunities between Nashua's arts community and schools to enhance student participation in the arts while aligning with their education goals (EDUCATION).
5. Update research on an Arts Center and other new arts venues (CENTRALIZATION + GROWTH).

## LEARN MORE

This summary provided is not a substitute for Nashua's Arts and Cultural Plan. It outlines the vision, goals, and priority actions but the plan introduces each of these items in greater depth, situating the plan within a historical context of Nashua's arts, its impact for the community, rationales and strategies, policies and initiatives, action implementation matrices with responsible organizations, and a conclusion which maps its implementation for the future.

This summary is only meant to provide an overview of the key issues and highlight the priority actions. Find out more about the plan at [www.nashuanh.gov/awesomeartplan.html](http://www.nashuanh.gov/awesomeartplan.html). Download this summary, the full plan, and action matrices for each of the goals, available as individual double-sided 11x17 pamphlets.

Explore the future of arts and culture in Nashua.

Arts Commission FINAL

Submitted to the Planning Board  
and Board of Aldermen

November 2014

-change adopt date pg 3, back cover

-website address update pg 79, back cover



NASHUA

arts and cultural plan

produced by: *Nashua Arts Commission*



# A NOTE TO OUR COMMUNITY

The arts are alive and well in Nashua. Home to award-winning musical ensembles, theater companies, visual artists and writers, there is a lot to boast about in the city. We also have reason for excitement as new groups continue to come together with fresh ideas for engagement and expression.

Support for the arts in Nashua comes—as it does in most cities—from various foundations, local businesses, donors, and government. Participation in the arts mirrors the variety of funding sources and the diversity of our community. Nearly everyone is affected by the arts in one way or another in their daily lives.

But all this variety can lead to a general sense of fragmentation that all the successes—when taken together—are somehow less than the sum of their parts. What is needed is a unified vision to strengthen and support the arts and to leverage the resources of our vibrant arts community to make Nashua all that we know it can be. This plan begins to address that and proposes a framework for action on a number of fronts: Identity, Centralization, Education, Marketing, Commerce, and Growth.

The arts can be the soul of the community, a signifier of a city's economic and spiritual health. We hope you will join us in our efforts to nurture them in the coherent and intentional ways outlined in the pages that follow.

# NASHUA ARTS AND CULTURAL PLAN

explore the future of arts in nashua

*Adopted by the City of Nashua 2014*

**Produced by the Nashua Arts Commission**

**Mayor** Donnalee Lozeau

**Arts Chair** Liz Racioppi

**Arts Commissioner** Tina Cassidy

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C  
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NASHUA ARTS  
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# INTRODUCTION

**Vision Statement:** In five years, Nashua will be a vibrant community, nationally recognized for its numerous diverse arts offerings that cater to all members of the community. Arts and culture are being integrated into all physical, social, economic, and educational aspects of the community. Because we are a well-rounded community that invests in the integration of art into every aspect of our city, our quality of life is enhanced and we attract businesses and residents who add to its future success.

**History:** Since its founding as a historic mill town, Nashua has always been a great community as evidenced by being the only city named the “Best Place to Live in America” twice. In recent years, arts and culture have become essential for the continued prosperity of Nashua.

Two organizations have similar missions to advance art in the City of Nashua and the region. City Arts Nashua, a private 501(c)3 started eight years ago, was formed to promote Greater Nashua’s artistic and cultural community, including visual arts, theater arts, musicians, and writers, with the goal of increasing awareness and building an expanded audience. City Arts Nashua’s objective is to act as a catalyst to help the arts thrive and to promote cooperation, coordination and common ground for artists, arts organizations and audiences. The Nashua Arts Commission, founded in 2011 as a public entity, has been charged with facilitating, advocating, coordinating, and educating for the arts, acting as one FACE to the community. Both organizations are complementary to each other, and both are important to the future of arts in Nashua. Creating a framework that includes clear distinction of their separate and collaborative roles is critical to maximize the value of both.

Working with the City’s Community Development Division, the Nashua Arts Commission has put together this plan as a blueprint for the area arts scene to promote collaboration among existing and emerging groups, to increase awareness of the arts, and to meet and exceed the needs of the cultural community. This plan is meant to act as a vision and a catalyst; while the Nashua Arts Commission is charged with its creation, it is the City, business community, organizations, artists, residents, and visitors who will be instrumental in making it a reality. We invite you to explore a richer future for arts and culture in the city of Nashua.

# GOALS

identity  
centralization  
education  
marketing  
commerce  
growth

**Identity** Create a unique brand to represent Nashua's culture that distinguishes the city within the region. The identity will be visible and engage both residents and visitors, recognizing their collective importance to the long-term viability of arts in Nashua.

**Centralization** Develop a collaborative citywide association of arts and culture by understanding and leveraging digital networks and existing venues and spaces within the city.

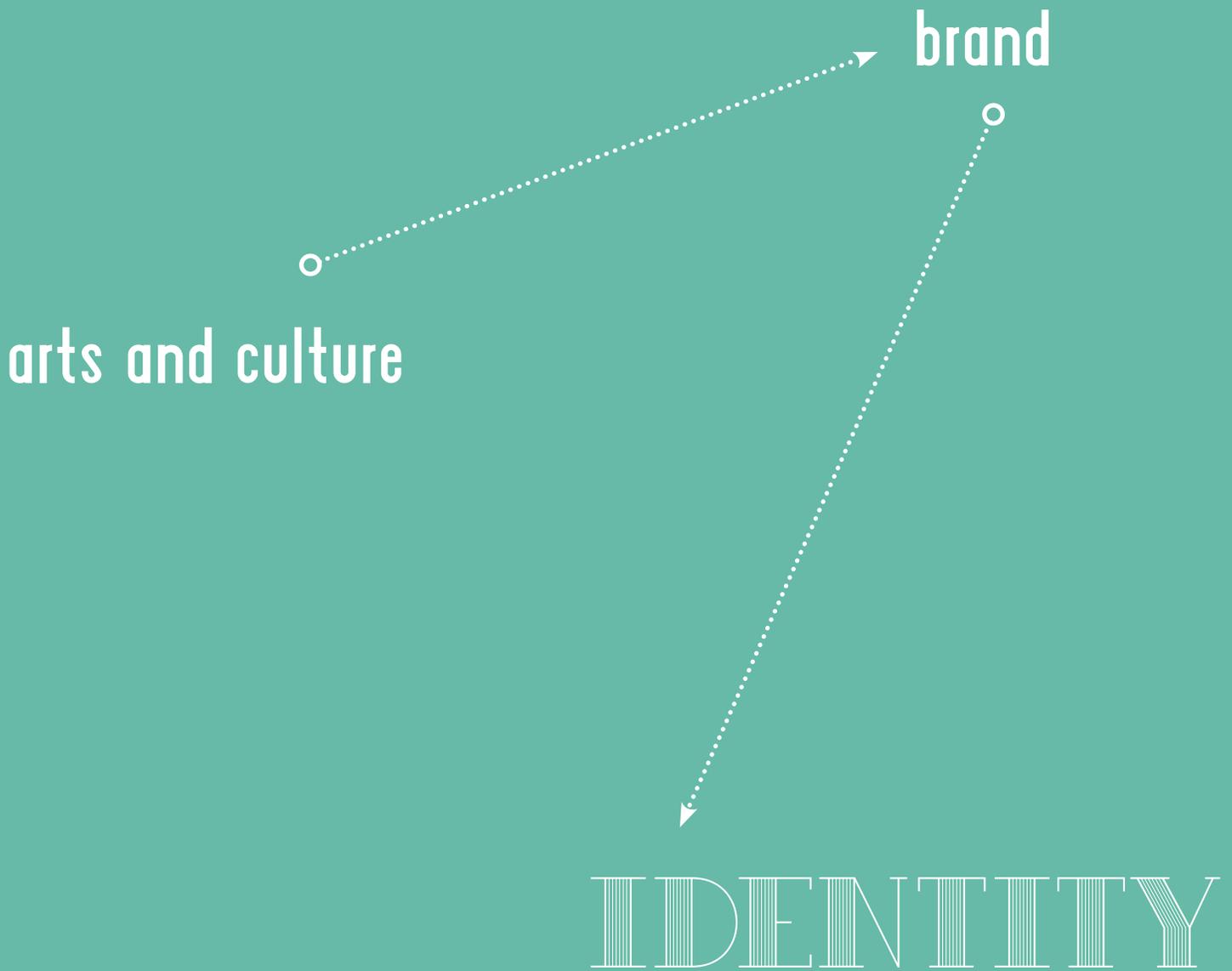
**Education** Engage residents of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities in arts and culture by raising awareness from a young age and integrating culture into educational, recreational, and social activities.

**Marketing** Attract visitors and residents to local events by publicizing the Nashua cultural brand through strategic outreach and promotion of the arts to both local and broader audiences.

**Commerce** Produce new economic opportunities for the city by integrating the arts into public and business policies, stimulating Nashua to evolve as a sustainable, resilient, and livable community.

**Growth** Encourage proliferation, prosperity, and visibility for both existing and emerging organizations in the arts.

identity centralization education  
marketing commerce growth



Create a unique brand to represent Nashua's culture that distinguishes the city within the region. The identity will be visible and engage both residents and visitors, recognizing their collective importance to the long-term viability of arts in Nashua.

# IDENTITY

**Rationale and Strategy:** The importance of arts in Nashua needs to be better understood by the community, making the creation and articulation of an identity an important step towards distinguishing Nashua from Boston and other New Hampshire communities. By identifying Nashua's existing strengths and promoting the unique qualities of the arts culture in the City, it is possible to present a unified vision to the community and increase the geographic reach of Nashua's arts offerings beyond city limits.

**Policies and Initiatives:** In order to establish and promote Nashua's unique artistic identity, it is crucial to streamline processes and centralize the administration of arts-related City initiatives. It is important to leverage environmental assets such as the Nashua River and the Broad Street Parkway. Community-wide buy-in by government entities, businesses, and arts organizations is essential because all parties need to invest in a singular identity for Nashua.

Nashua benefits from a richly diverse population. Embracing a variety of cultures and alternative modes of artistic expression will help the City establish its own unique brand. As important as the arts are to the daily life of the city, the city's nightlife should not be ignored. High quality performances bring attention to commerce in the community and enhance the Nashua experience for residents and visitors alike. It is essential that the community supports new ideas that increase public participation in the arts, creating new opportunities for artists and citizens.

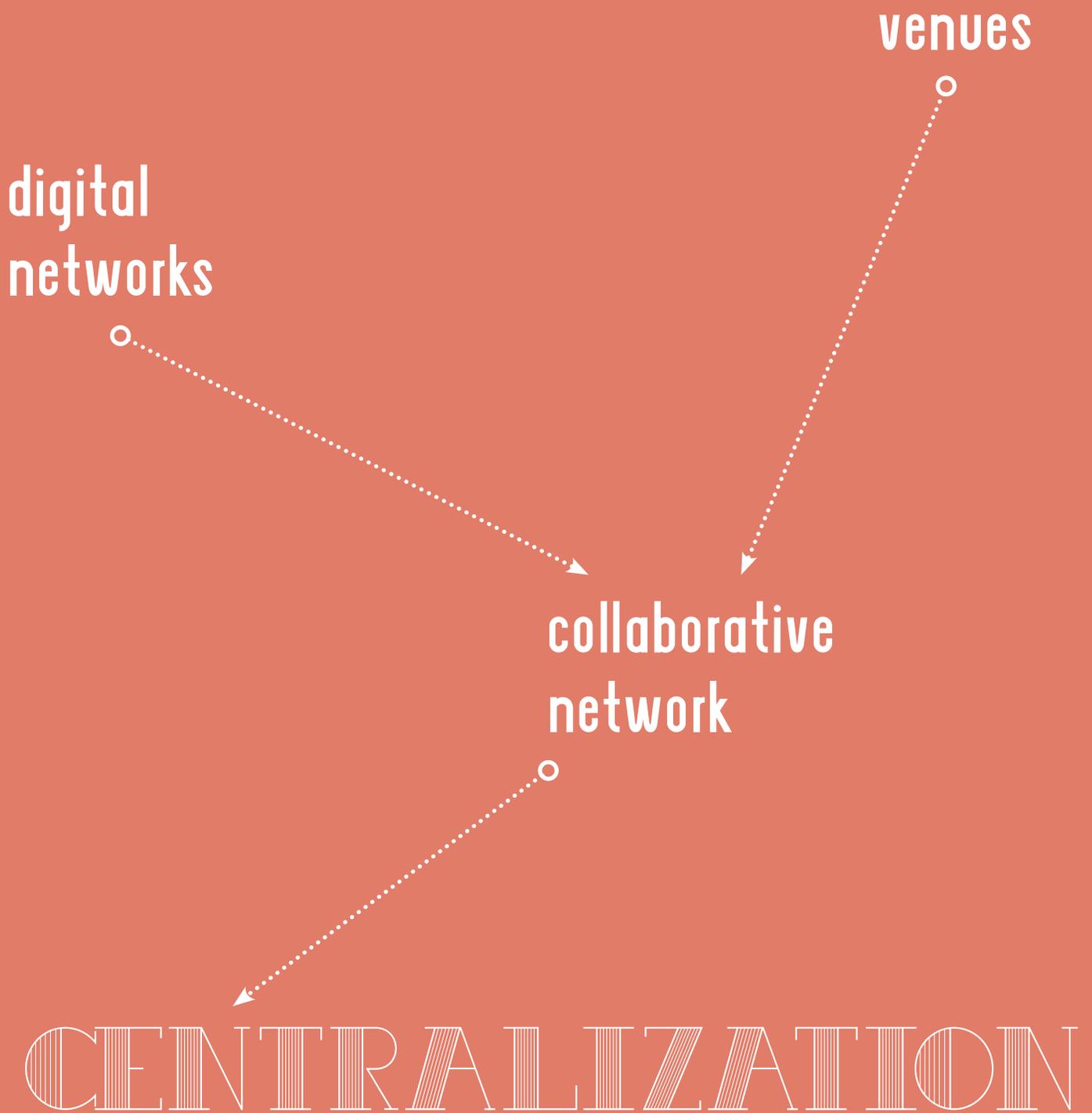
**action matrices abbreviations:** **BBBS** (Big Brothers, Big Sisters), **BGC** (Boys & Girls Club), **BOA** (Board of Aldermen), **CAN** (City Arts Nashua), **CDD** (Community Development Division), **COC** (Chamber of Commerce), **CTV** (Community TV), **DAM** (Downtown Art Movement), **DOT** (Division of Transportation), **DPW** (Division of Public Works), **EDD** (Economic Development Division), **GAD** (Great American Downtown), **IT** (Information Technology), **LEGAL** (Legal), **LIB** (Library), **MAYOR** (Mayor's Office), **NAAA**

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# IDENTITY ACTION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Suggested Action	Short Term	Mid-Range	Long Range	Responsible Organization	Partners	\$
Work with the Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Division, and Community Development Division to develop a brand and slogan for the City's arts	●			NAC	COC, CDD, EDD	
Work with the Creative Communities Network to promote and differentiate Nashua's unique cultural identity	●	●	●	NAC	NAC	
Work with the Department of Cultural Resources to include Nashua-based organizations in its tourism publications	●	●	●	CAN, NAC	CDD	
Wayfinding signage, particularly on the highway should map a clear route to cultural venues (see MARKETING)		●		CDD	LEGAL, PAR	\$
Create and install highway signage with logos of different arts organizations in the city (see MARKETING)		●		CDD	DOT, LEGAL	\$
Place a large sculpture and/or other gateway-like structures along the highway to highlight unique art organizations and function as an outdoor sampling of arts in the city		●		CAN, NISS	DOT, NAC	\$
Host a City Art Campaign with a recognizable and repeated motif that can rotate on Main Street so people of all groups are exposed to Nashua's arts (i.e. painted moose, holiday boxes, signal boxes, etc.) (see MARKETING)		●		CAN, GAD, PSA	DPW	
Create arts event(s) and/or installation of art along the river to engage the natural environment in Nashua			●	CAN, NISS, PSA	PAR	
Place art in public spaces to enliven the city's urban landscape (see COMMERCE/GROWTH)	●	●	●	CAN, NAC, PSA	DPW	
Encourage the presence of art in Downtown Nashua through gallery shows, public art, street performers, etc.	●	●	●	GAD	CDD	
Produce a walking tour for Downtown's artists, art and architecture which could also tie into smartphone applications which coincides with the articulated brand for the city	●			CAN, NAC	CDD	\$
Integrate brand into all marketing efforts for the arts community (see MARKETING)	●	●	●	CAN, NAC	EDD	
Define, strengthen, and align the collaboration between the Nashua Arts Commission (NAC) and City Arts Nashua (CAN) to create one face for the Nashua arts community	●			CAN, NAC	NAC	

identity centralization education  
marketing commerce growth



Develop a collaborative citywide association of arts and culture by understanding and leveraging digital networks and existing venues and spaces within the city.

# CENTRALIZATION

**Rationale and Strategy:** To increase public awareness of the arts in Nashua, all arts and culture groups should organize together and share their resources. Collaboration will promote a sense of teamwork rather than competitiveness amongst groups and an understanding that greater achievements are produced by working together rather than alone. Centralization, in this context, connotes bringing together collective information and resources in a way that can better serve various groups and neighborhoods in the community. The focus of this union will be collaboration, coordination, and promotion while still maintaining distinctions between arts organizations.

**Policies and Initiatives:** The Nashua Arts Commission should act as the driving force for new initiatives that encourage the collaboration of all arts and culture groups in the city. By hosting a quarterly meeting for arts organizations to gather, share ideas, and learn of events happening in the area, the Commission can foster good relationships amongst groups and promote collaboration.

Creating a city-wide calendar for the arts should be a main priority so all residents and visitors have access to a central source of information and all arts groups can easily schedule events. This calendar could aid groups looking either to avoid overlapping events that cause split attendance or to purposely coincide with similar events to create a larger, combined audience. As the main source of information regarding arts events, this calendar needs to be marketed as such and remain updated. It is essential to have an effective website to house this centralized calendar. Other information pertinent to the arts may also be posted, such as details on the steps to create an event in Nashua, instructions on forming a new group, and other information.

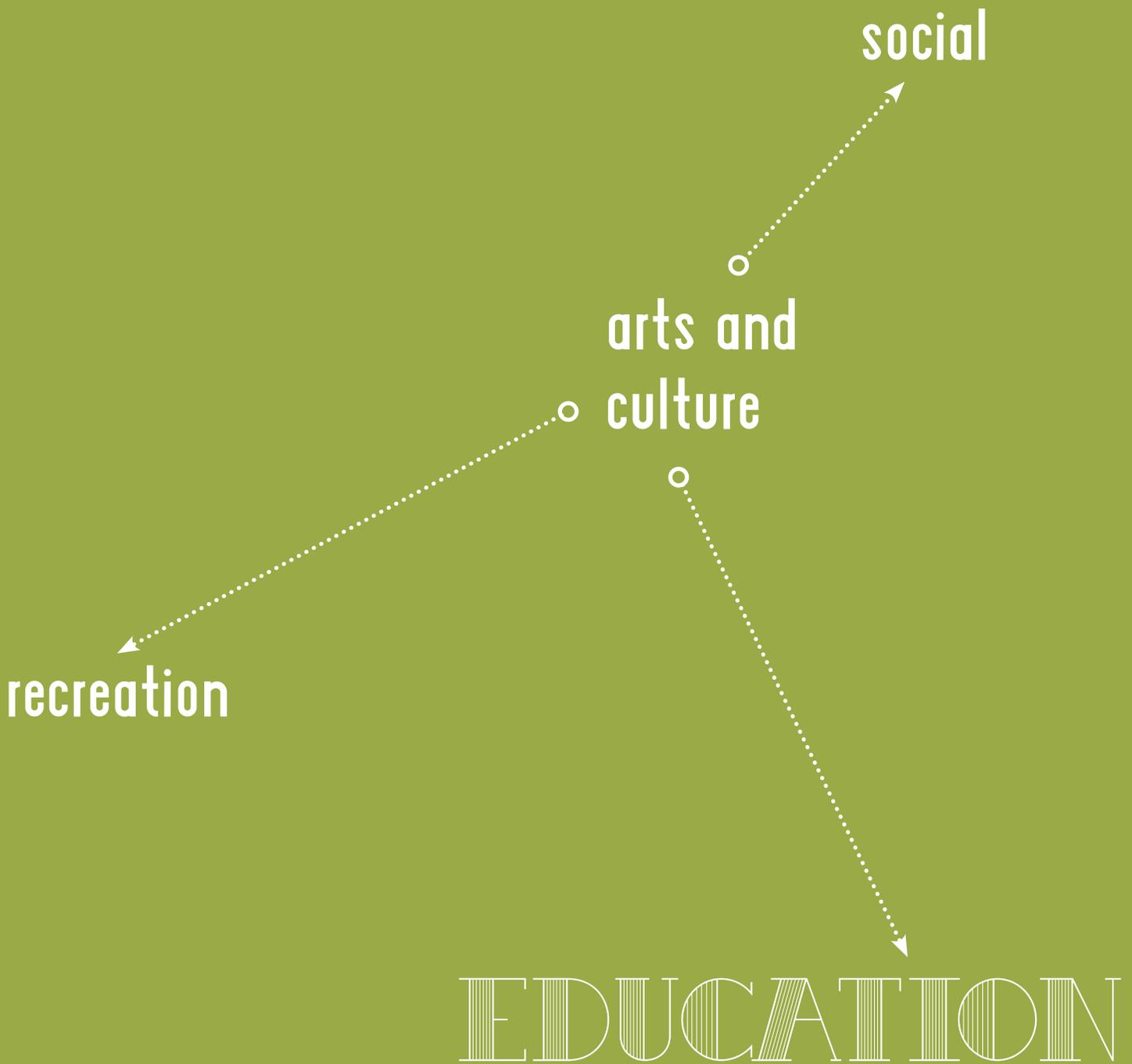
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# CENTRALIZATION ACTION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Suggested Action	Short Term	Mid-Range	Long Range	Responsible Organization	Partners	\$
Establish a quarterly meeting for all arts groups to review event scheduling, coordinate with outside events, and brainstorm for the future	●			NAC	NAC	
Bring in representatives on the NAC board from PSA, DAM, League of NH Craftsmen, and other startup nonprofits as well as bringing in high school student representative(s) to better engage schools	●	●		NAC	MAYOR	
Improve the Nashua Arts Commission webpage and Facebook (see MARKETING)	●			NAC	EDD, IT	
Launch a smartphone app for Nashua arts organizations and/or create an online artist gallery (see MARKETING)	●	●		CAN, NAC	IT	\$
Locate calendars for events, ticketing, booking venues, and other information on a central website in a user-friendly format with visuals	●			CAN	IT	
Highlight information relevant to educational and summer arts camps on a central website location	●			CAN, NAC	IT	
Produce live-streaming video of theater, music, sculpture build process, etc.		●	●	CAN	CTV	
Create a small packet and/or webpage with information for creating an event to facilitate it	●			NAC	EDD	
Have workshops which teach artists of different mediums how to work together	●			CAN, Arts Groups	CDD	
Sponsor one day a month for free activities and/or open studios that rotates amongst organizations (such as a "First Friday" art walk)		●		CAN	CDD	
Produce and market season tickets to different types of events by various arts organizations in the city to allow interdisciplinary exposure		●		CAN	EDD	
Create coupons by working with non-arts organizations (restaurants, hotels, etc.) to improve attendance and collaboration (see COMMERCE)		●		CAN, COC, GAD	EDD	
Collaborate and increase presence at events such as Artwalk, Taste of Downtown, Greeley Park Art, Ribfest, 4th of July festivities (see MARKETING)		●		CAN, GAD, NAAA	NAC	
Have performances and other art events at Silver Knights games and Holman Stadium (see GROWTH)		●		CAN	CDD	
Expand the Mayor's rotating art show to exhibit in prominent places (City Hall, Library, DMV)		●		NAAA	MAYOR	
Develop joint signage and maps		●		CAN, NAC	CDD	\$
Have a program to aid struggling groups (Studio 99)			●	NAC	EDD	
Find office space for arts groups (see COMMERCE)			●	CAN	EDD	
Improve Keefe Auditorium facility (see GROWTH)		●		SYMP	CDD, SCH	
Update research on an arts center and other new arts venues (see GROWTH)			●	CAN, NAC	CDD	\$

identity centralization **education**  
marketing commerce growth



Engage residents of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities in arts and culture by raising awareness from a young age and integrating culture into educational, recreational, and social activities.

# EDUCATION

**Rational and Strategy:** Supporting the relationship between the arts community and the Nashua School System (as well as private schools and higher education institutions) is critical for the long term viability of the arts in Nashua. Finding new ways to strengthen arts programs for the schools—including drama, visual art, music, dance, and prose/poetry—with help from local artists, is an important first step. An arts-rich learning environment promotes self-esteem, cooperation, and critical thinking, all of which have long-term benefits both for students and for the larger Nashua community.

**Policies and Initiatives:** Addressing the arts in schools will require a multi-pronged approach: investing financially, connecting arts organizations to the schools, honoring teachers for excellence in art education, and understanding that participation in the arts is indispensable for all students.

In general, students' involvement with enhancement programs in partnership with arts organizations should deepen as they advance through the grades. At the elementary level, students will gain wide exposure to a variety of performing/visual/written arts through in-school demonstrations and field trips. In middle school, students will begin to make choices about their arts participation and local arts organizations can deepen their involvement. In higher grades, students will express themselves in more advanced and individual ways, providing opportunities for mentorship by local artists.

Programs should strive to support students wishing to achieve higher education in the arts. In addition, the City should promote discussion amongst teachers, administrators, students, and parents about arts education and support these efforts with appropriate funding.

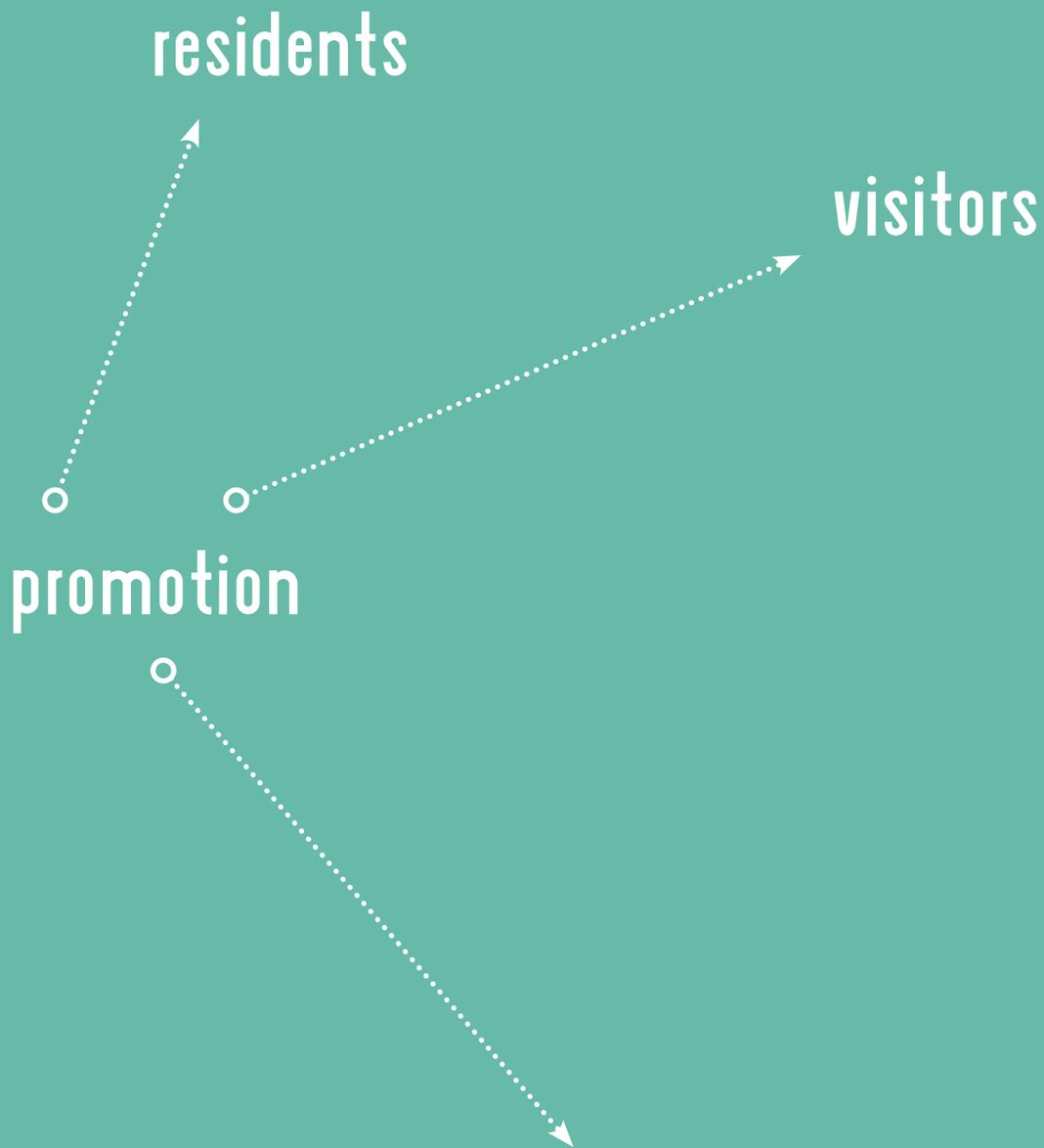
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# EDUCATION ACTION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Suggested Action	Short Term	Mid-Range	Long Range	Responsible Organization	Partners	\$
Promote more school field trips to art performances to instill appreciation for the arts, such as spending part of a day backstage with the Actorsingers	●			SCH, Arts Groups	SCH	
Have an orchestra (strings) program in the Nashua School system			●	SYMP	SCH	
Bring student music talent to Downtown to perform at events in Nashua such as the Holiday Stroll and Taste of Downtown		●		GAD	NAC	
Set up a mentorship program to encourage students to become involved in city-wide arts organizations	●	●		BBBS	SCH	
Pair each art organization with different schools to get students excited about the arts, using the model of the the sculpture symposium	●			Arts Groups	SCH	
Consider a permanent program for interchangeable student work to hang in City Hall	●			NAAA	MAYOR	
Increase outreach to the Children's Home, YMCA, Boys and Girls Club to bring all types of arts to students of all ages		●		BGC, NCH, YMCA	NAC	
Increase student outreach through performances and art exhibits at nursing homes, senior centers, parks, mall, etc.		●		CAN	NAC	
Provide incentives for students to attend concerts, plays, art openings, etc.	●			CAN	SCH	
Have free music lessons become part of after school programs and activities		●		NCMS	SCH	
Research programs for donated or discounted instruments for students who do not have access		●		NCMS	SCH	
Have a large event/competition which combines performances and an art exhibit for student work		●		CAN	SCH	
Encourage more multidisciplinary arts camps that partner with arts organizations and schools		●		CAN	SCH	
Get students involved and interested in poetry through the Poetry Out Loud Competition, a national competition (\$20,000 prize)	●			NHSCA	SCH	
Review the existing curriculum for Nashua Public Schools to make art appreciation part of each student's education		●		SCH, Arts Groups	SCH	
Increase funding and support for art scholarships			●	CAN	MAYOR	\$
Include an arts and cultural reading list on the Nashua Public Library's webpage	●			NAC	LIB	
Host arts classes at the Nashua Public Library		●		NAC	LIB	
Bring a lecture series to Nashua on arts topics			●	NAC	LIB	
Celebrate National Dance Day in Nashua			●	NBT	NAC	

identity centralization education  
marketing commerce growth



Attract visitors and residents to local events by publicizing the Nashua cultural brand through strategic outreach and promotion of the arts to both local and broader audiences.

# MARKETING

**Rationale and Strategy:** Exposure is a key component towards making the arts part of daily life in Nashua. It is vital to reach out to the greater population of the city, particularly to underrepresented groups including ethnic groups, small neighborhoods, and a younger demographics. Arts organizations must also create a strong working relationship with the local media that focuses on collaborative efforts to get the word out. Marketing should garner excitement and shed the image of the arts being “high society” or “stuffy.”

**Policies and Initiatives:** In order to reach out to more people, marketing should target a more diverse audience. This can be achieved in several ways such as promoting “family friendly” events, low-cost events, and weekend events. Reoccurring events or events that allow passersby to join at the last minute can be attractive to younger groups and those with dynamic schedules. Likewise, advertising events which do not have a language barrier, such as carnivals, and marketing directly to other cultures within our city will also encourage various cultural backgrounds to participate. Marketing both classical and contemporary arts can generate new audience members as well.

To advertise events, it is important to look at both physical signage, print media, and digital media. This includes managing exposure through downtown restaurants and stores, the library, grocery stores, the transit system, schools, churches, etc. More exposure through digital and print platforms (such as *The Telegraph*, *Hippo*, Patch, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Vine, etc.) will also allow more groups to understand what offerings the city has. Branching out to advertise in other cities, even Boston, can highlight unique qualities about the Nashua art scene to potential visitors.

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# MARKETING ACTION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Suggested Action	Short Term	Mid-Range	Long Range	Responsible Organization	Partners	\$
Create a marketing plan for the arts	●			CAN, NAC	NAC	
Allocate a portion of the NAC budget for marketing in Nashua		●		NAC	BOA, MAYOR,	
Integrate brand into all marketing efforts for the arts community (see IDENTITY)	●	●	●	CAN, NAC	EDD	
Use banners and/or sandwich boards on Main Street, storefront advertisements, newsletters, etc. to expose the arts		●		CAN, GAD	CDD, PAR	\$
Advertise for the arts on highway billboards or on the side of Nashua Transit buses		●	●	CAN	NAC	\$
Employ nonprofits interested in creating murals for mills or other artist building to act as advertising and public art		●	●	PSA	NAC	
Host a City Art Campaign that can rotate on Main Street so people of all groups are exposed to Nashua's arts (see IDENTITY)		●		CAN, GAD, PSA	DPW	
Wayfinding signage should clearly advertise for cultural venues and organizations in Nashua (see IDENTITY)		●		CDD	DOT, LEGAL, PAR	\$
Partner with hotels to advertise to visitors and also work with tourism websites and agencies to get the word out (see COMMERCE)	●			NAC	COC, EDD, NHDCR	
Drive increased attendance at events such as Artwalk, Taste of Downtown, Greeley Park Art, Ribfest, 4th of July festivities (see CENTRALIZATION)		●		CAN, GAD, NAAA	NAC	
Bring a well-known artist with mainstream appeal to attract people to Nashua (see GROWTH)			●	Arts Groups	NAC	\$
Recognize the achievements of local artists through a newspaper column and/or newsletter		●		CAN, NAC	NAC	
Provide marketing/social media training for artists	●			CAN	IT	
Employ outside advertisement and coupon companies such as Groupon and Living Social		●		CAN	NAC	
Improve the Nashua Arts Commission webpage and Facebook to better advertise for artists, events, etc. (see CENTRALIZATION)	●			NAC	EDD, IT	
Advertise through a smartphone app for arts and events (see CENTRALIZATION)	●	●		CAN, NAC	IT	\$
Work with Google on keyword searches to highlight Nashua's art organizations		●		CAN	IT	
Market quality Youtube videos and/or live streaming videos highlighting the best of Nashua's arts and arts groups		●	●	Arts Groups	NAC	
Introduce ads for the arts on Facebook/Twitter		●	●	NAC	NAC	\$
Establish a month to celebrate the arts			●	CAN, COC, NAC	BOA	

identity centralization education  
marketing **commerce** growth

art policies

economic  
opportunities

COMMERCE

Produce new economic opportunities for the city by integrating the arts into public and business policies, stimulating Nashua to evolve as a sustainable, resilient, and livable community.

# COMMERCE

**Rationale and Strategy:** The arts and culture industry generates billions in economic activity nationwide through increased spending by organizations and audiences. The Arts Commission can show how the arts can play a more prominent role in commerce and economic development by articulating the benefits of the arts community to the business and tourism industries. This includes more collaboration with Nashua’s community stakeholders as well as local business owners to foster new economic development, policy changes, and increase sources of funding. It is important to balance the freedom of creativity with financial and policy decisions.

**Policies and Initiatives:** Arts marketing must be incorporated into city planning. The City will identify grants and corporate sponsorships to help increase financial support for funding facilities, programs, and events. Arts organizations must then use these funds to offer exceptional creative experiences to the public.

Arts groups and developers should form good working relationships to increase the number of new projects that are affordable and welcoming to artists. It is important that artists establish a presence in the community and do not get priced out of the areas they have helped build. Legislation and state advocacy groups should support these and other artistic efforts.

Becoming more comfortable with business practices should work to cultivate relationships with businesses, hotels, education institutions and the Chamber of Commerce. Economic viability of the arts relies heavily on artists’ advocacy for themselves and the City’s public policies that promote the arts.

**action matrices abbreviations:** **BBBS** (Big Brothers, Big Sisters), **BGC** (Boys & Girls Club), **BOA** (Board of Aldermen), **CAN** (City Arts Nashua), **CDD** (Community Development Division), **COC** (Chamber of Commerce), **CTV** (Community TV), **DAM** (Downtown Art Movement), **DOT** (Division of Transportation), **DPW** (Division of Public Works), **EDD** (Economic Development Division), **GAD** (Great American Downtown), **IT** (Information Technology), **LEGAL** (Legal), **LIB** (Library), **MAYOR** (Mayor’s Office), **NAAA**

(Nashua Area Artists Association), **NAC** (Nashua Arts Commission), **NBT** (Northern Ballet Theater), **NCH** (Nashua Children’s Home), **NCMS** (Nashua Community Music School), **NHSCA** (NH State Council on the Arts), **NHDCR** (NH Division of Cultural Resources), **NISS** (Nashua International Sculpture Symposium), **NPD** (Nashua Police Department), **PAR** (Park and Recreation), **PLM** (Pheasant Lane Mall), **PSA** (Positive Street Art), **SCH** (School Department), **SYMP** (Symphony NH), **YMCA** (YMCA of Greater Nashua)

# COMMERCE ACTION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Suggested Action	Short Term	Mid-Range	Long Range	Responsible Organization	Partners	\$
Request and get support for an increased budget for the Nashua Arts Commission (see GROWTH)		●		NAC	BOA, MAYOR	\$
Request and get support for intern(s) on City staff for coordination, marketing, events, and office space (see GROWTH)		●		NAC	BOA, MAYOR	\$
Review grant funding guidelines to reward collaboration and assist fledgling organizations	●			COC	EDD	
Have initiatives and zoning laws to support live/work space for artists			●	COC	EDD	
Offer tax rebates or incentives to artist spaces or businesses that partner with cultural institutions			●	COC	EDD	\$
Create an artist neighborhood where classes and public services could be used in lieu of rent and/or to subsidize payments			●	COC	EDD	
Increase public art (see IDENTITY/GROWTH)	●	●	●	CAN, NAC, PSA	DPW	
Provide waivers for parking costs for arts events		●		DPW	EDD	
Work with developers to incorporate art alternatives into new developments and/or have a percent for the arts program that adds to construction/car registration fees/other fees			●	COC, EDD	MAYOR, NAC	
Review the high cost of rent at the Hunt Building		●		NAC	MAYOR	
Have transportation between Elm Street garage/transit station and Keefe Auditorium for events		●		DOT	EDD	\$
Increase police presence at night events		●		CAN, COC, GAD	NPD	
Partner the Nashua Arts Commission and City Arts Nashua to find more opportunities for grant funding at the state level	●			CAN	NAC	
Collaborate with local business owners to display locally made art in their businesses	●			GAD	NAC	
Work with businesses and restaurants to create coupons to events (see CENTRALIZATION)		●		CAN, COC, GAD	EDD	
Partner with hotels and motels to advertise to visitors (see MARKETING)	●			NAC	COC, EDD, NHDCR	
Use the Farmer's Market as a platform for selling art	●			GAD	NAC	
Host a benefit dinner or other event to celebrate the arts and arts philanthropy		●		CAN, NAC	NAC	\$
Strengthen the relationship between artists and the Chamber of Commerce	●			CAN, COC	NAC	
Have more varied open mic events or gallery shows to encourage emerging and amateur artists	●			CAN, COC	NAC	
Find office space for Nashua's arts groups to share and use (see CENTRALIZATION)			●	CAN	EDD	
Make Keefe Auditorium more patron-friendly including allowing wine and other alcohol to be served during performances (see GROWTH)	●	●		SYMP	CDD, SCH	

identity centralization education  
marketing commerce **growth**

proliferation



visibility



prosperity



GROWTH

Encourage proliferation, prosperity, and visibility for both existing and emerging organizations in the arts.

# GROWTH

**Rationale and Strategy:** To generate growth in the arts, the city should make arts more accessible. This includes both physical venues and marketing to underrepresented groups as well as creating new events to attract a larger, more diverse audience. By expanding the offerings in Nashua and fostering an environment for new participants and organizations to thrive, more of the population can become involved in the arts.

**Policies and Initiatives:** Growing Nashua's arts community requires strategically evaluating the needs of the public in relationship to the ability to meet those needs. This and all future plans must look at what the general public is gravitating towards, in addition to the benefits of the arts in the larger community, to increase exposure, knowledge, and access. In general, Nashua needs to find a way to have more events centered on the arts as well as events that bring in popular performers. To target new audiences, Nashua should have more outdoor events that engage its parks. Other areas that could also grow include endorsing the written arts more, developing an opera group, and encouraging more independent films to be shown locally. Furthermore, engaging in uncommon types of events, that combine the arts with sports or social activities, could generate new interest and build an audience.

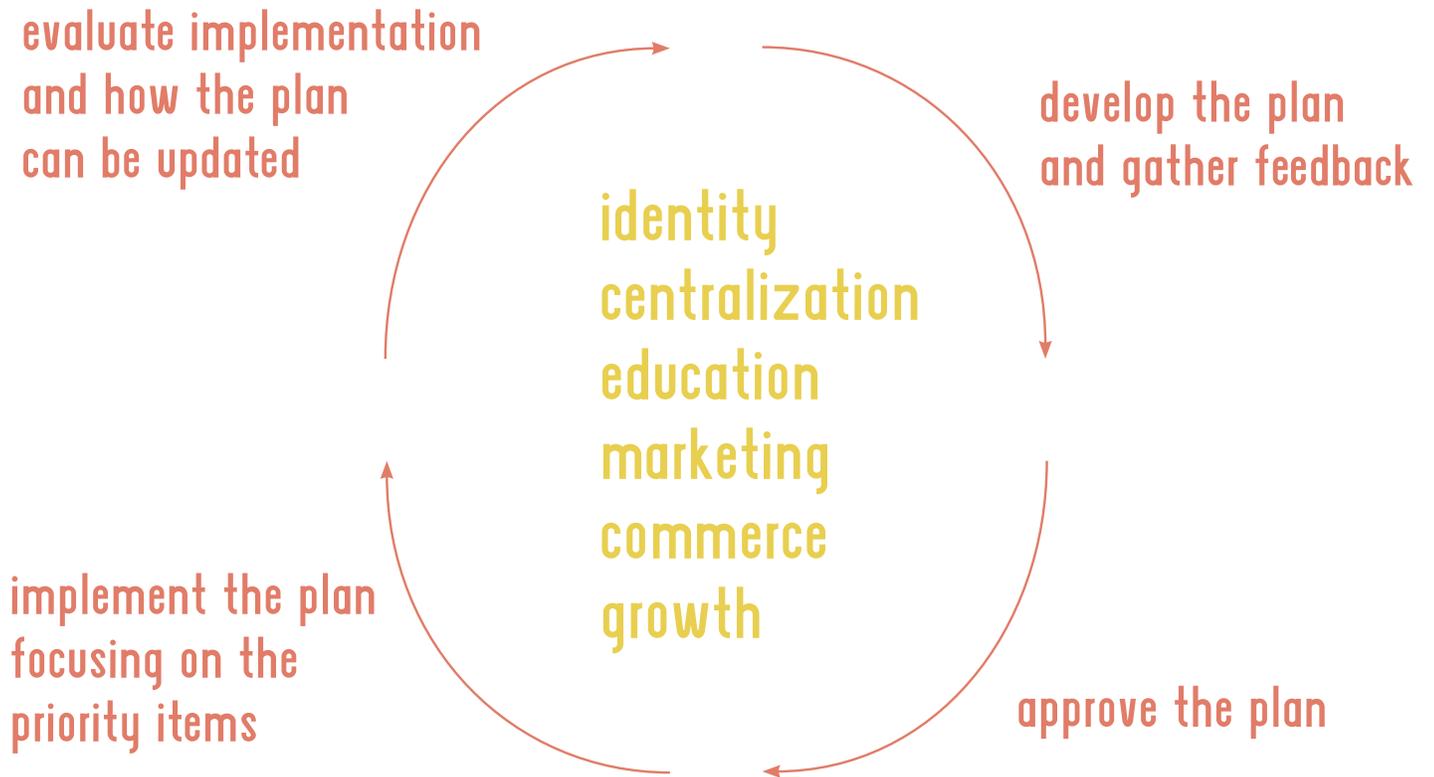
Finally, if Nashua can expand its influence through strategic signage and exploitation of the venues currently available, new facilities should be considered as part of the long term goals of the arts community. Organizations and individuals have been very vocal about having a multipurpose arts venue in Nashua. The City could benefit from updating the *Performing Arts Facility Needs Assessment and Market Study* to determine the feasibility of building an arts center in Nashua.

**action matrices abbreviations:** **BBBS** (Big Brothers, Big Sisters), **BGC** (Boys & Girls Club), **BOA** (Board of Aldermen), **CAN** (City Arts Nashua), **CDD** (Community Development Division), **COC** (Chamber of Commerce), **CTV** (Community TV), **DAM** (Downtown Art Movement), **DOT** (Division of Transportation), **DPW** (Division of Public Works), **EDD** (Economic Development Division), **GAD** (Great American Downtown), **IT** (Information Technology), **LEGAL** (Legal), **LIB** (Library), **MAYOR** (Mayor's Office), **NAAA**

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# GROWTH ACTION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Suggested Action	Short Term	Mid-Range	Long Range	Responsible Organization	Partners	\$
Request and get support for increased budget for the Nashua Arts Commission (see COMMERCE)		●		NAC	BOA, MAYOR	\$
Request and get support for intern(s) on City staff for coordination, marketing, events, and office space (see COMMERCE)		●		NAC	BOA, MAYOR	\$
Consider adding a creative meals event and/or a gala to generate funds for the arts		●		CAN, GAD	NAC	
Sponsor a “date night” with reduced prices and music to draw younger crowds		●		GAD	COC	\$
Organize creative contests with cash or art prizes (such as graffiti, street chalk or public art contests)		●		CAN, PSA	NAC	
Have collaborative arts exhibition at the Pheasant Lane Mall and/or a traveling arts show		●		CAN, NAAA, PLM	NAC	
Hold painting classes or other similar event in one of Nashua’s parks		●		CAN, DAM, NAAA, PSA	PAR	
Create festivals such as a folk festival			●	GAD, NAC	CDD	\$
Have street festivals and increased number of street performers Downtown			●	GAD, PSA	COC, NAC	\$
Have more open studio days for galleries		●		CAN, NAAA	NAC	
Create a new, annual big event for Nashua arts to appeal to the community		●		COC, GAD, NAC	CDD	\$
Hold music performances at Silver Knights events (see CENTRALIZATION)		●		CAN	CDD	
Bring a well-known artist with mainstream appeal to attract people to Nashua (see MARKETING)			●	Arts Groups	NAC	\$
Use empty storefronts for temporary galleries			●	COC, GAD, NAC	CDD, EDD	
Bring murals and more public art to the City (see IDENTITY/COMMERCE)	●	●	●	CAN, NAC, PSA	DPW	
Begin an Artist-in-Residency program			●	CAN	NAC	
Restart an International Film Festival		●		CAN, COC	CDD	
Study reusing a location in Downtown as a movie theater and/or dinner theater			●	CAN, COC	CDD, EDD	
Consider allowing wine and other alcohol to be served at events at Keefe Auditorium which could improve revenue and attendance (see COMMERCE)	●	●		SYMP	CDD, SCH	
Improve Keefe Auditorium facility with an appropriate lobby entrance and signage separate from the school’s signage (see CENTRALIZATION)		●		SYMP	CDD, SCH	\$
Renovate Keefe Auditorium bathrooms, backstage, and review handicap accessibility		●		SYMP	CDD, SCH	\$
Update research on a performing arts facility and look at the possibility of having other venues such as a museum, joint gallery, opera house, indie movie theater, poetry venue, jazz club, and/or children’s arts and science center (see CENTRALIZATION)			●	CAN, NAC	CDD	\$



## PLANNING PROCESS

# FIVE YEAR PLAN

## Priority Action Items:

1. Define, strengthen, and align collaboration between the Nashua Arts Commission and City Arts Nashua to create one face for the arts community (IDENTITY).
2. Partner with the Chamber of Commerce and city departments to integrate Nashua's new brand and tagline (Dare to Begin) with branding for the arts community (IDENTITY + MARKETING).
3. Create a marketing plan for the arts in Nashua and implement the plan (MARKETING).
4. Develop partnership opportunities between Nashua's arts community and schools to enhance student participation in the arts while aligning with their education goals (EDUCATION)
5. Update research on an Arts Center and other new arts venues (CENTRALIZATION + GROWTH).

**Implementation and Evaluation:** Completion of the written document for the plan is not the end - the plan is just the beginning of the process. The first and most critical step toward achieving the goals outlined in this plan is the provision of adequate funding—including, perhaps, the allocation of staff hours—to support these efforts. Once approved, the plan must be implemented and should be assessed every year. Focus should be on the items listed above; however, with each goal is an action matrix to guide priority implementation. Every five years, the Nashua Arts Commission will review whether or not the plan needs to be updated and make any larger adjustments to the overall process.

identity centralization education  
marketing commerce growth

# APPENDICES

This section of the plan covers the survey results, other information, and background research collected by the Nashua Arts Commission.



# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Within these appendices are several different types of information that were important towards the formation of this arts and cultural plan. Included are studies of other plans (Nashua, New Hampshire, and other cities in the United States), demographics, survey results, and descriptions of different arts organizations in the city.

This section of the plan is intended for those who are interested in the raw data used to generate this plan or for further information.

# PRECEDENTS (ALL)

## NEW HAMPSHIRE: (CULTURAL PLAN OUTLINE):

### MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE:

**Title:** Arts and Cultural Plan

**Population:** 109,830

**Description:** Currently they are in process to develop a 10 year cultural plan. Their previous plan was produced by Arts Builds Community! but the current plan is being developed under the arts commission. Thus, this is an analysis of the 2000 plan, meant to reflect a vision from the hopes and dreams of people from the City.

**Goals:** Creating Economic Opportunity, Honoring Cultural Expression, Coordinating Activities and Forging Alliances, Establishing Commitment

**Other components of the plan:** The book is broken into different sections with individual introduction pages that use a brown patterning to have each goal exist separately. Overall, it includes an overview and a set of goals that are then broken down into objectives and actions within each section. It includes quotes and observations from the associated meetings.

### CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE:

**Title:** Creative Economy Plan

**Population:** 42,733

**Description:** This plan was developed in 2008 and looks to capitalize on the arts by using them to stimulate economic growth.

**Goals:** Capacity, Creative Climate, Identity, Downtown, Greater Concord

**Other components of the plan:** The plan identifies who is included in the creative economy (including a list of organization) and the future goals through a list of specific priority action steps. It takes each of the goals and lists how they will be accomplished (although it does not prioritize this longer list nor list a timeline). It provides appendices which breaks down the statistics, ideas for branding, types of organizations, other precedent communities, etc.

### NORTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE:

**Title:** Regional Cultural Plan

**Population:** 45 North Country Communities

**Description:** Developed in 2002, the plan looks at steps of different scales to develop arts in this specific region, including programming and education.

**Goals:** Community and Economic Development, Cultural Programming, Information and Communications, Arts Education, Artists, Cultural Capacity

**Other components of the plan:** The goals are broken down into objectives and then further disseminated into suggested actions. The plan also suggests the need for further study of some of what is presented.

#### **ROCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE:**

**Title:** Community Revitalization and the Arts: A Cultural Plan

**Population:** 29,935

**Description:** The plan developed between 2006 and 2010 looks at providing support and furthering development of heritage, culture, and art in Rochester. Its focus is based on looking at the interests of different constituencies.

**Goals:** Heritage, Potential, Community, Commerce, Image, Leadership

**Other components of the plan:** The plan includes an executive statement, explains the committee, and gives a brief definition of culture and history of the city. Much of the plan focuses on survey results and identified constituencies and their respective “wants.” From there, each of the goals is further defined and objectives are extracted from them but not placed in order of priority.

#### **PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE:**

**Title:** Community Life and the Arts: Cultural Plan

**Population:** 20,848

**Description:** Approved in 2001, Portsmouth’s plan looks deeply at what culture means for the city. It also seems to respond to what it saw as an exodus of artists and a hope to reverse that trend while expanding upon and supporting the arts culture.

**Goals:** Preservation, Space, Youth, Business, Marketing, Agency

**Other components of the plan:** The plan develops a statement from the committee explaining the impetus for the plan and then proceeds to define a set of goals, further define them, and then examine how they meet what needs to be done in the community to achieve those goals. However, these are not given priority and instead are provided as a listing.

## **OTHER CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES WITH POPULATION LESS THAN ONE MILLION (CULTURAL PLAN OUTLINE):**

### **NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS:**

**Title:** Cultural Plan

**Population:** 28,501

**Description:** Produced in 1989, this plan is referenced in Concord's production of their master plan and is important as an older example of a cultural plan. The plan stresses working collaboratively and making a network of advocates in all sectors, one of the major components of implementing any plan.

**Goals:** Community Communication and Coordination, Municipal Support for the Arts, Arts in the Northampton School System, Private Sector Support for Local Arts, Space for Artists and Cultural Organizations

**Other components of the plan:** The plan includes sections about vision, introduction, plan, participants, and acknowledgements. It outlines several goals and recommendations for achieving those goals. It comes up with a time frame, who is responsible, and associated costs.

### **ROANOKE, VIRGINIA:**

**Title:** Arts and Cultural Plan

**Population:** 96,714

**Description:** Developed between 2010 and 2011, the city created the plan to figure out how to continue to leverage private dollars, attract businesses, and cultivate a professional and educated workforce. They are interested in having a method to assess how they are doing to continue to expand their role as the center of creativity in Western Virginia.

**Goals:** Synergy, Collaboration, Creative Solutions; Advocacy, Celebration, Collaboration, Education, Innovation, Inclusion

**Other components of the plan:** The plan articulates Roanoke as a vibrant and prosperous community where innovation is an important part of their brand. They have a variety of goals that are from different groups and to different ends. They look back at their history and find what they think they are good at and build on those building blocks: Vibrant Region—Healthy Economy, Livable Communities—Engaged Neighborhoods, People Education—Lifelong Learning. From each of these three goals, they extract policy approaches, initiatives, and implementation (in the form of a matrix which identifies the time period, lead agency, and partners). It also includes a set of appendices with a survey synopsis.

## **BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA:**

**Title:** Arts and Culture Plan

**Population:** 113,905

**Description:** Updated in 2004, the plan was designed to guide the city to create policy to support the arts. In addition, it makes the arts commission responsible for the implementation of the plan.

**Goals:** Enhance Berkeley as a community and place of culture and the arts in all areas and distinct neighborhoods of the city; Promote artistic and cultural engagement and public awareness of the arts in Berkeley including quality youth programming and education in the arts; Support arts in education in all Berkeley Schools; Enhance and support diversity of both participants and activities in the arts and promote city-wide incorporation of arts and culture; Assure consistent adequate and regular funding for arts and cultural activities and programs in Berkeley; Ensure access to arts and cultural programs and facilities for all ages, ethnicities and physical abilities.

**Other components of the plan:** The introduction provides an overview of the information collected and what the consulting agency produced, including a database, Economic Impact Analysis, need assessment of the 130 nonprofit organizations, an opinion survey, and five city-wide meetings. It provides an introduction to the city and a history of city support for the arts. It outlines a set of recommendations for the art as well as related policies and actions that should come as a result of the plan. It also puts the commission in charge of evaluating the performance in achieving the plan and providing amendments. The end provides a citywide map of the arts organizations.

## **BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT:**

**Title:** Cultural Plan

**Population:** 145,638

**Description:** Bridgeport, Connecticut assembled their cultural plan in 2007 to become part of their master plan. It builds on and complements the Coastal Fairfield County Cultural Plan, articulating the motto of One Coast—One Future.

**Goals:** Cultural Development, Jobs in the Creative Economy, Equity of Access, Education, Environment

**Other components of the plan:** The plan is brief and precise, providing long-term goals and four top priorities. It presents several goals and extracts a set of objectives, priorities and recommended actions. It includes facts, challenges, and process related to the plan at the end.

## PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND:

**Title:** Creative Providence: A Cultural Plan for the Creative Sector

**Population:** 178,053

**Description:** Developed in 2009, the plan works to build on Providence as the “creative capital.” The plan wishes to involve leadership in the creative sectors to work with government and business leaders to realize its next generation of potential and trying to deal with challenges through creative, imaginative thinking.

**Goals:** Mobilize the creative sector by positioning the Department of Art Culture and Tourism as a leader in the creative economic development; Building community and foster neighborhood vitality through increased access and diversified cultural participation; Educate and inspire the next generation of creative thinkers; Foster sustainable cultural organizations; Create conditions for creative workers to thrive in Providence; Raise public awareness of the creative sector

**Other components of the plan:** Included at the beginning is an introduction and purpose along with a timeline for the creation of the plan. It then provides a set of goals and outcomes as well as other objectives that come out from those. It looks at different institutions and the way to attack the different objectives to ensure success.

## MADISON, WISCONSIN:

**Title:** Cultural Plan 2013

**Population:** 236,901

**Description:** Assembled in 2013 with the help of a consultant and the cultural plan steering committee, Madison’s cultural plan is a five-year action plan which looks at the community’s arts, science, and history resources while recommending practical steps which engage access, civic interests, and economics. In a city that recently lost its percent-for-the-arts program and a number of other cuts in the cultural sector, the plan tries to lay out what is being done well and areas for improvement.

**Goals:** Position municipal government for leadership in the creative sector; Create a nexus for sustainable local and regional creative sector development; Strengthen programs that serve the broadest possible audience; Engage creative sector resources in defining place and identity; Strengthen policy and practice around creative sector facilities utilization and development; Create a coherent funding system for creative sector development

**Other components of the plan:** The plan features an introduction and an overview which includes recommended structural changes. The second section looks at findings of the report, including groups that they want to

involve and tying in the findings of the Downtown Master Plan and referring to several other reports. It looks at how culture can relate to sustainability and how to optimize use of the existing facilities. The conclusion outlines several concerns going forward. Finally, the recommendation sets out a plan for 2013-2016 with specific point items to accomplish.

## **OTHER CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES WITH POPULATION GREATER THAN ONE MILLION (CULTURAL PLAN OUTLINE):**

### **PHOENIX, ARIZONA:**

**Title:** Arts and Cultural Plan

**Population:** 1,460,000

**Description:** Phoenix's plan, completed between 2008 and 2012, creates a comprehensive vision for the city and its implementation in a five year time frame. There is a clear objective as part of the plan that the city, specifically the Office of Arts and Culture as well as the Arts and Culture Commission, is responsible for the implementation and updating of the plan.

**Goals:** Integrate arts and culture into neighborhoods citywide; Enhance the city's built environment through public art; Invest in arts and cultural education; Foster connect and nurture local arts and culture; Create a cultural environment that reflects the city's demographics; Promote Phoenix's arts and culture locally statewide nationally and internationally; Build Phoenix's reputation as an arts and cultural destination through development of a major city-wide event; Strengthen, expand, and stabilize funding for arts and culture; Foster an ongoing commitment to arts and culture; Ensure the viability and sustainability of city-owned arts and cultural facilities

**Other components of the plan:** The plan includes an introduction, a purpose statement, and a five-year vision. It includes strategic issues and a set of subsequent goals. These goals then become objectives and are explored through different strategies. There are also appendices which provide a breakdown of structuring for arts education, different arts organizations, and involved city departments.

### **WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

**Title:** Cultural Master Plan

**Population:** 350,946

**Description:** The Washtenaw County cultural plan was adopted in 2008 and looks at how to continue to use arts, culture, and creativity to create growth and success in the county. It articulates priority recommendations to be implemented over a five year period.

**Goals:** Engagement, Awareness, Understanding, Collaboration; Accessibility, Diversity, Economic Impact, Learning, Quality

**Other components of the plan:** The plan outlines a strategy for goals and corresponding recommendations. It presents specific findings with corresponding statistics at the front of the packet as part of the executive summary. It then breaks this down into an overview for how the process was conducted and identifying existing assets. It breaks down the specific goals into a vision and values system. From there, a set of “next steps” is outlined for each of the goals and sections outlined. For each of these sections, there are a number of actions suggested with recommendations, who will implement and partner, as well as models and outcomes highlighted. Individual task members for each part are outlined. The plan also includes interviews with different types of artists and their role in the community. All of this is then put together in a matrix. In addition to the master plan, there is an associated brochure which breaks down the findings.

## CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

**Title:** Cultural Plan

**Population:** 2,707,000

**Description:** This cultural plan developed in 2012 pulls from the 1986 plan and puts together a blueprint for how the city will develop its policies, leveraging its businesses, and look at the possibilities for the future for the community centered around culture. The plan was one of the first initiatives by the new mayor and thus far has led to some policy changes.

**Goals:** Economic development, Strong neighborhoods, Innovation, Environmental sustainability, Public health, Lifelong learning, Public safety, Well-being and quality of life

**Other components of the plan:** The plan develops a set of goals, analyzing the positioning of Chicago in a larger context and looking at the needs. It creates a set of categories which bring together different core concepts, and then gives priorities which clarify these and recommendations which are broad, and finally, different initiatives to accomplish these things, all put together in sections in the text to distill them further. The plan also provides an implementation strategy. It does not provide a hierarchy for the initiatives, and newspapers have critiqued the fact that they see it as being too vague.

# PRECEDENTS (NASHUA)

## CULTURAL FORUM TAKEAWAY 2008

**IMPORTANT ELEMENTS:** Nashua is considered livable but wants the city's arts culture to be taken seriously. The core (bedrock community) should provide support and help with the branding for the community.

**Marketing and Branding:** Centralize messaging (share distribution lists), need a branding concept, should connect with the Downtown.

**Optimize Existing Facilities:** Focus on two spaces: Elm Street (large) and 14 Court Street (small) and make necessary changes to them, confusion about the need for a large scale facility.

**Education-Collaboration:** Match spaces with programming usages, create a space inventory and directory with increased scheduling online, create a landscape of lifelong learners.

**Establish a Public Art Program:** Getting art into public spaces is crucial towards having a positive culture but make it a multi-pronged approach to raise awareness and excitement, "Art all Over"

**Urban Arts Residency:** Invite artists into the community. This could perhaps develop into a full-scale residency.

**Launch a New City-Wide Event:** Have a multi-disciplinary event to get people involved, which, because of its large scale, will provide sponsorships. This will create an event that is very unique to New England.

Nashua should be a community that is a home and has culture (two-in-one), but developing this means involving various groups, especially businesses.

## DREESZEN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CITY ARTS NASHUA STRATEGIC PLAN

**IMPORTANT ELEMENTS:** The plan puts together a mission, strategy, and set of goals. These goals are then broken down into objectives and tasks with certain ones highlighted as priorities.

**Goals:** Market the Arts, Coordinate Nashua's Cultural Community, Stimulate Cultural Economic Development, Build the Cultural Sector's Capacity

**Market the Arts:** Develop the website and serve as a centralized source for calendars and other information, have a central box office but also e-tickets, look for sponsors, have a newsletter, and publicize events, have a brand/identity, help other organizations increase their marketing capacity, advocate for support for the arts and culture including reviewing policies and cuts in funding, document results (especially organizations that receive grants).

**Coordinate Nashua's Cultural Community:** Promote strategic partnerships and networks, have leaders to monitor the plan, encourage arts education advocacy and partnerships, market to the diverse population.

**Stimulate Cultural Economic Development:** Promote creative economy initiatives, Look to support for this through policies such as artist live/work spaces, have affordable housing for artists, connect artists with professional assistance for business and marketing.

**Build the Cultural Sector's Capacity:** Make CAN professionally managed, seek funding and revenue to support the arts, research receiving funding from the city, develop the board, create an infrastructure with office space and partnership, coordinate planning of cultural facilities and work to improve them, increase capacity of arts and cultural organizations.

References several other studies including the *Nashua Arts Center Feasibility Study* (2002), *Conversations on the Arts Recommendations* (2005), *Beyond the Crossroads: Positioning Nashua in the Global Economy* (2005)

## **NASHUA CULTURAL PLANNING FORUM**

**IMPORTANT ELEMENTS:** The planning forum breaks down the importance of cultural planning and why it needs to happen now. It explains how the commission can act as a link between culture and city activities. It talks about how cultural life, community enhancement, and economic vitality are important and must be considered together.

**Themes:** Collaboration, Downtown, Nurturing additional city neighborhoods, Cultural Tourism, Sustainability, Education and community building.

It defines context and breaks down venues, artist support, unique cultural topics, and events focus.

It also defines previous plans including: *Nashua Arts Feasibility Study* (2002), *Conversations on the Arts* (2005), *Dreeszen Arts and Culture Strategic Plan* (2006).

## CONVERSATIONS ON THE ARTS

### IMPORTANT ELEMENTS:

These developed into the Dreeszen Plan. After a vote, some elements became part of the development of a committee (CAN). They wanted to create a full-time paid position to create a leader in this area. It also called to have a venue market and cost analysis to be able to maximize existing space, renovation of 14 Court Street and Keefe Auditorium, have a centralized website linked to the City site, to have marketing efforts that reach out to schools, community, and have a focused identity that is linked to the economic future of the city, applying for grant dollars, have a method for fundraising.

# DEMOGRAPHICS

## **Arts Participation in America: Trends and Perspectives** National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) Web Seminar August 18, 2009

- Survey completed in 2008
- Adults surveyed were 18+
- Total number of about 18,000 responses
- Measures self-reported rates of participation over past 12 months (behaviors not attitudes)
- Decline measured in art gallery/museum visits from 40% (1982-2002) to 35% (2008)
- The average age of the U.S. adult population has shot up from 39 in 1982 to 45 in 2008, about 6 years—baby boomers.
- Jazz—In 1982, jazz audiences were among the youngest arts audiences—at 29, on average, they were 10 years younger than the average adult. Now they're slightly over the median age of U.S. adults, at 46. There are similar patterns for adult audiences of classical music, ballet, and non-musical plays.
- This rapid aging of art audiences reflects the withdrawal of 18 to 24 year olds from many types of performing arts experiences.
- Higher levels of education reflect higher attendance rates for arts performances. (More education=higher salary)
- Photography and filmmaking were the only genres with increase(15%) in performance since 1992.
- Weaving & Sewing were the most popular in 2008 (but still down from 1992).
- Latin and Salsa music are one of the most popular arts activities to be enjoyed through broadcasts and recordings—slightly more than Jazz.
- Nearly one in five of all adults had attended a live arts performance at a church, synagogue, or mosque.
- 24% of all adults attended an elementary, middle, or high school music, theater, or dance performance in the last year. Moreover, although this is an adult survey, parents reveal that 33% of their children had attended a music, dance, or theater performance outside school.
- In Philadelphia, a new program, Engage 2020 estimates to double cultural participation by the year 2020.

- o Both African American and Hispanic participation rates in the arts were higher than white audiences.
- o Engagement levels among families with children were higher than those without children.
- o Brooklyn Museum included participation building to combine firsthand experience and attendance with internet.
- o American Dance Festival in Durham, NC commissioned a person to write a blog about the ADF and all its participants so people had an inside look into the artists' lives through the web.

## The Performing Arts

### Trends and Their Implications

[http://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_briefs/RB2504/index1.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB2504/index1.html)

\*Most data was collected between 1980 and 1997.

### Public Involvement

- o Attendances at live performances and purchasing of live recordings has grown consistently, most likely due to population growth not a percentage population increase in attendance.
- o Biggest growth occurred in the market for non-live arts (recorded & broadcast), citing rising costs of attending live performance and increasing preference for home-based leisure activities.
- o In the future the lower population growth is predicted to weaken attendance levels.
- o Americans are favoring flexible leisure activities that allow them to choose what they want to do and when and where they want to do it (reflected in the record levels of attendance at art museums).
- o The next generation are less inclined to pay for a live performance and/because they are more comfortable with entertainment accessed via the internet and other emerging technologies.

### Artists

- o The number of self proclaimed artists doubled from 1970 to 1990 totaling 1.6 million, due to the huge increase in both nonprofit and commercial arts organizations.
- o Amateur performing artists may outnumber pros at a ratio of 20 or 30 to 1 based on estimates.

- o Internet allows artists to market themselves directly to audiences.
- o Performing artists dedicate their lives to their art even though pay and job security have only marginally improved since the 1970s.

### Performing Arts Organizations

- o The number of nonprofit performing arts organizations increased by over 80% between 1982 and 1997, while the number of commercial performing arts organizations increased by over 40%.
- o Revenues for nonprofit performing groups have simultaneously declined, suggesting new nonprofits are small.
- o Smaller companies earning less than \$100,000 in annual revenue tend to focus more on local participation and volunteers.
- o Opera is the only area of the nonprofits that averages revenue growth between 1982-1997.
- o According to 1993 data collected by the Association of Performing Arts Presenters, over one-third of all their venues were built between 1980 and 1993.
- o Many theaters, symphony halls, and all-purpose performing arts centers receive financial support from the government, such as through community development block grants.
- o Organizations in recording and broadcasting industries (mostly commercial enterprises) are consolidating and are increasingly organized on a global scale.

### Organizational Finances

- o Revenues for America's nonprofits arts organizations fall into 3 main categories: earned income (i.e.: ticket sales, other business activities, and investment income), philanthropic contributions (i.e.: from individuals, foundations, and businesses), and direct government subsidies.
- o The average percentage of total revenues that are earned varies by discipline, with dance companies at the low end at about 30 percent and theater groups at the high end with about 60 percent.
- o Government funding has been shifting from federal down to state levels and now is more oriented towards local levels, which tend to focus more on the social and economic benefits to local communities when awarding grants.
- o Corporations are increasingly providing support for targeted purposes rather than unrestricted grants that allow organizations more flexibility in using the resources.
- o Performing arts organizations are using multiple strategies to deal with financial demands in an increasingly competitive leisure market.

- Strategies (such as cutting costs, developing revenues, and financing performances) often reflect the size of the organizations budget.
- Large nonprofits rely on star-studded blockbuster productions.
- Midsized organizations focus on “warhorse” programming (traditional works loved by general audiences).
- Small commercial, nonprofit and volunteer organizations program more for niche markets.
- Many large nonprofit have even adopted business models from for-profit organizations.

## A Vision of the Future

- \*If the trends of the past 20 years continue\* a fundamental shift in the performing arts system will occur with less division between non and for-profit organizations and major divisions with big vs. small arts organizations, or firms that cater to broad vs. niche markets.
- More small and local involvement is predicated for grant allocations and events participation.
- Big organizations (commercial and nonprofit) are predicted to rely more heavily on mass advertising and promotion of celebrity artists to attract large audiences.
- Small for-profit organizations will be able to serve a wider variety of smaller, more specialized markets through technological advances such as the internet and e-commerce.
- Small nonprofit and volunteer organizations will focus on low-budget, low-tech live productions that cater to local and specialized markets, particularly ethno-cultural communities and neighborhoods and opportunities for nonprofessional artists to participate in traditional high-arts forms.
- For a city of Nashua’s size, “the biggest change suggested by these trends relates to the middle tier of nonprofit arts organizations, particularly those opera companies, symphony orchestras, ballet companies, and theater groups located outside major metropolitan areas. Likely reductions in demand, rising costs, and static or even declining funding streams will force many of these institutions either to become larger and more prestigious—despite the fact that many lack the resources to do—or will become smaller and more community-oriented, using local talent to keep costs down and adapting programming to local audiences. Still others will simply close their doors, unable to reconcile conflicts among their various stakeholders.”

## Implications for the Arts

- o The quantity of performances will increase or decrease depending on the medium and whether they are live or recorded and whether they involve the high, folk, or popular arts.
- o Professional live performances of the high arts will most likely become increasingly concentrated in big cities and provided by high-budget, nonprofit organizations that can support the cost of such performers and productions.
- o Smaller cities and towns will have live professional arts serviced to them by touring artists and performing groups.
- o Performing arts which are broadcast or recorded should continue to proliferate and diversify.
- o The internet will continue to create healthy markets for art forms and reach far-flung audiences that have previously been economically insignificant or underrepresented.
- o Small professional groups and for-profit performing groups will build and maintain comparatively small but loyal audiences who will participate as both consumers and patrons.
- o Small organizations from the volunteer sector will continue to provide low-budget productions of great cultural and artistic diversity performed largely by volunteers.
- o If the polarization of artistic incomes created by the superstar phenomenon continues to grow and the number of both large and midsized arts organizations contracts, young artists will have fewer opportunities to gain experience in their field and it will be more difficult to mature artistically.
- o The pressure of earning greater revenues will produce programming and groups that appeal to mass audiences in both the large nonprofit and the commercial worlds.
- o Innovation and unusual talent may become discouraged or fail to attract the attention of more than a small circle of admirers.
- o While future patterns of demand are difficult to predict, it is likely that community-based performances and recorded product will proliferate while live professional performances may decline in some parts of the country.

## Considerations for Policy

- o The arts community has not given adequate attention to the critical issue of the affect of current trends on the broader public interest.
- o Policy should be developed and analyzed using a new framework that is grounded in an understanding of the public interests served by the

arts. It should also analyze the specific roles that government can play in promoting those interests, and the strategies that government at every level has at its disposal.

- Policy debates have been too narrowly focused on supporting the production and performance of the arts as well as supply strategies, rather being focused on stimulating public involvement in the arts, or demand strategies which do so.
- The new framework needs to center on the public benefits of the arts. It will require approaches designed to increase individual exposure, knowledge, and access to the arts.
- A more systematic approach is necessary to determine how individual preferences for the arts are formed. The procedure must also evaluate how public and private benefits of the arts are identified and measured so that policymakers can explore more diversified and innovative approaches to promoting the arts in American society.

# DOWNTOWN SURVEY

## SURVEY RESULTS (CONSUMERS)

1. 60% of people pass through Downtown at least once a week, with 25% passing through five or more times per week. Approximately 15% of people come to Downtown once a week to go shopping, eat out, for banking, or government. The majority of respondents come Downtown for these things every few months.
2. 60% of respondents want Downtown hours to be expanded on Friday and Saturday nights.
3. 60% of respondents want a casual dining restaurant in Downtown, followed by 52% wanting a movie theater and 45% wanting a bookstore.
4. The most popular of the Downtown events was the Holiday Stroll followed by the Farmer's Market and Taste of Downtown.
5. In terms of leisure activities, reading and listening to music are at the top of the list with more than 60% of respondents engaging in these activities. Photography and crafts have 30% participation, painting/drawing has 13% participation, sewing is 18%, dancing is 17% participation, band/choir is 11%, and acting/drama is 7% participation.
6. 72% of respondents want to see a commuter rail station while 40% want a performing arts center.
7. In terms of advertisement, *The Telegraph* is the most read by residents and Facebook is the most used social networking site.
8. When asked about what cities people think have a vibrant Downtown, the most frequent response is Portsmouth, with Concord and Manchester being the next most common answers followed by Boston/Cambridge.
9. Asked what people think would improve Downtown, responses included:
  - o The most common response is to reduce the parking rates and the lack of choice of stores (less expensive stores). One wrote, "If you want to encourage people to come Downtown, improve your parking policies. Have park free days."; family activities and activities for younger people; Italian bakery, dog park.
  - o "I think we need more for our teens. If we had a local club or rollerskating rink, they would have a place to go with a restaurant."
  - o "Time to get into the 21st century. Let's make improvements for the next 50 years today."

- “In Nashua, we need to create programs that would interest our children and young adults in order to keep them from getting into trouble. Nashua offers nothing to interest them.”
- Comments about theaters were prevalent: “A quality cinema along the lines of Wilton Town Hall Theatre would be nice.”, “Expand artistic endeavors.”
- “It feels like a small, closed community and needs to address a broader base. Everyone should feel ownership and inclusion in Greater Southern New Hampshire.”
- Multiple sources cite their concerns that “It’s very difficult to visit with small children.”
- “Growing up, it was more family oriented, had movie theaters, clothing stores, grocery stores, a bit of everything. There needs to be more diversity.”
- “I think that if Nashua Downtown started to think about the Latin community, it will be a success! We are too many people, and we would like to be part of our city!”
- “Develop old factories/mills into evening-out destinations: casual dining, theaters, shopping, entertainment, clubs. See other revitalization projects: Jacksonville Landing, Atlantic Station in Atlanta, Oklahoma’s Bricktown, Miami Bayside, Coconut Grove, San Diego’s Gaslamp District, Minneapolis’ Exchange Building. We must be a draw for the surrounding 30-40 miles to draw a dining/strolling/shopping customer, not just the current occasional fine-dining customer. Downtown needs tourist, gift, curiosity, unique, art shops that you remember and enjoy finding. We have a ton of local artists, but where are the galleries and art stores featuring paintings, photography, jewelry, glasswork, sculpture, pottery, etc. Large-draw, well-advertised annual events.”

## **SURVEY RESULTS (BUSINESSES)**

- 1.** Most popular events for businesses include: 82% saw an increased in sales during the Winter Holiday Stroll, with 59% during the Taste of Downtown.
- 2.** Most people advertise on the Internet (56%) with newspapers coming in second with 49%.
- 3.** The businesses most downtown vendors want to see are a bookstore (67%) and a movie theater (56%).
- 4.** The most wanted asset for a business is 63% want expanded public parking, 57% want a train station, and 56% want a performing arts center.
- 5.** Some of these were the specific responses of businesses:

- o More street events, better parking, concerns about activities to do in Downtown Nashua.
- o “We need a multipurpose performing arts center like Wilton Theater or Palace Theater in Manchester.” Others commented on various theaters in neighboring towns including the Verizon Wireless Center.
- o Multiple vendors were concerned about parking, saying, “Two-hour parking meters are hurting small shops.”
- o “There needs to be more places and activities for young people (mid to late teens) to go to socialize without fear for their safety.” Multiple businesses made similar comments.

# ARTS SURVEY

## 1. What steps could be taken to distinguish the Nashua arts community?

- Focus on providing a small number of types of artistic experience and doing them well so that Nashua becomes known for those experiences. Do not try to be all things to all people.
- Take the arts more seriously at City Hall; make downtown at night more arts-friendly and less alcohol-centric.
- Invest financially in the arts and arts education in the public schools. Create more partnerships between artists, businesses, student artists, and others.
- Clearly identify existing strengths in Nashua and promote them.
- Identify Nashua's arts groups and when they perform/exhibit.
- Promote unique elements of the arts community in Nashua.
- Develop a specific segment of the arts for Nashua to be known for, such as theater.
- Build up a Community/Neighborhood in a specific neighborhood, such as the mill area.
- Campaign that generates participation and curiosity in the arts to identify an arts community.
- Share ways for children and adults to get involved and socialize.
- Display more art in public spaces.
- Employ Positive Street Art to paint the sides of mills or other artist buildings to attract visitors and act as advertisement and public art.
- Gallery showings like Taste of Downtown & Art Walk to encourage and expose all types of art and integrate into the Downtown.
- Host a City Art Campaign with a recognizable and repeated motif i.e. painted cows, moose, signal boxes, etc.
- Build up a presence Downtown through gallery shows, public art, street performers, etc.
- Increase the geographic area from which audiences are drawn.
- Attract art buyers to the area.
- Change the symphony name back to Nashua Symphony.
- More recognition of the achievements of local artists—when they win prizes or residency slots, let folks know in a quarterly section of the *Telegraph* or other print/online venue.
- Host benefit dinners with music and theater for an accessible price.

- Embrace the diversity Nashua has to offer and explore the art of different cultures present in Nashua.
- Have one cohesive and collaborative space for performances, galleries, lessons, and museum.
- Utilize Holman as a venue for a larger concert.
- Walking tour guide with smart phone QR codes to scan with information about various artists, artwork, architecture, etc.
- Host more open studio days or crowd source a studio/gallery space.
- Add highway exit and city signs for the arts.
- Bring in more bigger name acts.
- Create a catchy slogan to be incorporated into event marketing.
- Bring a significant, well-known artist with mainstream appeal to draw people and attention to Nashua.

## **2. What could Nashua be doing to raise awareness and promote the arts?**

- Banners on street poles to raise awareness about arts organizations.
- Create quality YouTube videos showing the best of Nashua.
- Produce a rotating art show that exhibits in prominent places such as the Mayor's office, City Hall Rotunda, library, etc.
- Promote and advertise the Sculpture Symposium more, include sculpture tours.
- Add billboards on highway, busses, etc.
- Help the art community with more publicity.
- Increase the diversity and number of events.
- Utilize the public access television, WMUR, Channel 9, NH and MA Public Radio and other local radio stations.
- Add more downtown sandwich boards for the arts.
- Create an Indie movie house.
- Drum up more support for places like the Picker Building.
- The arts commission should communicate with other neighboring cities to promote art happenings in Nashua.
- Reach out to the area's colleges and universities.
- Promote arts in schools from a young age to develop a discerning and educated audience for the future to drive the demand for arts.
- Become more involved with nearby schools.
- Utilize both the free and paid portions of social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter.
- Advertise and have more exposure in the *Telegraph*, *Hippo*, etc.
- Start a monthly column in the *Encore* section of the *Telegraph*.
- Incorporate arts marketing into city planning.
- Make permits available for street performers.

- Increase accessibility of public spaces for outdoor galleries similar to the farmer's market.
- Hire a paid executive to promote the arts in the city.
- Find city office space for arts organizations to call home and use to collaborate on projects.
- Bring back the Mayor's Arts Ball or a similar concept to celebrate the highest impact arts in Nashua or to fundraise for future endeavors of the arts.
- Create relationships with area businesses to get the word out about upcoming art events.
- Promote arts through community outreach at places such as the Children's Home and with groups such as the Granite State Independent Art Therapy.
- Call attention to individual artists through local spotlight newsletters or webpages.
- Hold more events similar to the Holiday Stroll in Downtown Nashua with the City's support.
- Promote higher profile events in a central location.
- Host festivals that celebrate the local diversity in culture such as a folk festival.
- Offer package deals for art events and local restaurants.
- Coordinate with all arts groups so there is always something going on.
- Establish a month to celebrate the arts and highlight all area art organizations, all mediums of art, etc.
- Host a quarterly event for arts organizations to reach the public.
- Include arts events on all tourist information in hotel rooms and on tourism websites.
- Pay for marketing.
- Increase street performances and free events.
- Create a community arts calendar that is always up to date and advertised at all arts events.
- Create a smartphone app for Nashua arts organizations and their calendars of events.
- Ensure that public art is of good quality and not installed unfinished nor rushed to completion by a deadline for installment.

### **3. How can the arts in Nashua become more visible online?**

- Create an online community where information and outside input can be exchanged, shared art, contacts, opportunities, etc.
- Visibility should be boosted through online versions of newspapers.
- Get events listed on the homepage of the City.

- An umbrella organization similar to Lowell’s “COOL” should be very present online and kept informed of every event.
- Google keyword searches should turn up Nashua information.
- Advertise on gaming websites during a game’s intermission.
- The arts are visible, but don’t seem connected.
- Employ humor in advertising.
- Create quality YouTube videos showing the best of Nashua.
- Consolidate info from all arts websites onto one with easy search keywords, ticketing information, and venue availability.
- Bring a bigger presence to social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Vine, etc.
- Create a culture section on GoNashua.com.
- Fund paid staff for City Arts Nashua and Arts Commission to regulate and update website.
- Integrate an online artist gallery with backgrounds, images, and locations of artwork.
- Have an individual person act as a contact point for all area artists.
- Produce live streaming video of theater and art events as they occur.
- Have a centralized ticketing system and calendar for all organizations.
- Employ outside advertisement and coupon companies such as Groupon and Living Social.
- Form closer relationships with the schools.
- Build and maintain a fan base with social media.
- Create ads on Facebook, Twitter, etc. for Nashua arts.
- Produce events which publicize “how-tos” for social media accounts in Nashua and have volunteers available to help organizations set up a profile or page and learn the basics of operation.
- Have an arts tab on the city’s website.
- Cross-promote events and arts with local businesses, hotels, education institutions, and the Chamber of Commerce.
- Build a smartphone app that residents and visitors can use to keep up to date on art happenings.
- Have more arts visibility on official tourism sites.
- Create a paid position to build a professional hub website and produce documentaries and interviews with local artists.
- Build a link on the Nashua Public Library homepage to Nashua arts information and organizations.

#### **4. How can Nashua make arts education more accessible?**

- Promote arts through schools, local colleges, and the library.
- Bring music talent in the schools to Downtown to perform at events like the Holiday Stroll and Taste of Downtown.

- Always combine the arts when on display (i.e. have music at the Greeley Art Show).
- Use the Greeley Park bandstand for more events.
- Create an artist neighborhood where classes and public service could be used in lieu of rent or to subsidize payments.
- Work with school children of all levels.
- Create opportunities for adults to access and learn new forms of art.
- Allow classes and artists to use empty storefronts.
- Support arts in the schools.
- Coordinate existing education opportunities and advertise online and with brochures.
- Utilize the two high school buildings and their studios more.
- Strategically outreach to parents about arts opportunities not related to school clubs.
- Make Keefe Auditorium more handicap and elderly accessible.
- Provide incentives for students to attend concerts, art openings, etc.
- Create marketing materials that reduce the “high society,” “stuffy,” and “boring” stigmas that can be associated with some art forms.
- Create Saturday morning and matinee options for arts events.
- Find grants to promote events, fund internships, and increase scholarships/fellowships for artists.
- Offer free music lessons in after-school programs.
- Create grants for materials and courses to be awarded to nominees from local schools.
- Start an endowment for the arts, and encourage education in the arts with a scholarship program for local students.
- Host an event with a low ticket price with all proceeds going to benefit arts education.
- Host free classes at the Nashua Public Library.
- Promote a closer relationship with schools.
- After-school music lessons should be offered. with a string program in every elementary school. Look at the success of El Sistema in Venezuela. Longy School of Music is training teachers in Los Angeles in this method right now, in conjunction with the LA Phil and the Disney performing arts center.
- Celebrate the cultural diversity present in Nashua.
- Create a string program or orchestra in the public school system in addition to the band.
- Have open discussions with school children about the arts to foster creativity, interest, and comfort with all mediums.
- Make arts education a requirement in school and not an elective.
- Employ area artists to teach more classes.

- Spread arts appreciation through community outreach in nursing homes, senior centers, schools, malls, parks, etc.
- Build a centralized venue to host after-school programs for children interested in the arts, which could double as a space for lectures, expositions, and workshops for adults.
- Host competitions for local artists, performers, and musicians.
- Bring a lecture series to Nashua to complement art meetings.

## **5. How can Nashua engage the next generation in the arts, particularly those under the age of 25?**

- Create opportunities for young people who are already interested in drawing and painting to find affordable education opportunities. Educate non-artist kids about art appreciation, but don't force any type of art on them.
- Keep an open mind about "what is art." Many established businesses and governmental bodies enjoy art in the traditional sense. Increase exposure to all kinds of art such as less "stuffy" mediums including street art, modern art, etc.
- Promote the NAAA student shows and scholarship program.
- Encourage businesses to hang local art on the walls.
- Invite representatives from organizations such as PSA and DAM to join the Nashua Arts Commission.
- Creatively generate funding for area art events to ensure ticket prices remain affordable and events seem attractive to younger generations.
- Establish working relationship with developers to initiate new projects that are affordable and welcoming to artists.
- Develop a focus group of young professionals and residents to establish the wants and needs of the younger population.
- Make events affordable and welcoming to young attendees.
- Promote a closer relationship with schools.
- Reach out to high schools and colleges, and have contests which offer scholarships/fellowships.
- Bring artists to the schools to talk to the students, similar to the Nashua International Sculpture Symposium's recent program.
- Have events that are both contemporary and classical.
- Hire Art teachers. Confront the prevailing thinking that the purpose of education is to train people for jobs in technology.
- Assist nonprofits in getting the word out on how this demographic can support and participate in their activities.
- Utilize the web, social media, and smartphone apps.
- Combine art with social activities at a bar or restaurant, incorporate art into a dating or mixer event.

- Sponsor a “date night” with reduced prices and music.
- Sponsor an event showcasing local artists in their working environment (studios) and map out where the studios are. Display artworks in a prominent area and make it a large event so that residents will be aware of what is in the community.
- Host community dance lessons on Main Street.
- Encourage more street performers in Nashua.
- Build a new museum for the city.
- Concentrate efforts on developing downtown as a community that invites and fosters the art scene. See Lowell, Massachusetts.
- There is an organization in Boston that is for younger generations. An entrance fee or drink ticket at a monthly or bi-monthly event would give you both a drink as well as a vote for your choice of artistic endeavors to support that cycle: Visit <http://opusaffair.org/>.
- Support and promote more and diverse free or low cost music and arts festivals throughout the city.
- Find out what younger people consider “art” and try to match those interests to programs and activities. Make activities social events.
- Organize creative contests with cash prizes (i.e: a graffiti contest).

## **6. What can be done to attract visitors to the arts community in Nashua?**

- Have an organization perform the administrative tasks involved with art events to ensure artists spend maximum time creating art and receive maximum return on investment.
- Create a relationship with businesses to support local artists with food, materials, etc.
- Host a round-table discussion about the identity of the Nashua art community and its unique qualities.
- Have more participatory events where visitors can make something to take home with them.
- Offer free parking on Saturdays.
- Help artists get recognized and promoted. The Chamber of Commerce won’t help because artists aren’t paying members. That is shameful. We are creating our own artist failures because of a lack of interest.
- Promote more school field trips to “higher” art performances to instill appreciation of the arts, comfortability in arts venues, and admiration of the efforts of artists.
- Attract world class artists to generate larger crowds.
- Work with Department of Cultural Resources to make sure Nashua-based organizations are included in their tourism publications.
- Make performance venues more audience/experience friendly.

- Have high quality events to attract artists from beyond the area.
- Create more street festivals and outdoor concerts.
- Utilize Holman for a larger scale concert or Blues Festival.
- Host multiple art shows in Greeley Park.
- Utilize the web and social media to promote events.
- Involve the League of NH Craftsmen in programming future events.
- Promote the city as the epicenter of arts in New England.
- Advertise in other local arts communities such as Lowell, Boston, Manchester, and Portsmouth.
- Include listings in tourist brochures, hotels, and web pages.
- Have an artistic, eye-catching gateway to promote art in Nashua.
- Create a Nashua arts walking map. Include paper and Internet access.
- Place more articles in papers both in and outside of Nashua. Preview more local performances in these written segments.
- Advertise in tourism packets at local hotels.
- Generate paid marketing, refreshments, and family-oriented entertainment to attract more people.
- Advertise in the Boston community. Bring in visiting artists to hold public showings in Nashua. Keep the cost of attending exhibits as low cost as possible.
- Create a free, dedicated constant meeting place for the arts in Nashua
- Build a world class performing arts center in Downtown and/or on the river to integrate it with the riverwalk and the millyard development. To help with the funding, use federal transportation money to supplement (from the Broad Street Parkway project).
- Update the Keefe Auditorium, both in the lobby for patrons and behind stage for performers.
- Create a clear message to advertise the arts community in Nashua.
- Have a cultural event to support the location of a new or renovations of, a building that houses theater arts as well as all types of art media.
- Partner with the Pheasant Lane Mall for exhibitions.
- Create an alliance with landlords to use empty storefronts for temporary galleries.
- Have an annual art award to compete for and be recognized.
- Remove Keefe Auditorium from the School Department and make it an independent Arts Center.
- Form a nonprofit group to open a hands-on art and science museum for people of all ages to allow opportunities for local artists to display their work and teach/demonstrate their craft.

## 7. What public policies should be changed or added to improve the arts in Nashua? What potential funding sources could be used to assist the arts?

- Update the Keefe Auditorium, especially lobby, bathrooms, backstage.
- Secure more private funding with the understanding that it responds to the quality of the arts.
- Positive Street Art should be given more funding/financial support.
- There should be more competition public arts like street chalk and painting classes where materials are covered and winning piece is displayed on City buses.
- Apply for more grants and corporate sponsorships.
- Hold art shows on Main Street or along the river.
- Greeley Park policies could be improved to allow selling from booths. Nashua needs to fix its vendor license issues.
- Allow artists to use more public spaces.
- Look at initiatives such as <http://detroitssoup.com> or <http://sundaysoup.org/start-your-own> for Nashua.
- A portion of beer sales at an art event should go to the arts.
- Have a state art alliance, especially with Concord.
- Hire a lobbyist to act as a liaison to the state.
- Remove restrictions that impede the freedom of artists and their events in the city.
- Create tax rebates for artist space.
- Legislation and state advocacy should become part of policies for the arts and could help increase funding.
- Revise permit policies for nonprofits.
- Solicit a large company to put in a performing arts center or have it be part of a movie chain venue like in Orange County New York.
- Focus on arts budgeting and city sponsorship.
- Add to existing fees on car registrations, transportation, health care, and new construction permits to fund the arts.
- The high cost of rent at the Hunt building and other fees for vendor licenses should be reevaluated.
- Arts coordinator and marketing specialist positions should be added.
- Organize and hold a gala kickoff event.
- Have local industries like BAE and Fidelity become more involved in arts in Nashua.
- Have a Nashua Reads program where the mayor picks a book.
- Art should be displayed in the atrium at City Hall and the DMV.
- Allow wine and other alcohol to be served at events at Keefe Auditorium to increase revenue in off hours for the school so that it becomes more of a performance center.
- Institute a Percent for the Arts program.

- Offer free parking for events.
- Have a central location that can feature local, national, and international talent.
- Expand exhibition of artwork to other businesses and buildings.
- Have a donation box in different businesses to help fund the arts.
- Target and reward philanthropy in the arts.
- Look at the curriculum at schools and parent involvement to increase arts education.
- Partner with large museums in Boston.
- Bring murals and more public art to the city.

### **8. Considering the arts organizations currently in the city, what can be done to encourage more collaboration between groups?**

- Have shared spaces and materials for art groups.
- Maintain distinctions between groups so that they can focus on what they do well.
- Better advertise art classes in the millyard and by other organizations.
- Have each group host a breakfast, luncheon, or cocktail party to discuss and exchange ideas.
- Have more interdisciplinary shows and juried exhibitions or hold dinner theaters and street festivals as collaborative events.
- Eliminate red tape for events.
- Hold quarterly brainstorming meetings and assessment of the area to discuss events and other topics.
- Use CAN act as the umbrella for groups/individuals.
- Have an arts endowment fund that offers scholarships.
- Bring more awareness of what arts organizations exist in the city.
- Have a deeper conversation so that everything isn't fragmented and work towards serving the community rather than individual interests.
- Start an annual initiative for an artist collective with leaders.
- Build a centralized location or venue.
- Have workshops to teach artists how various mediums work together.
- Use a similar format for CAN as for GAD for funding.
- The government needs to take the lead to make collaboration happen.
- Have programs for struggling programs to prevent them from closing and to help them (Studio 99) and educate organizations on why collaboration is important.
- Create representatives from each organization.
- Offer free parking for events.
- Have one umbrella organization (CAN and NAC).
- Educate artists on how to be more business-oriented.
- Target more ethnic groups and small neighborhood interests.

- Have a museum for adults and children.
- Have events that appeal to a younger demographic.

## **9. What new initiatives are important to add to Nashua's arts community?**

- Have quality art education that is advertised for all age groups.
- Create a walking guide for Downtown's art and architecture.
- Build a venue for the arts, such as a PAC, opera house, museum, gallery, indie movie theater or poetry venue.
- Hold a raffle or fundraiser to offer free art lessons.
- Add a publicity initiative.
- Increase funding and funding initiatives.
- Have a uniformed schedule for the year with season tickets to different types of events.
- Offer duct tape sculpturing, squirt art, etc. to make arts more accessible to the public.
- Make Nashua welcoming as an artist colony and embrace the arts.
- Increase outreach to various arts organizations.
- Hold more events in Downtown.
- Hire and provide funding for paid staff and/or director.
- Increase collaboration at existing events and hold more events: Artwalk, Taste of Downtown, Greeley Park Art, and Ribfest.
- Make affordable rental spaces for studios.
- Decrease membership paywalls; by making the arts become part of social and networking circles like the Chamber of Commerce.
- Add a program similar to <http://www.tappsartscenter.com>.
- Have a jazz club somewhere in Downtown.
- Promote more collaboration for July 4th festivities to include an arts festival/concert/fireworks.
- Bring more popular entertainers to Nashua.
- Train artists in marketing through workshops or other sessions.
- Have an arts gallery space that can double as a space for small performances or other events.
- Increase police presence at night events.
- Offer more education and active art programs in schools.
- Make the Keefe Auditorium an independent arts center.
- Add a murals initiative.
- Increase performances at the Silver Knights events.
- Offer street events and festivals in the summer months.

**10. What kind of infrastructure/facilities improvements does Nashua need to be competitive?**

- Update the Keefe Auditorium including lobby, bathrooms, and backstage, while allowing alcohol to be served at events.
- Have a museum like the Currier in Manchester New Hampshire with new exhibits that are interesting to those under the age of 25.
- Build a PAC or arena.
- Artists should assist in urban renewal efforts.
- Have painting in the park workshops.
- Partner with the local farmer's market.
- Encourage more street performers in Nashua.
- Offer better parking for events.
- Build a YMCA-type facility for the arts.
- Engage the river in Nashua for arts to be displayed.
- Reuse the fire station on Crown Street for the arts.
- Try to coordinate more with the food vendors at the art show in Greeley Park to allow visibility for the artists.
- Improve the Court Street area.
- Use the Hunt Building for meetings and make it a space for exhibition space, classes, and art education efforts.
- Organize and promote art residencies.
- Offer affordable renting space for theaters.
- Encourage studio spaces, especially in the millyard where the rents are not very high.
- Add more promotional signage.
- Create gallery space in the old mills which is off the beaten path.
- Have a shuttle from the transit station on event nights.
- Encourage more pop-up events to coordinate with businesses.
- Take advantage of Nashua's location on the river.
- Offer transportation between Elm Street garage/parking garages and Keefe Auditorium.
- Retrofit or build a movie theater like Wilton which could also be used for performing arts.
- Have discounts associated with restaurants and shops Downtown.
- Foster better bike access.

**11. What does culture mean to you? Give one or more definitions rather than a set of action items.**

- "Culture" is a shared experience of artistic expression.
- The term refers to a unique set of traditions.
- Culture denotes different types of art.

- It means opening ones eyes to different ideas, histories, etc.
- Culture is a way of life.
- The beliefs of the city are dependent on the people of an area and their backgrounds.
- Culture is understanding, appreciating, and enjoying art of all forms.
- Culture means diversity.
- It is an expression of ideas through different mediums.
- It is an essence of the city, flavor, and vigor which defines the people.
- Culture promotes a more well-rounded individual, opening doors to different thoughts and wider views of the world.
- It is an acquaintance with and taste in fine arts including patterns of human knowledge, belief, and behavior as well as customs, social forms, and religious or social groups.
- It represents collective individuals experiences, beliefs, and values as well as a shared vision.
- Culture is at the root of a community and is an expression of the community's history, living, and future.
- For Nashua, culture is fluidic and changing.
- The term refers to a broad knowledge of different arts and the expression of the creative mind.
- More than observing, culture is about participation.
- Culture should be inclusive rather setting up boundaries.
- Culture is the awakening feeling inside to slow you down and immerse in being.
- It is a celebration of artistic vision for all kinds of people.
- Experiencing culture means sharing expressions of the human heart and mind.
- Culture is a deepening of one's understanding of humanity and community as well as art and beauty.
- It nourishes us and helps us appreciate what is beautiful in life.
- The meaning is expressive in tones that emerge from a community.
- Arts open up your imagination.
- Culture represents artistic achievements of a particular civilizations and are grounded in a shared history.
- It is an umbrella term covering community's cultivation of visual, literary, performing and culinary arts.
- Culture is like a yeast and relies on people, faith, hope, and charity.
- It is about meaning and connecting as well as embracing diversity.
- To define the word, it is music and visual art.
- It is the fabric of society, being devalued but is important.
- Beliefs, actions, and critical components are the heartbeat of a society.
- Culture is the styles and behaviors of a group of people.
- It refers to community, humanity, spirituality, livability, individuality,

respect, and love.

- It means interest, beauty, excitement, entertainment, and education.
- Culture causes an improvement in lifestyle.
- Creative impulse in specific modes of expression within an environment defines culture.
- True culture is inclusion, education, and exposure.
- It is part of what makes life enjoyable.
- As something to be passed on to future generations, it includes our history, languages, customs, passions, and desires as well as our reverence for beauty and expression.
- The essence of the arts, whether in music, paintings, plays, sculpture, dance, or poetry, is what makes up our culture.
- It is a celebration or recognition of food, fine art, and performing art causing awe with the ability to span ages, continents, races, and class.
- Culture is a recognition of food and other types of arts.
- We need it as an enhancement of the human experience.
- Thriving businesses participate in the arts process and culture gives, opportunities for artists to perform in different places.
- It is integration of arts, manners, and thoughtfulness in a community.
- What an individual or group holds as important is culture.
- Culture shares talents with people from different backgrounds.
- It is the culmination of art, music, achievement within a community.
- Culture means understanding artistic endeavors and how they affect each other.
- It is the heritage and tradition of a group of people.
- Culture means fun, excitement, education, relaxation, engagement, understanding the world, etc.

**12. Do you see any obstacles to the arts in Nashua? Do you have any other comments or actions that you would recommend?**

- Minimize obstacles.
- Generate more money and funding.
- Advertisement is an enormous obstacle, including restaurants, stores, library, grocery stores, transport system, schools and churches.
- Arts need more space and facilities.
- More support from the government and commerce is critical.
- To flourish, arts should include young professionals.
- More variety in open mic nights and live music is important.
- The major concern is a centralized focus and competition.
- Arts in Nashua need a vision and must believe in it.
- The arts play a small role and more focus should be on those struggling to survive. What is the point of arts?

- There is a lack of fun or spirit about the arts.
- More arts are needed in the school system.
- The city needs an orchestra program in Nashua schools.
- A children's Arts and Science Center should be built.
- Bring in bands and big acts to Nashua.
- Arts need to be important to people and there needs to be a commitment and a lifestyle.
- Arts need to be part of the experience from an early age and schools play a huge role in assuring it happens.
- Attendance at Greeley Park shows had been slipping but it's an issue of community involvement with Rotary, Rivier, etc.
- Nashua is a bedroom community that doesn't need its own arts scene.
- Nashua is viewed as having surrendered its downtown night life scene to alcohol fuelled venues and events.
- Arts in Nashua need to work together and coordinate.
- There is a lack of integration or definition of the arts community.
- The arts lack friendliness.
- There is a dearth of opportunities to "do" art.
- More autonomy and control in the arts is critical to their survival.
- Having more grassroots movements and support is crucial.
- Education about the value of arts needs to be a focus.
- Parking fees affects galleries.
- The Chamber members casting off creatives because they aren't Chamber members.
- Vandalism is a key issue.
- Apathy is an obstacle.
- Arts need to develop diversity and interest in inner city residents.
- Capacity building is a key issue.
- Work/live space should be offered.
- Entertainment needs to match the quality of our restaurants.
- More scholarships in the arts
- Being close to Boston is a big challenge.
- There is a need to make arts not just accessible to the upper class.
- Leverage the parkway for the arts.
- Leadership needs to happen under one organization.
- Build a PAC (performing arts center).
- People need to get out of their cars and onto the sidewalks.

# ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

## CITY ARTS NASHUA

**Description:** City Arts Nashua is about promoting Greater Nashua's artistic and cultural community, including visual arts, theater arts, musicians, and writers and is about promoting cooperation and community to help the arts thrive in the city.

Projects they do include Artwalk, Art in Bloom, the Mural Project, Downtown Nights Uptown Jazz, as well as supporting other artist groups such as the Sculpture Symposium, Gallery at the Wall, etc.

## CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**Description:** Centered on business advocacy, the Chamber offers assistance and membership to businesses and organizations. It has several partnerships with other organizations in order to develop the vitality of businesses everywhere in Greater Nashua.

Projects include the Insider Series and partnering for events like Downtown Dinner and a Movie (sponsored by Bellwether Community Credit Union).

## COMMUNITY MUSIC SCHOOL

**Description:** The school creates a learning and performing atmosphere for music. The school has professors for their three semesters as well as ensembles and workshops throughout the year.

Programs include several ensembles, flute choir, jazz band, children's choir, African drumming, and private lessons.

## GALLERY AT THE WALL

**Description:** The Nashua Adult Learning Center near Rotary Common becomes an outdoor art gallery and a display for Nashua's past in illustration. Despite its listing, this will be a rotating gallery and is a program rather than an organization.

## NASHUA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

**Description:** The orchestra fills a niche between the full symphony and chamber ensemble. It creates an environment for talented amateurs to perform classical music.

Programs are typically in the format of concerts and galas.

## NORTHERN BALLET THEATER

**Description:** The Northern Ballet Theatre creates an atmosphere and training for dance students from pre-dance to adult to learn ballet, pointe, variations, pas de deux, modern dance, jazz, contemporary, and tap styles.

Programs at the school center around performances in addition to mentorship for students as well as community outreach in the form of performances at schools, nursing homes, and community centers.

## NASHUA INTERNATIONAL SCULPTURE SYMPOSIUM

**Description:** As one of only three symposia for sculpture in the United States (and the only one for a city on an annual basis), the Sculpture Symposium aims to bring public art to the public in Nashua, involving residents in the process from watching the sculptors work to talking with the community to producing final pieces for all to enjoy.

Programs focus on the event of the symposium itself, from opening to closing ceremony as a public event. The symposium also holds fundraisers to make its project possible, including cabaret to an iron pour and also reaches out to the community in a variety of different activities.

## SPARTANS DRUM & BUGLE CORP

**Description:** The Spartans were founded in 1955 as an organization for drum corps activity, promoting youth involvement and participation, winning various international gold medals. An organization that prides themselves on performance and music, they practice and hold camps to teach marching music activity.

Programs include camp and practice to put together performances at various venues and touring, both in Nashua and other locations.

## SYMPHONY NH

**Description:** Symphony NH was founded in 1923 as the Nashua Symphony Orchestra, the oldest professional orchestra in New Hampshire. They use music as a way to create pride and culturally serve New Hampshire.

Programs typically occur at the Keefe Memorial Auditorium and include a season schedule of performances. Their work includes the Summer Fun Concert and their own concerts.

## NASHUA AREA ARTIST ASSOCIATION

**Description:** Established in 1951, the NAAA is about the advancement of art through demonstration, scholarships, seminars, guidance on business aspects, and participation.

Projects that the Nashua Area Artist Association organizes include the Greeley Park Art Show. They post other upcoming events for their artists (like at the Nashua Public Library) or other free events or art shows in the area.

## ACTORSINGERS

**Description:** As an amateur community theater organization, Actorsingers creates stage entertainment of a musical nature and promotes relationships to other theater groups and as part of a lineage of theater in the United States.

Programs include different shows that include rehearsals and performances to the public. They also have some workshops and classes for the public and social events for its members.

## MERRIMACK VALLEY FLUTE CHOIR

**Description:** Founded in 1997, MVFC performs in Nashua and around the Merrimack Valley with a variety of different flute types. Programs include different concerts for the public and other events for a variety of different audiences.

## NASHUA FLUTE CHOIR

**Description:** The Nashua Flute Choir is a traveling organization which performs through the New England region, all on different types of flutes. Members come from Massachusetts and New Hampshire and have a large repertoire of pieces.

Programs include concerts for the public and for specific events and different audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

### STAGECOACH PRODUCTIONS

**Description:** A theater production, Stagecoach Productions includes music along with acting. The mission is “giving voice to the extraordinary.”

Programs start with auditions and rehearsals for performances that are given to the public.

### PEACOCK PLAYERS

**Description:** Peacock Players is a theater group meant to entertain, educate and inspire the community as well as offer theater arts educational programs. They include various smaller groups, like a comedy troupe and an a capella music group as well as the mainstage performances include musicals and other acting performances.

Programs done by the organization include the actual performances as well as classes and camps in addition to smaller performances by specific groups.

### NASHUA THEATRE GUILD

**Description:** The mission of the Nashua Theater Guild is to offer the community affordable, high-quality theater to the public while enriching the talents of its members.

Programs include the live performances and galas as well as competing in different festivals.

### ALLEGRO DANCE ACADEMY

**Description:** Formed in 2006, the academy offers a variety of classes with large studio spaces for all levels of students, recreational or pre-professional. They have an annual performance for all students to perform. They have all kinds of classes, from ballet to tap, to jazz to musical theater, to hip-hop to stretch and strength.

Programs include classes and performances.

## NASHUA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Description:** The Historical Society collects and preserves artifacts, properties, records, and documents from Nashua, Nashville, and Colonial Dunstable. They want to encourage the community to value the history of Nashua through different experiences and work towards community outreach and education. The society includes the Florence H. Speare Memorial Museum as well as the Abbot-Spalding Museum.

Programs offered by the Historical Society are tours and teacher workshops, support for all students in history and history activities, research resources, exhibitions, and a historic lecture series.

## PICKER BUILDING

**Description:** While this refers to a place, it is a conglomeration of galleries for artists that have an open studio event during the year.

## STREETWISE GRAFFITI, BIKE, AND PAINT SHOP

**Description:** While this is actually a business, it is a culturally oriented business. It is a shop dedicated to graffiti art, providing the correct types of spray paint and also contracts to do graffiti art in Nashua (like the Chicken and Chips graffiti). It is home to the only legal graffiti wall in the state and brings in different graffiti artists to paint.

## POSITIVE STREET ART

**Description:** As a nonprofit, Positive Street Art seeks to encourage passion for the urban art as a productive way to build stronger communities through educational workshops, community events, and artistic services.

Programs like the different murals and workshops are part of their work on positive street art. They worked on the holiday boxes for Main Street and continue to work closely with the Boys and Girls Club by teaching two art classes. They do benefits, cosponsor events with others (like Art in Bloom), work with high school students for different workshops, have paint nights, and hold various other activities to involve the community.

want to know more?

visit us at [www.nashuanh.gov/awesomeartplan.html](http://www.nashuanh.gov/awesomeartplan.html)



# nashua arts and cultural plan

visit us at [www.nashuanh.gov/awesomeartplan.html](http://www.nashuanh.gov/awesomeartplan.html)

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## **RESOLUTION**

**RELATIVE TO THE ADOPTION OF THE NASHUA ARTS AND CULTURAL PLAN**

### ***CITY OF NASHUA***

*In the Year Two Thousand and Fourteen*

***RESOLVED*** by the Board of Aldermen of the City of Nashua that the attached Nashua Arts and Cultural Plan produced by the Nashua Arts Commission is hereby adopted.

Arts Commission FINAL

Changes made per PEDC requests

February 2015

-changes under Education: Strategy, Policies  
and Initiatives

-Commerce Matrix

-Growth Matrix



NASHUA

arts and cultural plan

produced by: *Nashua Arts Commission*



# A NOTE TO OUR COMMUNITY

The arts are alive and well in Nashua. Home to award-winning musical ensembles, theater companies, visual artists and writers, there is a lot to boast about in the city. We also have reason for excitement as new groups continue to come together with fresh ideas for engagement and expression.

Support for the arts in Nashua comes—as it does in most cities—from various foundations, local businesses, donors, and government. Participation in the arts mirrors the variety of funding sources and the diversity of our community. Nearly everyone is affected by the arts in one way or another in their daily lives.

But all this variety can lead to a general sense of fragmentation that all the successes—when taken together—are somehow less than the sum of their parts. What is needed is a unified vision to strengthen and support the arts and to leverage the resources of our vibrant arts community to make Nashua all that we know it can be. This plan begins to address that and proposes a framework for action on a number of fronts: Identity, Centralization, Education, Marketing, Commerce, and Growth.

The arts can be the soul of the community, a signifier of a city's economic and spiritual health. We hope you will join us in our efforts to nurture them in the coherent and intentional ways outlined in the pages that follow.

# NASHUA ARTS AND CULTURAL PLAN

explore the future of arts in nashua

*Adopted by the City of Nashua 2014*

**Produced by the Nashua Arts Commission**

**Mayor** Donnalee Lozeau

**Arts Chair** Liz Racioppi

**Arts Commissioner** Tina Cassidy

**Arts Commissioner** John Egan

**Arts Commissioner** Bonnie Guercio

**Arts Commissioner** Paul LaFlamme

**Arts Commissioner** Charles Matthews

**Arts Commissioner** Donna Metzger

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**Cover Art** Nashua Historical Society, 1987

Thank you to the New Hampshire Creative Community Network for their CCN Toolkit which contributed to the plan framework. Thank you to Mark Cookson for his four years of dedication to the arts.

Special thanks to our arts community for their work, survey response, and feedback for this plan.



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C  
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# INTRODUCTION

**Vision Statement:** In five years, Nashua will be a vibrant community, nationally recognized for its numerous diverse arts offerings that cater to all members of the community. Arts and culture are being integrated into all physical, social, economic, and educational aspects of the community. Because we are a well-rounded community that invests in the integration of art into every aspect of our city, our quality of life is enhanced and we attract businesses and residents who add to its future success.

**History:** Since its founding as a historic mill town, Nashua has always been a great community as evidenced by being the only city named the “Best Place to Live in America” twice. In recent years, arts and culture have become essential for the continued prosperity of Nashua.

Two organizations have similar missions to advance art in the City of Nashua and the region. City Arts Nashua, a private 501(c)3 started eight years ago, was formed to promote Greater Nashua’s artistic and cultural community, including visual arts, theater arts, musicians, and writers, with the goal of increasing awareness and building an expanded audience. City Arts Nashua’s objective is to act as a catalyst to help the arts thrive and to promote cooperation, coordination and common ground for artists, arts organizations and audiences. The Nashua Arts Commission, founded in 2011 as a public entity, has been charged with facilitating, advocating, coordinating, and educating for the arts, acting as one FACE to the community. Both organizations are complementary to each other, and both are important to the future of arts in Nashua. Creating a framework that includes clear distinction of their separate and collaborative roles is critical to maximize the value of both.

Working with the City’s Community Development Division, the Nashua Arts Commission has put together this plan as a blueprint for the area arts scene to promote collaboration among existing and emerging groups, to increase awareness of the arts, and to meet and exceed the needs of the cultural community. This plan is meant to act as a vision and a catalyst; while the Nashua Arts Commission is charged with its creation, it is the City, business community, organizations, artists, residents, and visitors who will be instrumental in making it a reality. We invite you to explore a richer future for arts and culture in the city of Nashua.

# GOALS

identity  
centralization  
education  
marketing  
commerce  
growth

**Identity** Create a unique brand to represent Nashua's culture that distinguishes the city within the region. The identity will be visible and engage both residents and visitors, recognizing their collective importance to the long-term viability of arts in Nashua.

**Centralization** Develop a collaborative citywide association of arts and culture by understanding and leveraging digital networks and existing venues and spaces within the city.

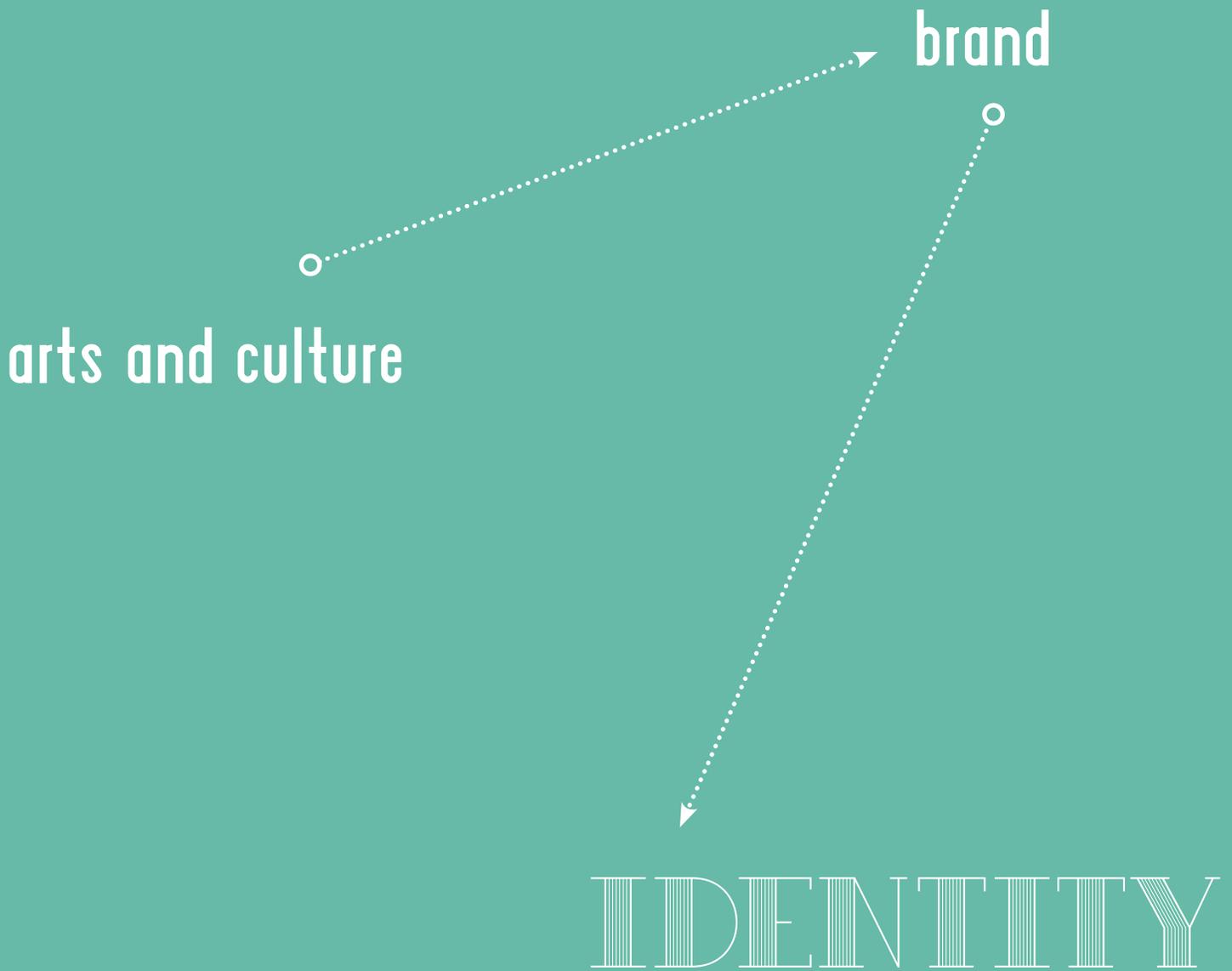
**Education** Engage residents of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities in arts and culture by raising awareness from a young age and integrating culture into educational, recreational, and social activities.

**Marketing** Attract visitors and residents to local events by publicizing the Nashua cultural brand through strategic outreach and promotion of the arts to both local and broader audiences.

**Commerce** Produce new economic opportunities for the city by integrating the arts into public and business policies, stimulating Nashua to evolve as a sustainable, resilient, and livable community.

**Growth** Encourage proliferation, prosperity, and visibility for both existing and emerging organizations in the arts.

identity centralization education  
marketing commerce growth



Create a unique brand to represent Nashua's culture that distinguishes the city within the region. The identity will be visible and engage both residents and visitors, recognizing their collective importance to the long-term viability of arts in Nashua.

# IDENTITY

**Rationale and Strategy:** The importance of arts in Nashua needs to be better understood by the community, making the creation and articulation of an identity an important step towards distinguishing Nashua from Boston and other New Hampshire communities. By identifying Nashua's existing strengths and promoting the unique qualities of the arts culture in the City, it is possible to present a unified vision to the community and increase the geographic reach of Nashua's arts offerings beyond city limits.

**Policies and Initiatives:** In order to establish and promote Nashua's unique artistic identity, it is crucial to streamline processes and centralize the administration of arts-related City initiatives. It is important to leverage environmental assets such as the Nashua River and the Broad Street Parkway. Community-wide buy-in by government entities, businesses, and arts organizations is essential because all parties need to invest in a singular identity for Nashua.

Nashua benefits from a richly diverse population. Embracing a variety of cultures and alternative modes of artistic expression will help the City establish its own unique brand. As important as the arts are to the daily life of the city, the city's nightlife should not be ignored. High quality performances bring attention to commerce in the community and enhance the Nashua experience for residents and visitors alike. It is essential that the community supports new ideas that increase public participation in the arts, creating new opportunities for artists and citizens.

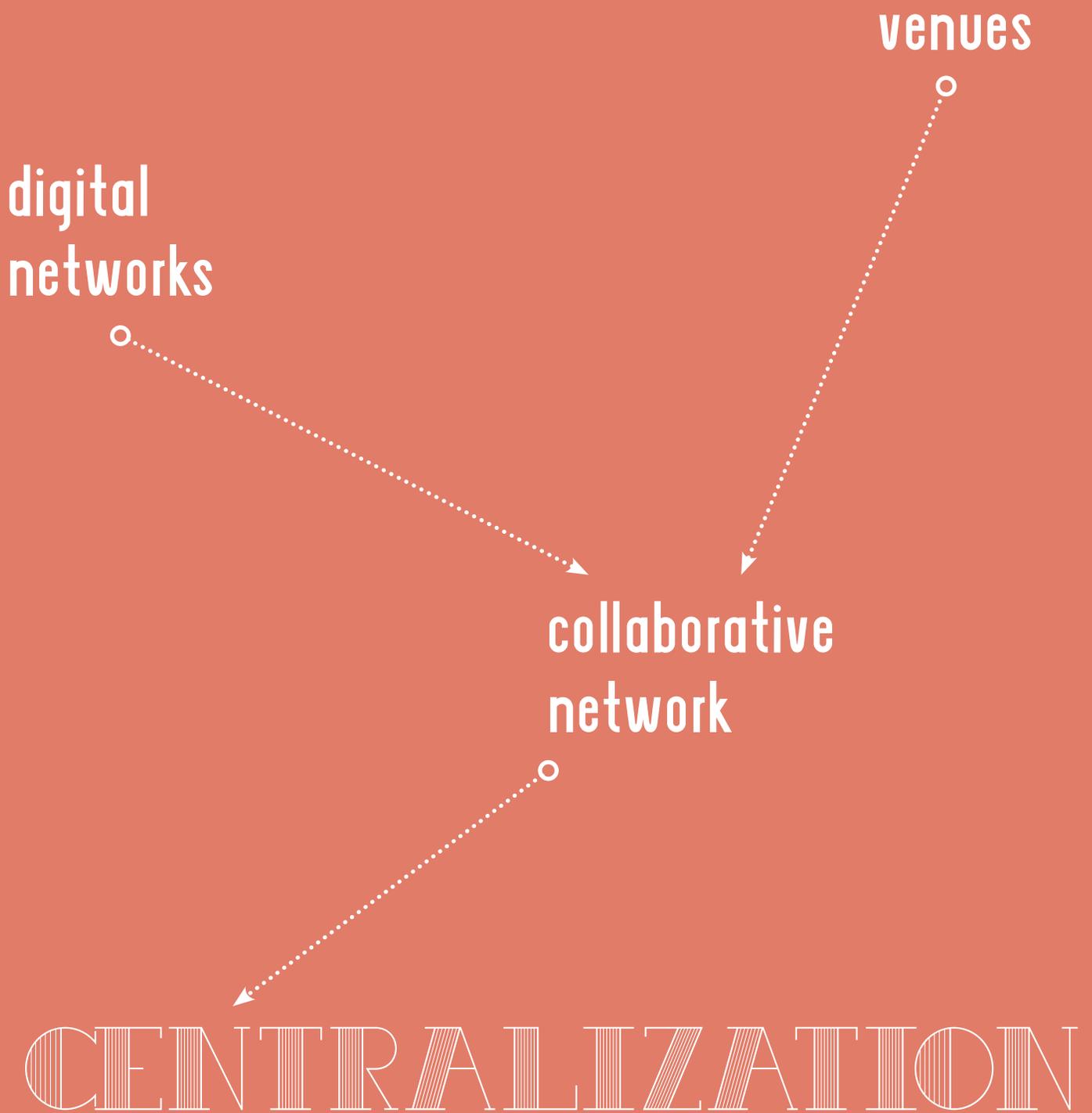
**action matrices abbreviations:** **BBBS** (Big Brothers, Big Sisters), **BGC** (Boys & Girls Club), **BOA** (Board of Aldermen), **CAN** (City Arts Nashua), **CDD** (Community Development Division), **COC** (Chamber of Commerce), **CTV** (Community TV), **DAM** (Downtown Art Movement), **DOT** (Division of Transportation), **DPW** (Division of Public Works), **EDD** (Economic Development Division), **GAD** (Great American Downtown), **IT** (Information Technology), **LEGAL** (Legal), **LIB** (Library), **MAYOR** (Mayor's Office), **NAAA**

(Nashua Area Artists Association), **NAC** (Nashua Arts Commission), **NBT** (Northern Ballet Theater), **NCH** (Nashua Children's Home), **NCMS** (Nashua Community Music School), **NHSCA** (NH State Council on the Arts), **NHDCR** (NH Division of Cultural Resources), **NISS** (Nashua International Sculpture Symposium), **NPD** (Nashua Police Department), **PAR** (Park and Recreation), **PLM** (Pheasant Lane Mall), **PSA** (Positive Street Art), **SCH** (School Department), **SYMP** (Symphony NH), **YMCA** (YMCA of Greater Nashua)

# IDENTITY ACTION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Suggested Action	Short Term	Mid-Range	Long Range	Responsible Organization	Partners	\$
Work with the Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Division, and Community Development Division to develop a brand and slogan for the City's arts	●			NAC	COC, CDD, EDD	
Work with the Creative Communities Network to promote and differentiate Nashua's unique cultural identity	●	●	●	NAC	NAC	
Work with the Department of Cultural Resources to include Nashua-based organizations in its tourism publications	●	●	●	CAN, NAC	CDD	
Wayfinding signage, particularly on the highway should map a clear route to cultural venues (see MARKETING)		●		CDD	LEGAL, PAR	\$
Create and install highway signage with logos of different arts organizations in the city (see MARKETING)		●		CDD	DOT, LEGAL	\$
Place a large sculpture and/or other gateway-like structures along the highway to highlight unique art organizations and function as an outdoor sampling of arts in the city		●		CAN, NISS	DOT, NAC	\$
Host a City Art Campaign with a recognizable and repeated motif that can rotate on Main Street so people of all groups are exposed to Nashua's arts (i.e. painted moose, holiday boxes, signal boxes, etc.) (see MARKETING)		●		CAN, GAD, PSA	DPW	
Create arts event(s) and/or installation of art along the river to engage the natural environment in Nashua			●	CAN, NISS, PSA	PAR	
Place art in public spaces to enliven the city's urban landscape (see COMMERCE/GROWTH)	●	●	●	CAN, NAC, PSA	DPW	
Encourage the presence of art in Downtown Nashua through gallery shows, public art, street performers, etc.	●	●	●	GAD	CDD	
Produce a walking tour for Downtown's artists, art and architecture which could also tie into smartphone applications which coincides with the articulated brand for the city	●			CAN, NAC	CDD	\$
Integrate brand into all marketing efforts for the arts community (see MARKETING)	●	●	●	CAN, NAC	EDD	
Define, strengthen, and align the collaboration between the Nashua Arts Commission (NAC) and City Arts Nashua (CAN) to create one face for the Nashua arts community	●			CAN, NAC	NAC	

identity centralization education  
marketing commerce growth



Develop a collaborative citywide association of arts and culture by understanding and leveraging digital networks and existing venues and spaces within the city.

# CENTRALIZATION

**Rationale and Strategy:** To increase public awareness of the arts in Nashua, all arts and culture groups should organize together and share their resources. Collaboration will promote a sense of teamwork rather than competitiveness amongst groups and an understanding that greater achievements are produced by working together rather than alone. Centralization, in this context, connotes bringing together collective information and resources in a way that can better serve various groups and neighborhoods in the community. The focus of this union will be collaboration, coordination, and promotion while still maintaining distinctions between arts organizations.

**Policies and Initiatives:** The Nashua Arts Commission should act as the driving force for new initiatives that encourage the collaboration of all arts and culture groups in the city. By hosting a quarterly meeting for arts organizations to gather, share ideas, and learn of events happening in the area, the Commission can foster good relationships amongst groups and promote collaboration.

Creating a city-wide calendar for the arts should be a main priority so all residents and visitors have access to a central source of information and all arts groups can easily schedule events. This calendar could aid groups looking either to avoid overlapping events that cause split attendance or to purposely coincide with similar events to create a larger, combined audience. As the main source of information regarding arts events, this calendar needs to be marketed as such and remain updated. It is essential to have an effective website to house this centralized calendar. Other information pertinent to the arts may also be posted, such as details on the steps to create an event in Nashua, instructions on forming a new group, and other information.

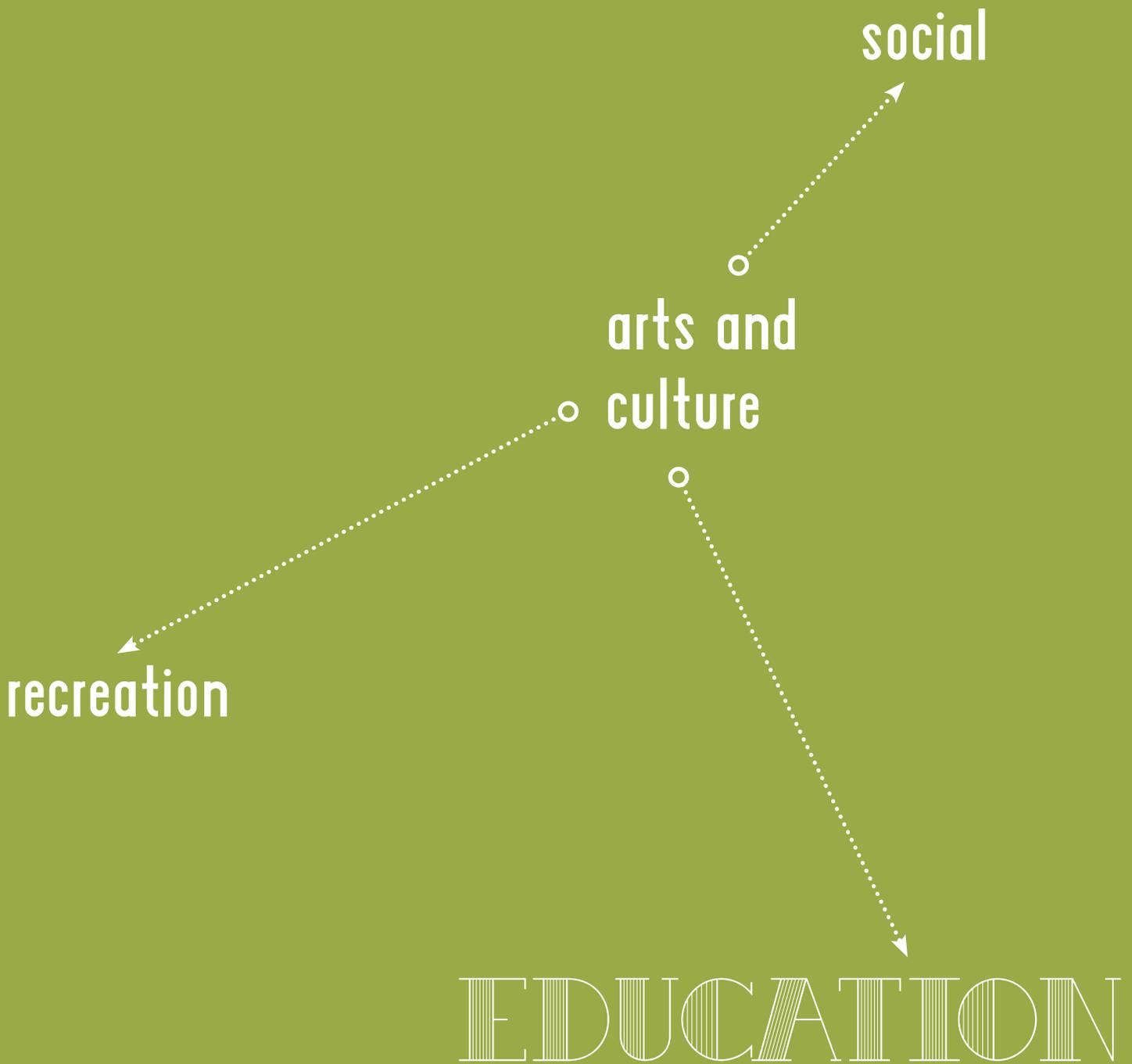
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# CENTRALIZATION ACTION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Suggested Action	Short Term	Mid-Range	Long Range	Responsible Organization	Partners	\$
Establish a quarterly meeting for all arts groups to review event scheduling, coordinate with outside events, and brainstorm for the future	●			NAC	NAC	
Bring in representatives on the NAC board from PSA, DAM, League of NH Craftsmen, and other startup nonprofits as well as bringing in high school student representative(s) to better engage schools	●	●		NAC	MAYOR	
Improve the Nashua Arts Commission webpage and Facebook (see MARKETING)	●			NAC	EDD, IT	
Launch a smartphone app for Nashua arts organizations and/or create an online artist gallery (see MARKETING)	●	●		CAN, NAC	IT	\$
Locate calendars for events, ticketing, booking venues, and other information on a central website in a user-friendly format with visuals	●			CAN	IT	
Highlight information relevant to educational and summer arts camps on a central website location	●			CAN, NAC	IT	
Produce live-streaming video of theater, music, sculpture build process, etc.		●	●	CAN	CTV	
Create a small packet and/or webpage with information for creating an event to facilitate it	●			NAC	EDD	
Have workshops which teach artists of different mediums how to work together	●			CAN, Arts Groups	CDD	
Sponsor one day a month for free activities and/or open studios that rotates amongst organizations (such as a "First Friday" art walk)		●		CAN	CDD	
Produce and market season tickets to different types of events by various arts organizations in the city to allow interdisciplinary exposure		●		CAN	EDD	
Create coupons by working with non-arts organizations (restaurants, hotels, etc.) to improve attendance and collaboration (see COMMERCE)		●		CAN, COC, GAD	EDD	
Collaborate and increase presence at events such as Artwalk, Taste of Downtown, Greeley Park Art, Ribfest, 4th of July festivities (see MARKETING)		●		CAN, GAD, NAAA	NAC	
Have performances and other art events at Silver Knights games and Holman Stadium (see GROWTH)		●		CAN	CDD	
Expand the Mayor's rotating art show to exhibit in prominent places (City Hall, Library, DMV)		●		NAAA	MAYOR	
Develop joint signage and maps		●		CAN, NAC	CDD	\$
Have a program to aid struggling groups (Studio 99)			●	NAC	EDD	
Find office space for arts groups (see COMMERCE)			●	CAN	EDD	
Improve Keefe Auditorium facility (see GROWTH)		●		SYMP	CDD, SCH	
Update research on an arts center and other new arts venues (see GROWTH)			●	CAN, NAC	CDD	\$

identity centralization **education**  
marketing commerce growth



Engage residents of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities in arts and culture by raising awareness from a young age and integrating culture into educational, recreational, and social activities.

# EDUCATION

**Strategy:** Arts education should be inclusive of and offered to all Nashua residents of any age. An arts-rich learning environment promotes self-esteem, cooperation, and critical thinking, all of which have long-term benefits both for the students and for the larger Nashua community. Of particular importance is supporting the relationship between the arts community and the Nashua School System (as well as private schools and higher education institutions) which is critical for the long term viability of the arts in Nashua. Finding new ways to strengthen arts programs for the schools—including drama, visual art, music, dance, and prose/poetry—with help from local artists, is an important first step.

**Policies and Initiatives:** Addressing the arts in schools and adult learning facilities will require a multi-pronged approach: investing financially, connecting arts organizations to the schools, and adult learning organizations, honoring teachers for excellence in art education, and understanding that participation in the arts is indispensable for students of all ages and backgrounds.

In general, students' and community members' involvement with enhancement programs in partnership with arts organizations should deepen as they advance. At the elementary level, students will gain wide exposure to a variety of performing/visual/written arts through in-school demonstrations and field trips. In middle school, students will begin to make choices about their arts participation and local arts organizations can deepen their involvement. In higher grades, students will express themselves in more advanced and individual ways. Adults will be able to express their creativity more extensively. All levels of arts education will provide opportunities for mentorship by local artists.

Programs should strive to support students wishing to achieve higher education in the arts. In addition, the City should promote discussion amongst teachers, administrators, students, and parents about arts education and support these efforts with appropriate funding.

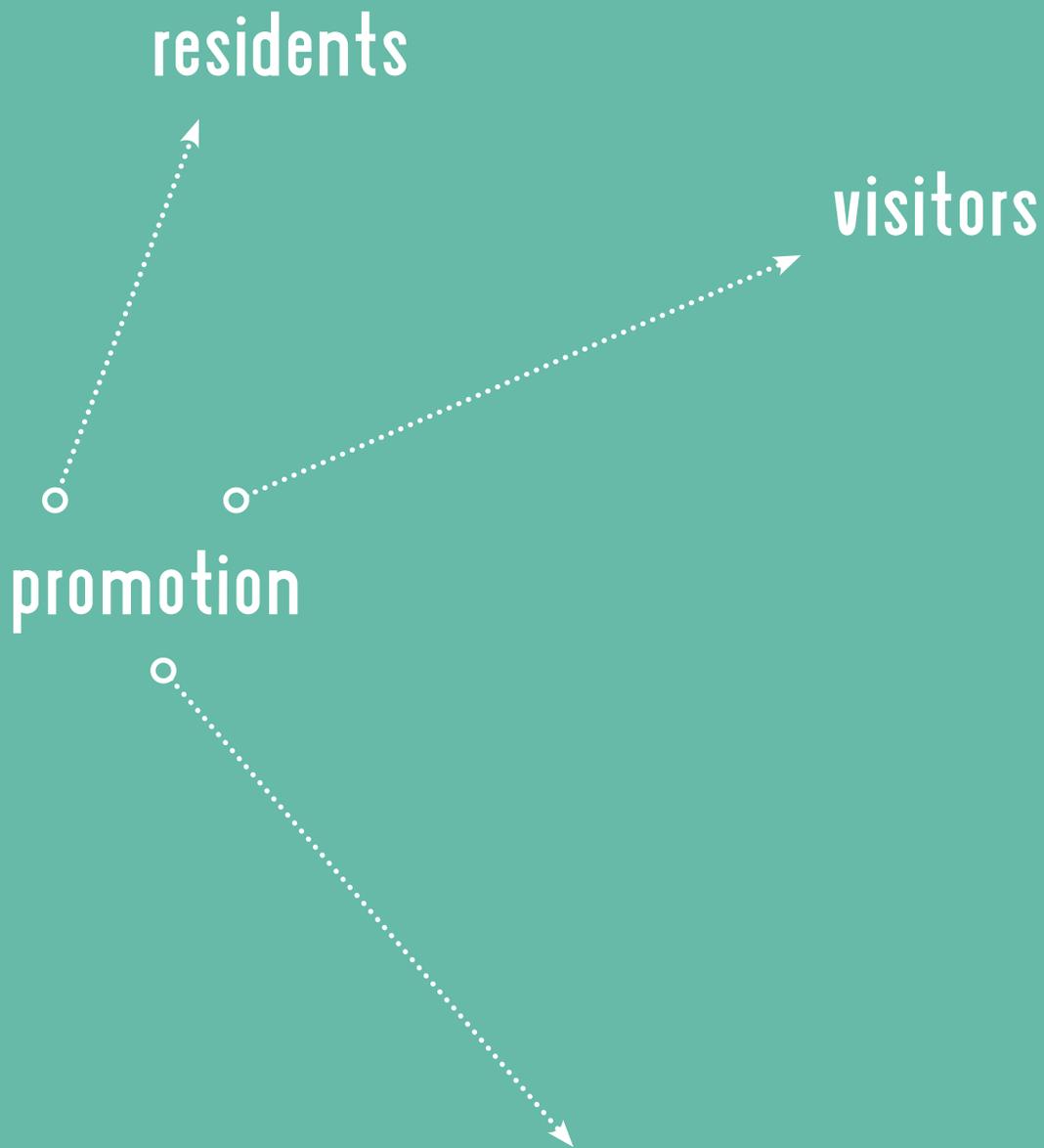
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# EDUCATION ACTION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Suggested Action	Short Term	Mid-Range	Long Range	Responsible Organization	Partners	\$
Promote more school field trips to art performances to instill appreciation for the arts, such as spending part of a day backstage with the Actorsingers	●			SCH, Arts Groups	SCH	
Have an orchestra (strings) program in the Nashua School system			●	SYMP	SCH	
Bring student music talent to Downtown to perform at events in Nashua such as the Holiday Stroll and Taste of Downtown		●		GAD	NAC	
Set up a mentorship program to encourage students to become involved in city-wide arts organizations	●	●		BBBS	SCH	
Pair each art organization with different schools to get students excited about the arts, using the model of the the sculpture symposium	●			Arts Groups	SCH	
Consider a permanent program for interchangeable student work to hang in City Hall	●			NAAA	MAYOR	
Increase outreach to the Children's Home, YMCA, Boys and Girls Club to bring all types of arts to students of all ages		●		BGC, NCH, YMCA	NAC	
Increase student outreach through performances and art exhibits at nursing homes, senior centers, parks, mall, etc.		●		CAN	NAC	
Provide incentives for students to attend concerts, plays, art openings, etc.	●			CAN	SCH	
Have free music lessons become part of after school programs and activities		●		NCMS	SCH	
Research programs for donated or discounted instruments for students who do not have access		●		NCMS	SCH	
Have a large event/competition which combines performances and an art exhibit for student work		●		CAN	SCH	
Encourage more multidisciplinary arts camps that partner with arts organizations and schools		●		CAN	SCH	
Get students involved and interested in poetry through the Poetry Out Loud Competition, a national competition (\$20,000 prize)	●			NHSCA	SCH	
Review the existing curriculum for Nashua Public Schools to make art appreciation part of each student's education		●		SCH, Arts Groups	SCH	
Increase funding and support for art scholarships			●	CAN	MAYOR	\$
Include an arts and cultural reading list on the Nashua Public Library's webpage	●			NAC	LIB	
Host arts classes at the Nashua Public Library		●		NAC	LIB	
Bring a lecture series to Nashua on arts topics			●	NAC	LIB	
Celebrate National Dance Day in Nashua			●	NBT	NAC	

identity centralization education  
marketing commerce growth



Attract visitors and residents to local events by publicizing the Nashua cultural brand through strategic outreach and promotion of the arts to both local and broader audiences.

# MARKETING

**Rationale and Strategy:** Exposure is a key component towards making the arts part of daily life in Nashua. It is vital to reach out to the greater population of the city, particularly to underrepresented groups including ethnic groups, small neighborhoods, and a younger demographics. Arts organizations must also create a strong working relationship with the local media that focuses on collaborative efforts to get the word out. Marketing should garner excitement and shed the image of the arts being “high society” or “stuffy.”

**Policies and Initiatives:** In order to reach out to more people, marketing should target a more diverse audience. This can be achieved in several ways such as promoting “family friendly” events, low-cost events, and weekend events. Reoccurring events or events that allow passersby to join at the last minute can be attractive to younger groups and those with dynamic schedules. Likewise, advertising events which do not have a language barrier, such as carnivals, and marketing directly to other cultures within our city will also encourage various cultural backgrounds to participate. Marketing both classical and contemporary arts can generate new audience members as well.

To advertise events, it is important to look at both physical signage, print media, and digital media. This includes managing exposure through downtown restaurants and stores, the library, grocery stores, the transit system, schools, churches, etc. More exposure through digital and print platforms (such as *The Telegraph*, *Hippo*, Patch, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Vine, etc.) will also allow more groups to understand what offerings the city has. Branching out to advertise in other cities, even Boston, can highlight unique qualities about the Nashua art scene to potential visitors.

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# MARKETING ACTION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Suggested Action	Short Term	Mid-Range	Long Range	Responsible Organization	Partners	\$
Create a marketing plan for the arts	●			CAN, NAC	NAC	
Allocate a portion of the NAC budget for marketing in Nashua		●		NAC	BOA, MAYOR,	
Integrate brand into all marketing efforts for the arts community (see IDENTITY)	●	●	●	CAN, NAC	EDD	
Use banners and/or sandwich boards on Main Street, storefront advertisements, newsletters, etc. to expose the arts		●		CAN, GAD	CDD, PAR	\$
Advertise for the arts on highway billboards or on the side of Nashua Transit buses		●	●	CAN	NAC	\$
Employ nonprofits interested in creating murals for mills or other artist building to act as advertising and public art		●	●	PSA	NAC	
Host a City Art Campaign that can rotate on Main Street so people of all groups are exposed to Nashua's arts (see IDENTITY)		●		CAN, GAD, PSA	DPW	
Wayfinding signage should clearly advertise for cultural venues and organizations in Nashua (see IDENTITY)		●		CDD	DOT, LEGAL, PAR	\$
Partner with hotels to advertise to visitors and also work with tourism websites and agencies to get the word out (see COMMERCE)	●			NAC	COC, EDD, NHDCR	
Drive increased attendance at events such as Artwalk, Taste of Downtown, Greeley Park Art, Ribfest, 4th of July festivities (see CENTRALIZATION)		●		CAN, GAD, NAAA	NAC	
Bring a well-known artist with mainstream appeal to attract people to Nashua (see GROWTH)			●	Arts Groups	NAC	\$
Recognize the achievements of local artists through a newspaper column and/or newsletter		●		CAN, NAC	NAC	
Provide marketing/social media training for artists	●			CAN	IT	
Employ outside advertisement and coupon companies such as Groupon and Living Social		●		CAN	NAC	
Improve the Nashua Arts Commission webpage and Facebook to better advertise for artists, events, etc. (see CENTRALIZATION)	●			NAC	EDD, IT	
Advertise through a smartphone app for arts and events (see CENTRALIZATION)	●	●		CAN, NAC	IT	\$
Work with Google on keyword searches to highlight Nashua's art organizations		●		CAN	IT	
Market quality Youtube videos and/or live streaming videos highlighting the best of Nashua's arts and arts groups		●	●	Arts Groups	NAC	
Introduce ads for the arts on Facebook/Twitter		●	●	NAC	NAC	\$
Establish a month to celebrate the arts			●	CAN, COC, NAC	BOA	

identity centralization education  
marketing **commerce** growth

art policies

economic  
opportunities

COMMERCE

Produce new economic opportunities for the city by integrating the arts into public and business policies, stimulating Nashua to evolve as a sustainable, resilient, and livable community.

# COMMERCE

**Rationale and Strategy:** The arts and culture industry generates billions in economic activity nationwide through increased spending by organizations and audiences. The Arts Commission can show how the arts can play a more prominent role in commerce and economic development by articulating the benefits of the arts community to the business and tourism industries. This includes more collaboration with Nashua's community stakeholders as well as local business owners to foster new economic development, policy changes, and increase sources of funding. It is important to balance the freedom of creativity with financial and policy decisions.

**Policies and Initiatives:** Arts marketing must be incorporated into city planning. The City will identify grants and corporate sponsorships to help increase financial support for funding facilities, programs, and events. Arts organizations must then use these funds to offer exceptional creative experiences to the public.

Arts groups and developers should form good working relationships to increase the number of new projects that are affordable and welcoming to artists. It is important that artists establish a presence in the community and do not get priced out of the areas they have helped build. Legislation and state advocacy groups should support these and other artistic efforts.

Becoming more comfortable with business practices should work to cultivate relationships with businesses, hotels, education institutions and the Chamber of Commerce. Economic viability of the arts relies heavily on artists' advocacy for themselves and the City's public policies that promote the arts.

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# COMMERCE ACTION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Suggested Action	Short Term	Mid-Range	Long Range	Responsible Organization	Partners	\$
Request and get support for an increased budget for the Nashua Arts Commission (see GROWTH)		●		NAC	BOA, MAYOR	\$
Request and get support for intern(s) on City staff for coordination, marketing, events, and office space (see GROWTH)		●		NAC	BOA, MAYOR	\$
Review grant funding guidelines to reward collaboration and assist fledgling organizations	●			COC	EDD	
Have initiatives and zoning laws to support live/work space for artists			●	COC	EDD	
Offer tax rebates or incentives to artist spaces or businesses that partner with cultural institutions			●	COC	EDD	\$
Create an artist neighborhood where classes and public services could be used in lieu of rent and/or to subsidize payments			●	COC	EDD	
Increase public art (see IDENTITY/GROWTH)	●	●	●	CAN, NAC, PSA	DPW	
Provide waivers for parking costs for arts events		●		DPW	EDD	
Work with developers to incorporate art alternatives into new developments and/or have a percent for the arts program that adds to construction/car registration fees/other fees			●	COC, EDD	MAYOR, NAC	
Review the high cost of rent at the Hunt Building		●		NAC	MAYOR	
Have transportation between Elm Street garage/transit station and Keefe Auditorium for events		●		DOT	EDD	\$
Increase police presence at night events		●		CAN, COC, GAD	NPD	
Partner the Nashua Arts Commission and City Arts Nashua to find more opportunities for grant funding at the state level	●			CAN	NAC	
Collaborate with local business owners to display locally made art in their businesses	●			GAD	NAC	
Work with businesses and restaurants to create coupons to events (see CENTRALIZATION)		●		CAN, COC, GAD	EDD	
Partner with hotels and motels to advertise to visitors (see MARKETING)	●			NAC	COC, EDD, NHDCR	
Use the Farmer's Market as a platform for selling art	●			GAD	NAC	
Host a benefit dinner or other event to celebrate the arts and arts philanthropy		●		CAN, NAC	NAC	\$
Strengthen the relationship between artists and the Chamber of Commerce	●			CAN, COC	NAC	
Have more varied open mic events or gallery shows to encourage emerging and amateur artists	●			CAN, COC	NAC	
Find office space for Nashua's arts groups to share and use (see CENTRALIZATION)			●	CAN	EDD	
Investigate making performance venues more patron-friendly (see GROWTH)	●	●		SYMP	CDD, SCH	

identity centralization education  
marketing commerce growth

proliferation



visibility



prosperity



GROWTH

Encourage proliferation, prosperity, and visibility for both existing and emerging organizations in the arts.

# GROWTH

**Rationale and Strategy:** To generate growth in the arts, the city should make arts more accessible. This includes both physical venues and marketing to underrepresented groups as well as creating new events to attract a larger, more diverse audience. By expanding the offerings in Nashua and fostering an environment for new participants and organizations to thrive, more of the population can become involved in the arts.

**Policies and Initiatives:** Growing Nashua's arts community requires strategically evaluating the needs of the public in relationship to the ability to meet those needs. This and all future plans must look at what the general public is gravitating towards, in addition to the benefits of the arts in the larger community, to increase exposure, knowledge, and access. In general, Nashua needs to find a way to have more events centered on the arts as well as events that bring in popular performers. To target new audiences, Nashua should have more outdoor events that engage its parks. Other areas that could also grow include endorsing the written arts more, developing an opera group, and encouraging more independent films to be shown locally. Furthermore, engaging in uncommon types of events, that combine the arts with sports or social activities, could generate new interest and build an audience.

Finally, if Nashua can expand its influence through strategic signage and exploitation of the venues currently available, new facilities should be considered as part of the long term goals of the arts community. Organizations and individuals have been very vocal about having a multipurpose arts venue in Nashua. The City could benefit from updating the *Performing Arts Facility Needs Assessment and Market Study* to determine the feasibility of building an arts center in Nashua.

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# GROWTH ACTION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Suggested Action	Short Term	Mid-Range	Long Range	Responsible Organization	Partners	\$
Request and get support for increased budget for the Nashua Arts Commission (see COMMERCE)		●		NAC	BOA, MAYOR	\$
Request and get support for intern(s) on City staff for coordination, marketing, events, and office space (see COMMERCE)		●		NAC	BOA, MAYOR	\$
Consider adding a creative meals event and/or a gala to generate funds for the arts		●		CAN, GAD	NAC	
Sponsor a “date night” with reduced prices and music to draw younger crowds		●		GAD	COC	\$
Organize creative contests with cash or art prizes (such as graffiti, street chalk or public art contests)		●		CAN, PSA	NAC	
Have collaborative arts exhibition at the Pheasant Lane Mall and/or a traveling arts show		●		CAN, NAAA, PLM	NAC	
Hold painting classes or other similar event in one of Nashua’s parks		●		CAN, DAM, NAAA, PSA	PAR	
Create festivals such as a folk festival			●	GAD, NAC	CDD	\$
Have street festivals and increased number of street performers Downtown			●	GAD, PSA	COC, NAC	\$
Have more open studio days for galleries		●		CAN, NAAA	NAC	
Create a new, annual big event for Nashua arts to appeal to the community		●		COC, GAD, NAC	CDD	\$
Hold music performances at Silver Knights events (see CENTRALIZATION)		●		CAN	CDD	
Bring a well-known artist with mainstream appeal to attract people to Nashua (see MARKETING)			●	Arts Groups	NAC	\$
Use empty storefronts for temporary galleries			●	COC, GAD, NAC	CDD, EDD	
Bring murals and more public art to the City (see IDENTITY/COMMERCE)	●	●	●	CAN, NAC, PSA	DPW	
Begin an Artist-in-Residency program			●	CAN	NAC	
Restart an International Film Festival		●		CAN, COC	CDD	
Study reusing a location in Downtown as a movie theater and/or dinner theater			●	CAN, COC	CDD, EDD	
Improve Keefe Auditorium facility with an appropriate lobby entrance and signage separate from the school’s signage (see CENTRALIZATION)		●		SYMP	CDD, SCH	\$
Renovate Keefe Auditorium bathrooms, backstage, and review handicap accessibility		●		SYMP	CDD, SCH	\$
Update research on a performing arts facility and look at the possibility of having other venues such as a museum, joint gallery, opera house, indie movie theater, poetry venue, jazz club, and/or children’s arts and science center (see CENTRALIZATION)			●	CAN, NAC	CDD	\$

evaluate implementation  
and how the plan  
can be updated

develop the plan  
and gather feedback

identity  
centralization  
education  
marketing  
commerce  
growth

implement the plan  
focusing on the  
priority items

approve the plan

# PLANNING PROCESS

# FIVE YEAR PLAN

## Priority Action Items:

1. Define, strengthen, and align collaboration between the Nashua Arts Commission and City Arts Nashua to create one face for the arts community (IDENTITY).
2. Partner with the Chamber of Commerce and city departments to integrate Nashua's new brand and tagline (Dare to Begin) with branding for the arts community (IDENTITY + MARKETING).
3. Create a marketing plan for the arts in Nashua and implement the plan (MARKETING).
4. Develop partnership opportunities between Nashua's arts community and schools to enhance student participation in the arts while aligning with their education goals (EDUCATION)
5. Update research on an Arts Center and other new arts venues (CENTRALIZATION + GROWTH).

**Implementation and Evaluation:** Completion of the written document for the plan is not the end - the plan is just the beginning of the process. The first and most critical step toward achieving the goals outlined in this plan is the provision of adequate funding—including, perhaps, the allocation of staff hours—to support these efforts. Once approved, the plan must be implemented and should be assessed every year. Focus should be on the items listed above; however, with each goal is an action matrix to guide priority implementation. Every five years, the Nashua Arts Commission will review whether or not the plan needs to be updated and make any larger adjustments to the overall process.

identity centralization education  
marketing commerce growth

# APPENDICES

This section of the plan covers the survey results, other information, and background research collected by the Nashua Arts Commission.



# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Within these appendices are several different types of information that were important towards the formation of this arts and cultural plan. Included are studies of other plans (Nashua, New Hampshire, and other cities in the United States), demographics, survey results, and descriptions of different arts organizations in the city.

This section of the plan is intended for those who are interested in the raw data used to generate this plan or for further information.

# PRECEDENTS (ALL)

## NEW HAMPSHIRE: (CULTURAL PLAN OUTLINE):

### MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE:

**Title:** Arts and Cultural Plan

**Population:** 109,830

**Description:** Currently they are in process to develop a 10 year cultural plan. Their previous plan was produced by Arts Builds Community! but the current plan is being developed under the arts commission. Thus, this is an analysis of the 2000 plan, meant to reflect a vision from the hopes and dreams of people from the City.

**Goals:** Creating Economic Opportunity, Honoring Cultural Expression, Coordinating Activities and Forging Alliances, Establishing Commitment

**Other components of the plan:** The book is broken into different sections with individual introduction pages that use a brown patterning to have each goal exist separately. Overall, it includes an overview and a set of goals that are then broken down into objectives and actions within each section. It includes quotes and observations from the associated meetings.

### CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE:

**Title:** Creative Economy Plan

**Population:** 42,733

**Description:** This plan was developed in 2008 and looks to capitalize on the arts by using them to stimulate economic growth.

**Goals:** Capacity, Creative Climate, Identity, Downtown, Greater Concord

**Other components of the plan:** The plan identifies who is included in the creative economy (including a list of organization) and the future goals through a list of specific priority action steps. It takes each of the goals and lists how they will be accomplished (although it does not prioritize this longer list nor list a timeline). It provides appendices which breaks down the statistics, ideas for branding, types of organizations, other precedent communities, etc.

### NORTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE:

**Title:** Regional Cultural Plan

**Population:** 45 North Country Communities

**Description:** Developed in 2002, the plan looks at steps of different scales to develop arts in this specific region, including programming and education.

**Goals:** Community and Economic Development, Cultural Programming, Information and Communications, Arts Education, Artists, Cultural Capacity

**Other components of the plan:** The goals are broken down into objectives and then further disseminated into suggested actions. The plan also suggests the need for further study of some of what is presented.

#### **ROCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE:**

**Title:** Community Revitalization and the Arts: A Cultural Plan

**Population:** 29,935

**Description:** The plan developed between 2006 and 2010 looks at providing support and furthering development of heritage, culture, and art in Rochester. Its focus is based on looking at the interests of different constituencies.

**Goals:** Heritage, Potential, Community, Commerce, Image, Leadership

**Other components of the plan:** The plan includes an executive statement, explains the committee, and gives a brief definition of culture and history of the city. Much of the plan focuses on survey results and identified constituencies and their respective “wants.” From there, each of the goals is further defined and objectives are extracted from them but not placed in order of priority.

#### **PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE:**

**Title:** Community Life and the Arts: Cultural Plan

**Population:** 20,848

**Description:** Approved in 2001, Portsmouth’s plan looks deeply at what culture means for the city. It also seems to respond to what it saw as an exodus of artists and a hope to reverse that trend while expanding upon and supporting the arts culture.

**Goals:** Preservation, Space, Youth, Business, Marketing, Agency

**Other components of the plan:** The plan develops a statement from the committee explaining the impetus for the plan and then proceeds to define a set of goals, further define them, and then examine how they meet what needs to be done in the community to achieve those goals. However, these are not given priority and instead are provided as a listing.

## **OTHER CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES WITH POPULATION LESS THAN ONE MILLION (CULTURAL PLAN OUTLINE):**

### **NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS:**

**Title:** Cultural Plan

**Population:** 28,501

**Description:** Produced in 1989, this plan is referenced in Concord's production of their master plan and is important as an older example of a cultural plan. The plan stresses working collaboratively and making a network of advocates in all sectors, one of the major components of implementing any plan.

**Goals:** Community Communication and Coordination, Municipal Support for the Arts, Arts in the Northampton School System, Private Sector Support for Local Arts, Space for Artists and Cultural Organizations

**Other components of the plan:** The plan includes sections about vision, introduction, plan, participants, and acknowledgements. It outlines several goals and recommendations for achieving those goals. It comes up with a time frame, who is responsible, and associated costs.

### **ROANOKE, VIRGINIA:**

**Title:** Arts and Cultural Plan

**Population:** 96,714

**Description:** Developed between 2010 and 2011, the city created the plan to figure out how to continue to leverage private dollars, attract businesses, and cultivate a professional and educated workforce. They are interested in having a method to assess how they are doing to continue to expand their role as the center of creativity in Western Virginia.

**Goals:** Synergy, Collaboration, Creative Solutions; Advocacy, Celebration, Collaboration, Education, Innovation, Inclusion

**Other components of the plan:** The plan articulates Roanoke as a vibrant and prosperous community where innovation is an important part of their brand. They have a variety of goals that are from different groups and to different ends. They look back at their history and find what they think they are good at and build on those building blocks: Vibrant Region—Healthy Economy, Livable Communities—Engaged Neighborhoods, People Education—Lifelong Learning. From each of these three goals, they extract policy approaches, initiatives, and implementation (in the form of a matrix which identifies the time period, lead agency, and partners). It also includes a set of appendices with a survey synopsis.

## **BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA:**

**Title:** Arts and Culture Plan

**Population:** 113,905

**Description:** Updated in 2004, the plan was designed to guide the city to create policy to support the arts. In addition, it makes the arts commission responsible for the implementation of the plan.

**Goals:** Enhance Berkeley as a community and place of culture and the arts in all areas and distinct neighborhoods of the city; Promote artistic and cultural engagement and public awareness of the arts in Berkeley including quality youth programming and education in the arts; Support arts in education in all Berkeley Schools; Enhance and support diversity of both participants and activities in the arts and promote city-wide incorporation of arts and culture; Assure consistent adequate and regular funding for arts and cultural activities and programs in Berkeley; Ensure access to arts and cultural programs and facilities for all ages, ethnicities and physical abilities.

**Other components of the plan:** The introduction provides an overview of the information collected and what the consulting agency produced, including a database, Economic Impact Analysis, need assessment of the 130 nonprofit organizations, an opinion survey, and five city-wide meetings. It provides an introduction to the city and a history of city support for the arts. It outlines a set of recommendations for the art as well as related policies and actions that should come as a result of the plan. It also puts the commission in charge of evaluating the performance in achieving the plan and providing amendments. The end provides a citywide map of the arts organizations.

## **BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT:**

**Title:** Cultural Plan

**Population:** 145,638

**Description:** Bridgeport, Connecticut assembled their cultural plan in 2007 to become part of their master plan. It builds on and complements the Coastal Fairfield County Cultural Plan, articulating the motto of One Coast—One Future.

**Goals:** Cultural Development, Jobs in the Creative Economy, Equity of Access, Education, Environment

**Other components of the plan:** The plan is brief and precise, providing long-term goals and four top priorities. It presents several goals and extracts a set of objectives, priorities and recommended actions. It includes facts, challenges, and process related to the plan at the end.

## PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND:

**Title:** Creative Providence: A Cultural Plan for the Creative Sector

**Population:** 178,053

**Description:** Developed in 2009, the plan works to build on Providence as the “creative capital.” The plan wishes to involve leadership in the creative sectors to work with government and business leaders to realize its next generation of potential and trying to deal with challenges through creative, imaginative thinking.

**Goals:** Mobilize the creative sector by positioning the Department of Art Culture and Tourism as a leader in the creative economic development; Building community and foster neighborhood vitality through increased access and diversified cultural participation; Educate and inspire the next generation of creative thinkers; Foster sustainable cultural organizations; Create conditions for creative workers to thrive in Providence; Raise public awareness of the creative sector

**Other components of the plan:** Included at the beginning is an introduction and purpose along with a timeline for the creation of the plan. It then provides a set of goals and outcomes as well as other objectives that come out from those. It looks at different institutions and the way to attack the different objectives to ensure success.

## MADISON, WISCONSIN:

**Title:** Cultural Plan 2013

**Population:** 236,901

**Description:** Assembled in 2013 with the help of a consultant and the cultural plan steering committee, Madison’s cultural plan is a five-year action plan which looks at the community’s arts, science, and history resources while recommending practical steps which engage access, civic interests, and economics. In a city that recently lost its percent-for-the-arts program and a number of other cuts in the cultural sector, the plan tries to lay out what is being done well and areas for improvement.

**Goals:** Position municipal government for leadership in the creative sector; Create a nexus for sustainable local and regional creative sector development; Strengthen programs that serve the broadest possible audience; Engage creative sector resources in defining place and identity; Strengthen policy and practice around creative sector facilities utilization and development; Create a coherent funding system for creative sector development

**Other components of the plan:** The plan features an introduction and an overview which includes recommended structural changes. The second section looks at findings of the report, including groups that they want to

involve and tying in the findings of the Downtown Master Plan and referring to several other reports. It looks at how culture can relate to sustainability and how to optimize use of the existing facilities. The conclusion outlines several concerns going forward. Finally, the recommendation sets out a plan for 2013-2016 with specific point items to accomplish.

## **OTHER CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES WITH POPULATION GREATER THAN ONE MILLION (CULTURAL PLAN OUTLINE):**

### **PHOENIX, ARIZONA:**

**Title:** Arts and Cultural Plan

**Population:** 1,460,000

**Description:** Phoenix's plan, completed between 2008 and 2012, creates a comprehensive vision for the city and its implementation in a five year time frame. There is a clear objective as part of the plan that the city, specifically the Office of Arts and Culture as well as the Arts and Culture Commission, is responsible for the implementation and updating of the plan.

**Goals:** Integrate arts and culture into neighborhoods citywide; Enhance the city's built environment through public art; Invest in arts and cultural education; Foster connect and nurture local arts and culture; Create a cultural environment that reflects the city's demographics; Promote Phoenix's arts and culture locally statewide nationally and internationally; Build Phoenix's reputation as an arts and cultural destination through development of a major city-wide event; Strengthen, expand, and stabilize funding for arts and culture; Foster an ongoing commitment to arts and culture; Ensure the viability and sustainability of city-owned arts and cultural facilities

**Other components of the plan:** The plan includes an introduction, a purpose statement, and a five-year vision. It includes strategic issues and a set of subsequent goals. These goals then become objectives and are explored through different strategies. There are also appendices which provide a breakdown of structuring for arts education, different arts organizations, and involved city departments.

### **WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

**Title:** Cultural Master Plan

**Population:** 350,946

**Description:** The Washtenaw County cultural plan was adopted in 2008 and looks at how to continue to use arts, culture, and creativity to create growth and success in the county. It articulates priority recommendations to be implemented over a five year period.

**Goals:** Engagement, Awareness, Understanding, Collaboration; Accessibility, Diversity, Economic Impact, Learning, Quality

**Other components of the plan:** The plan outlines a strategy for goals and corresponding recommendations. It presents specific findings with corresponding statistics at the front of the packet as part of the executive summary. It then breaks this down into an overview for how the process was conducted and identifying existing assets. It breaks down the specific goals into a vision and values system. From there, a set of “next steps” is outlined for each of the goals and sections outlined. For each of these sections, there are a number of actions suggested with recommendations, who will implement and partner, as well as models and outcomes highlighted. Individual task members for each part are outlined. The plan also includes interviews with different types of artists and their role in the community. All of this is then put together in a matrix. In addition to the master plan, there is an associated brochure which breaks down the findings.

## CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

**Title:** Cultural Plan

**Population:** 2,707,000

**Description:** This cultural plan developed in 2012 pulls from the 1986 plan and puts together a blueprint for how the city will develop its policies, leveraging its businesses, and look at the possibilities for the future for the community centered around culture. The plan was one of the first initiatives by the new mayor and thus far has led to some policy changes.

**Goals:** Economic development, Strong neighborhoods, Innovation, Environmental sustainability, Public health, Lifelong learning, Public safety, Well-being and quality of life

**Other components of the plan:** The plan develops a set of goals, analyzing the positioning of Chicago in a larger context and looking at the needs. It creates a set of categories which bring together different core concepts, and then gives priorities which clarify these and recommendations which are broad, and finally, different initiatives to accomplish these things, all put together in sections in the text to distill them further. The plan also provides an implementation strategy. It does not provide a hierarchy for the initiatives, and newspapers have critiqued the fact that they see it as being too vague.

# PRECEDENTS (NASHUA)

## CULTURAL FORUM TAKEAWAY 2008

**IMPORTANT ELEMENTS:** Nashua is considered livable but wants the city's arts culture to be taken seriously. The core (bedrock community) should provide support and help with the branding for the community.

**Marketing and Branding:** Centralize messaging (share distribution lists), need a branding concept, should connect with the Downtown.

**Optimize Existing Facilities:** Focus on two spaces: Elm Street (large) and 14 Court Street (small) and make necessary changes to them, confusion about the need for a large scale facility.

**Education-Collaboration:** Match spaces with programming usages, create a space inventory and directory with increased scheduling online, create a landscape of lifelong learners.

**Establish a Public Art Program:** Getting art into public spaces is crucial towards having a positive culture but make it a multi-pronged approach to raise awareness and excitement, "Art all Over"

**Urban Arts Residency:** Invite artists into the community. This could perhaps develop into a full-scale residency.

**Launch a New City-Wide Event:** Have a multi-disciplinary event to get people involved, which, because of its large scale, will provide sponsorships. This will create an event that is very unique to New England.

Nashua should be a community that is a home and has culture (two-in-one), but developing this means involving various groups, especially businesses.

## DREESZEN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CITY ARTS NASHUA STRATEGIC PLAN

**IMPORTANT ELEMENTS:** The plan puts together a mission, strategy, and set of goals. These goals are then broken down into objectives and tasks with certain ones highlighted as priorities.

**Goals:** Market the Arts, Coordinate Nashua's Cultural Community, Stimulate Cultural Economic Development, Build the Cultural Sector's Capacity

**Market the Arts:** Develop the website and serve as a centralized source for calendars and other information, have a central box office but also e-tickets, look for sponsors, have a newsletter, and publicize events, have a brand/identity, help other organizations increase their marketing capacity, advocate for support for the arts and culture including reviewing policies and cuts in funding, document results (especially organizations that receive grants).

**Coordinate Nashua's Cultural Community:** Promote strategic partnerships and networks, have leaders to monitor the plan, encourage arts education advocacy and partnerships, market to the diverse population.

**Stimulate Cultural Economic Development:** Promote creative economy initiatives, Look to support for this through policies such as artist live/work spaces, have affordable housing for artists, connect artists with professional assistance for business and marketing.

**Build the Cultural Sector's Capacity:** Make CAN professionally managed, seek funding and revenue to support the arts, research receiving funding from the city, develop the board, create an infrastructure with office space and partnership, coordinate planning of cultural facilities and work to improve them, increase capacity of arts and cultural organizations.

References several other studies including the *Nashua Arts Center Feasibility Study* (2002), *Conversations on the Arts Recommendations* (2005), *Beyond the Crossroads: Positioning Nashua in the Global Economy* (2005)

## **NASHUA CULTURAL PLANNING FORUM**

**IMPORTANT ELEMENTS:** The planning forum breaks down the importance of cultural planning and why it needs to happen now. It explains how the commission can act as a link between culture and city activities. It talks about how cultural life, community enhancement, and economic vitality are important and must be considered together.

**Themes:** Collaboration, Downtown, Nurturing additional city neighborhoods, Cultural Tourism, Sustainability, Education and community building.

It defines context and breaks down venues, artist support, unique cultural topics, and events focus.

It also defines previous plans including: *Nashua Arts Feasibility Study* (2002), *Conversations on the Arts* (2005), *Dreeszen Arts and Culture Strategic Plan* (2006).

## CONVERSATIONS ON THE ARTS

### IMPORTANT ELEMENTS:

These developed into the Dreeszen Plan. After a vote, some elements became part of the development of a committee (CAN). They wanted to create a full-time paid position to create a leader in this area. It also called to have a venue market and cost analysis to be able to maximize existing space, renovation of 14 Court Street and Keefe Auditorium, have a centralized website linked to the City site, to have marketing efforts that reach out to schools, community, and have a focused identity that is linked to the economic future of the city, applying for grant dollars, have a method for fundraising.

# DEMOGRAPHICS

## **Arts Participation in America: Trends and Perspectives** National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) Web Seminar August 18, 2009

- Survey completed in 2008
- Adults surveyed were 18+
- Total number of about 18,000 responses
- Measures self-reported rates of participation over past 12 months (behaviors not attitudes)
- Decline measured in art gallery/museum visits from 40% (1982-2002) to 35% (2008)
- The average age of the U.S. adult population has shot up from 39 in 1982 to 45 in 2008, about 6 years—baby boomers.
- Jazz—In 1982, jazz audiences were among the youngest arts audiences—at 29, on average, they were 10 years younger than the average adult. Now they're slightly over the median age of U.S. adults, at 46. There are similar patterns for adult audiences of classical music, ballet, and non-musical plays.
- This rapid aging of art audiences reflects the withdrawal of 18 to 24 year olds from many types of performing arts experiences.
- Higher levels of education reflect higher attendance rates for arts performances. (More education=higher salary)
- Photography and filmmaking were the only genres with increase(15%) in performance since 1992.
- Weaving & Sewing were the most popular in 2008 (but still down from 1992).
- Latin and Salsa music are one of the most popular arts activities to be enjoyed through broadcasts and recordings—slightly more than Jazz.
- Nearly one in five of all adults had attended a live arts performance at a church, synagogue, or mosque.
- 24% of all adults attended an elementary, middle, or high school music, theater, or dance performance in the last year. Moreover, although this is an adult survey, parents reveal that 33% of their children had attended a music, dance, or theater performance outside school.
- In Philadelphia, a new program, Engage 2020 estimates to double cultural participation by the year 2020.

- o Both African American and Hispanic participation rates in the arts were higher than white audiences.
- o Engagement levels among families with children were higher than those without children.
- o Brooklyn Museum included participation building to combine firsthand experience and attendance with internet.
- o American Dance Festival in Durham, NC commissioned a person to write a blog about the ADF and all its participants so people had an inside look into the artists' lives through the web.

## The Performing Arts

### Trends and Their Implications

[http://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_briefs/RB2504/index1.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB2504/index1.html)

\*Most data was collected between 1980 and 1997.

### Public Involvement

- o Attendances at live performances and purchasing of live recordings has grown consistently, most likely due to population growth not a percentage population increase in attendance.
- o Biggest growth occurred in the market for non-live arts (recorded & broadcast), citing rising costs of attending live performance and increasing preference for home-based leisure activities.
- o In the future the lower population growth is predicted to weaken attendance levels.
- o Americans are favoring flexible leisure activities that allow them to choose what they want to do and when and where they want to do it (reflected in the record levels of attendance at art museums).
- o The next generation are less inclined to pay for a live performance and/because they are more comfortable with entertainment accessed via the internet and other emerging technologies.

### Artists

- o The number of self proclaimed artists doubled from 1970 to 1990 totaling 1.6 million, due to the huge increase in both nonprofit and commercial arts organizations.
- o Amateur performing artists may outnumber pros at a ratio of 20 or 30 to 1 based on estimates.

- o Internet allows artists to market themselves directly to audiences.
- o Performing artists dedicate their lives to their art even though pay and job security have only marginally improved since the 1970s.

### Performing Arts Organizations

- o The number of nonprofit performing arts organizations increased by over 80% between 1982 and 1997, while the number of commercial performing arts organizations increased by over 40%.
- o Revenues for nonprofit performing groups have simultaneously declined, suggesting new nonprofits are small.
- o Smaller companies earning less than \$100,000 in annual revenue tend to focus more on local participation and volunteers.
- o Opera is the only area of the nonprofits that averages revenue growth between 1982-1997.
- o According to 1993 data collected by the Association of Performing Arts Presenters, over one-third of all their venues were built between 1980 and 1993.
- o Many theaters, symphony halls, and all-purpose performing arts centers receive financial support from the government, such as through community development block grants.
- o Organizations in recording and broadcasting industries (mostly commercial enterprises) are consolidating and are increasingly organized on a global scale.

### Organizational Finances

- o Revenues for America's nonprofits arts organizations fall into 3 main categories: earned income (i.e.: ticket sales, other business activities, and investment income), philanthropic contributions (i.e.: from individuals, foundations, and businesses), and direct government subsidies.
- o The average percentage of total revenues that are earned varies by discipline, with dance companies at the low end at about 30 percent and theater groups at the high end with about 60 percent.
- o Government funding has been shifting from federal down to state levels and now is more oriented towards local levels, which tend to focus more on the social and economic benefits to local communities when awarding grants.
- o Corporations are increasingly providing support for targeted purposes rather than unrestricted grants that allow organizations more flexibility in using the resources.
- o Performing arts organizations are using multiple strategies to deal with financial demands in an increasingly competitive leisure market.

- Strategies (such as cutting costs, developing revenues, and financing performances) often reflect the size of the organizations budget.
- Large nonprofits rely on star-studded blockbuster productions.
- Midsized organizations focus on “warhorse” programming (traditional works loved by general audiences).
- Small commercial, nonprofit and volunteer organizations program more for niche markets.
- Many large nonprofit have even adopted business models from for-profit organizations.

## A Vision of the Future

- \*If the trends of the past 20 years continue\* a fundamental shift in the performing arts system will occur with less division between non and for-profit organizations and major divisions with big vs. small arts organizations, or firms that cater to broad vs. niche markets.
- More small and local involvement is predicated for grant allocations and events participation.
- Big organizations (commercial and nonprofit) are predicted to rely more heavily on mass advertising and promotion of celebrity artists to attract large audiences.
- Small for-profit organizations will be able to serve a wider variety of smaller, more specialized markets through technological advances such as the internet and e-commerce.
- Small nonprofit and volunteer organizations will focus on low-budget, low-tech live productions that cater to local and specialized markets, particularly ethno-cultural communities and neighborhoods and opportunities for nonprofessional artists to participate in traditional high-arts forms.
- For a city of Nashua’s size, “the biggest change suggested by these trends relates to the middle tier of nonprofit arts organizations, particularly those opera companies, symphony orchestras, ballet companies, and theater groups located outside major metropolitan areas. Likely reductions in demand, rising costs, and static or even declining funding streams will force many of these institutions either to become larger and more prestigious—despite the fact that many lack the resources to do—or will become smaller and more community-oriented, using local talent to keep costs down and adapting programming to local audiences. Still others will simply close their doors, unable to reconcile conflicts among their various stakeholders.”

## Implications for the Arts

- The quantity of performances will increase or decrease depending on the medium and whether they are live or recorded and whether they involve the high, folk, or popular arts.
- Professional live performances of the high arts will most likely become increasingly concentrated in big cities and provided by high-budget, nonprofit organizations that can support the cost of such performers and productions.
- Smaller cities and towns will have live professional arts serviced to them by touring artists and performing groups.
- Performing arts which are broadcast or recorded should continue to proliferate and diversify.
- The internet will continue to create healthy markets for art forms and reach far-flung audiences that have previously been economically insignificant or underrepresented.
- Small professional groups and for-profit performing groups will build and maintain comparatively small but loyal audiences who will participate as both consumers and patrons.
- Small organizations from the volunteer sector will continue to provide low-budget productions of great cultural and artistic diversity performed largely by volunteers.
- If the polarization of artistic incomes created by the superstar phenomenon continues to grow and the number of both large and midsized arts organizations contracts, young artists will have fewer opportunities to gain experience in their field and it will be more difficult to mature artistically.
- The pressure of earning greater revenues will produce programming and groups that appeal to mass audiences in both the large nonprofit and the commercial worlds.
- Innovation and unusual talent may become discouraged or fail to attract the attention of more than a small circle of admirers.
- While future patterns of demand are difficult to predict, it is likely that community-based performances and recorded product will proliferate while live professional performances may decline in some parts of the country.

## Considerations for Policy

- The arts community has not given adequate attention to the critical issue of the affect of current trends on the broader public interest.
- Policy should be developed and analyzed using a new framework that is grounded in an understanding of the public interests served by the

arts. It should also analyze the specific roles that government can play in promoting those interests, and the strategies that government at every level has at its disposal.

- Policy debates have been too narrowly focused on supporting the production and performance of the arts as well as supply strategies, rather being focused on stimulating public involvement in the arts, or demand strategies which do so.
- The new framework needs to center on the public benefits of the arts. It will require approaches designed to increase individual exposure, knowledge, and access to the arts.
- A more systematic approach is necessary to determine how individual preferences for the arts are formed. The procedure must also evaluate how public and private benefits of the arts are identified and measured so that policymakers can explore more diversified and innovative approaches to promoting the arts in American society.

# DOWNTOWN SURVEY

## SURVEY RESULTS (CONSUMERS)

1. 60% of people pass through Downtown at least once a week, with 25% passing through five or more times per week. Approximately 15% of people come to Downtown once a week to go shopping, eat out, for banking, or government. The majority of respondents come Downtown for these things every few months.
2. 60% of respondents want Downtown hours to be expanded on Friday and Saturday nights.
3. 60% of respondents want a casual dining restaurant in Downtown, followed by 52% wanting a movie theater and 45% wanting a bookstore.
4. The most popular of the Downtown events was the Holiday Stroll followed by the Farmer's Market and Taste of Downtown.
5. In terms of leisure activities, reading and listening to music are at the top of the list with more than 60% of respondents engaging in these activities. Photography and crafts have 30% participation, painting/drawing has 13% participation, sewing is 18%, dancing is 17% participation, band/choir is 11%, and acting/drama is 7% participation.
6. 72% of respondents want to see a commuter rail station while 40% want a performing arts center.
7. In terms of advertisement, *The Telegraph* is the most read by residents and Facebook is the most used social networking site.
8. When asked about what cities people think have a vibrant Downtown, the most frequent response is Portsmouth, with Concord and Manchester being the next most common answers followed by Boston/Cambridge.
9. Asked what people think would improve Downtown, responses included:
  - o The most common response is to reduce the parking rates and the lack of choice of stores (less expensive stores). One wrote, "If you want to encourage people to come Downtown, improve your parking policies. Have park free days."; family activities and activities for younger people; Italian bakery, dog park.
  - o "I think we need more for our teens. If we had a local club or rollerskating rink, they would have a place to go with a restaurant."
  - o "Time to get into the 21st century. Let's make improvements for the next 50 years today."

- “In Nashua, we need to create programs that would interest our children and young adults in order to keep them from getting into trouble. Nashua offers nothing to interest them.”
- Comments about theaters were prevalent: “A quality cinema along the lines of Wilton Town Hall Theatre would be nice.” “Expand artistic endeavors.”
- “It feels like a small, closed community and needs to address a broader base. Everyone should feel ownership and inclusion in Greater Southern New Hampshire.”
- Multiple sources cite their concerns that “It’s very difficult to visit with small children.”
- “Growing up, it was more family oriented, had movie theaters, clothing stores, grocery stores, a bit of everything. There needs to be more diversity.”
- “I think that if Nashua Downtown started to think about the Latin community, it will be a success! We are too many people, and we would like to be part of our city!”
- “Develop old factories/mills into evening-out destinations: casual dining, theaters, shopping, entertainment, clubs. See other revitalization projects: Jacksonville Landing, Atlantic Station in Atlanta, Oklahoma’s Bricktown, Miami Bayside, Coconut Grove, San Diego’s Gaslamp District, Minneapolis’ Exchange Building. We must be a draw for the surrounding 30-40 miles to draw a dining/strolling/shopping customer, not just the current occasional fine-dining customer. Downtown needs tourist, gift, curiosity, unique, art shops that you remember and enjoy finding. We have a ton of local artists, but where are the galleries and art stores featuring paintings, photography, jewelry, glasswork, sculpture, pottery, etc. Large-draw, well-advertised annual events.”

## **SURVEY RESULTS (BUSINESSES)**

- 1.** Most popular events for businesses include: 82% saw an increased in sales during the Winter Holiday Stroll, with 59% during the Taste of Downtown.
- 2.** Most people advertise on the Internet (56%) with newspapers coming in second with 49%.
- 3.** The businesses most downtown vendors want to see are a bookstore (67%) and a movie theater (56%).
- 4.** The most wanted asset for a business is 63% want expanded public parking, 57% want a train station, and 56% want a performing arts center.
- 5.** Some of these were the specific responses of businesses:

- o More street events, better parking, concerns about activities to do in Downtown Nashua.
- o “We need a multipurpose performing arts center like Wilton Theater or Palace Theater in Manchester.” Others commented on various theaters in neighboring towns including the Verizon Wireless Center.
- o Multiple vendors were concerned about parking, saying, “Two-hour parking meters are hurting small shops.”
- o “There needs to be more places and activities for young people (mid to late teens) to go to socialize without fear for their safety.” Multiple businesses made similar comments.

# ARTS SURVEY

## 1. What steps could be taken to distinguish the Nashua arts community?

- Focus on providing a small number of types of artistic experience and doing them well so that Nashua becomes known for those experiences. Do not try to be all things to all people.
- Take the arts more seriously at City Hall; make downtown at night more arts-friendly and less alcohol-centric.
- Invest financially in the arts and arts education in the public schools. Create more partnerships between artists, businesses, student artists, and others.
- Clearly identify existing strengths in Nashua and promote them.
- Identify Nashua's arts groups and when they perform/exhibit.
- Promote unique elements of the arts community in Nashua.
- Develop a specific segment of the arts for Nashua to be known for, such as theater.
- Build up a Community/Neighborhood in a specific neighborhood, such as the mill area.
- Campaign that generates participation and curiosity in the arts to identify an arts community.
- Share ways for children and adults to get involved and socialize.
- Display more art in public spaces.
- Employ Positive Street Art to paint the sides of mills or other artist buildings to attract visitors and act as advertisement and public art.
- Gallery showings like Taste of Downtown & Art Walk to encourage and expose all types of art and integrate into the Downtown.
- Host a City Art Campaign with a recognizable and repeated motif i.e. painted cows, moose, signal boxes, etc.
- Build up a presence Downtown through gallery shows, public art, street performers, etc.
- Increase the geographic area from which audiences are drawn.
- Attract art buyers to the area.
- Change the symphony name back to Nashua Symphony.
- More recognition of the achievements of local artists—when they win prizes or residency slots, let folks know in a quarterly section of the *Telegraph* or other print/online venue.
- Host benefit dinners with music and theater for an accessible price.

- Embrace the diversity Nashua has to offer and explore the art of different cultures present in Nashua.
- Have one cohesive and collaborative space for performances, galleries, lessons, and museum.
- Utilize Holman as a venue for a larger concert.
- Walking tour guide with smart phone QR codes to scan with information about various artists, artwork, architecture, etc.
- Host more open studio days or crowd source a studio/gallery space.
- Add highway exit and city signs for the arts.
- Bring in more bigger name acts.
- Create a catchy slogan to be incorporated into event marketing.
- Bring a significant, well-known artist with mainstream appeal to draw people and attention to Nashua.

## **2. What could Nashua be doing to raise awareness and promote the arts?**

- Banners on street poles to raise awareness about arts organizations.
- Create quality YouTube videos showing the best of Nashua.
- Produce a rotating art show that exhibits in prominent places such as the Mayor's office, City Hall Rotunda, library, etc.
- Promote and advertise the Sculpture Symposium more, include sculpture tours.
- Add billboards on highway, busses, etc.
- Help the art community with more publicity.
- Increase the diversity and number of events.
- Utilize the public access television, WMUR, Channel 9, NH and MA Public Radio and other local radio stations.
- Add more downtown sandwich boards for the arts.
- Create an Indie movie house.
- Drum up more support for places like the Picker Building.
- The arts commission should communicate with other neighboring cities to promote art happenings in Nashua.
- Reach out to the area's colleges and universities.
- Promote arts in schools from a young age to develop a discerning and educated audience for the future to drive the demand for arts.
- Become more involved with nearby schools.
- Utilize both the free and paid portions of social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter.
- Advertise and have more exposure in the *Telegraph*, *Hippo*, etc.
- Start a monthly column in the *Encore* section of the *Telegraph*.
- Incorporate arts marketing into city planning.
- Make permits available for street performers.

- Increase accessibility of public spaces for outdoor galleries similar to the farmer's market.
- Hire a paid executive to promote the arts in the city.
- Find city office space for arts organizations to call home and use to collaborate on projects.
- Bring back the Mayor's Arts Ball or a similar concept to celebrate the highest impact arts in Nashua or to fundraise for future endeavors of the arts.
- Create relationships with area businesses to get the word out about upcoming art events.
- Promote arts through community outreach at places such as the Children's Home and with groups such as the Granite State Independent Art Therapy.
- Call attention to individual artists through local spotlight newsletters or webpages.
- Hold more events similar to the Holiday Stroll in Downtown Nashua with the City's support.
- Promote higher profile events in a central location.
- Host festivals that celebrate the local diversity in culture such as a folk festival.
- Offer package deals for art events and local restaurants.
- Coordinate with all arts groups so there is always something going on.
- Establish a month to celebrate the arts and highlight all area art organizations, all mediums of art, etc.
- Host a quarterly event for arts organizations to reach the public.
- Include arts events on all tourist information in hotel rooms and on tourism websites.
- Pay for marketing.
- Increase street performances and free events.
- Create a community arts calendar that is always up to date and advertised at all arts events.
- Create a smartphone app for Nashua arts organizations and their calendars of events.
- Ensure that public art is of good quality and not installed unfinished nor rushed to completion by a deadline for installment.

### **3. How can the arts in Nashua become more visible online?**

- Create an online community where information and outside input can be exchanged, shared art, contacts, opportunities, etc.
- Visibility should be boosted through online versions of newspapers.
- Get events listed on the homepage of the City.

- An umbrella organization similar to Lowell's "COOL" should be very present online and kept informed of every event.
- Google keyword searches should turn up Nashua information.
- Advertise on gaming websites during a game's intermission.
- The arts are visible, but don't seem connected.
- Employ humor in advertising.
- Create quality YouTube videos showing the best of Nashua.
- Consolidate info from all arts websites onto one with easy search keywords, ticketing information, and venue availability.
- Bring a bigger presence to social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Vine, etc.
- Create a culture section on GoNashua.com.
- Fund paid staff for City Arts Nashua and Arts Commission to regulate and update website.
- Integrate an online artist gallery with backgrounds, images, and locations of artwork.
- Have an individual person act as a contact point for all area artists.
- Produce live streaming video of theater and art events as they occur.
- Have a centralized ticketing system and calendar for all organizations.
- Employ outside advertisement and coupon companies such as Groupon and Living Social.
- Form closer relationships with the schools.
- Build and maintain a fan base with social media.
- Create ads on Facebook, Twitter, etc. for Nashua arts.
- Produce events which publicize "how-tos" for social media accounts in Nashua and have volunteers available to help organizations set up a profile or page and learn the basics of operation.
- Have an arts tab on the city's website.
- Cross-promote events and arts with local businesses, hotels, education institutions, and the Chamber of Commerce.
- Build a smartphone app that residents and visitors can use to keep up to date on art happenings.
- Have more arts visibility on official tourism sites.
- Create a paid position to build a professional hub website and produce documentaries and interviews with local artists.
- Build a link on the Nashua Public Library homepage to Nashua arts information and organizations.

#### **4. How can Nashua make arts education more accessible?**

- Promote arts through schools, local colleges, and the library.
- Bring music talent in the schools to Downtown to perform at events like the Holiday Stroll and Taste of Downtown.

- Always combine the arts when on display (i.e. have music at the Greeley Art Show).
- Use the Greeley Park bandstand for more events.
- Create an artist neighborhood where classes and public service could be used in lieu of rent or to subsidize payments.
- Work with school children of all levels.
- Create opportunities for adults to access and learn new forms of art.
- Allow classes and artists to use empty storefronts.
- Support arts in the schools.
- Coordinate existing education opportunities and advertise online and with brochures.
- Utilize the two high school buildings and their studios more.
- Strategically outreach to parents about arts opportunities not related to school clubs.
- Make Keefe Auditorium more handicap and elderly accessible.
- Provide incentives for students to attend concerts, art openings, etc.
- Create marketing materials that reduce the “high society,” “stuffy,” and “boring” stigmas that can be associated with some art forms.
- Create Saturday morning and matinee options for arts events.
- Find grants to promote events, fund internships, and increase scholarships/fellowships for artists.
- Offer free music lessons in after-school programs.
- Create grants for materials and courses to be awarded to nominees from local schools.
- Start an endowment for the arts, and encourage education in the arts with a scholarship program for local students.
- Host an event with a low ticket price with all proceeds going to benefit arts education.
- Host free classes at the Nashua Public Library.
- Promote a closer relationship with schools.
- After-school music lessons should be offered. with a string program in every elementary school. Look at the success of El Sistema in Venezuela. Longy School of Music is training teachers in Los Angeles in this method right now, in conjunction with the LA Phil and the Disney performing arts center.
- Celebrate the cultural diversity present in Nashua.
- Create a string program or orchestra in the public school system in addition to the band.
- Have open discussions with school children about the arts to foster creativity, interest, and comfort with all mediums.
- Make arts education a requirement in school and not an elective.
- Employ area artists to teach more classes.

- Spread arts appreciation through community outreach in nursing homes, senior centers, schools, malls, parks, etc.
- Build a centralized venue to host after-school programs for children interested in the arts, which could double as a space for lectures, expositions, and workshops for adults.
- Host competitions for local artists, performers, and musicians.
- Bring a lecture series to Nashua to complement art meetings.

## **5. How can Nashua engage the next generation in the arts, particularly those under the age of 25?**

- Create opportunities for young people who are already interested in drawing and painting to find affordable education opportunities. Educate non-artist kids about art appreciation, but don't force any type of art on them.
- Keep an open mind about "what is art." Many established businesses and governmental bodies enjoy art in the traditional sense. Increase exposure to all kinds of art such as less "stuffy" mediums including street art, modern art, etc.
- Promote the NAAA student shows and scholarship program.
- Encourage businesses to hang local art on the walls.
- Invite representatives from organizations such as PSA and DAM to join the Nashua Arts Commission.
- Creatively generate funding for area art events to ensure ticket prices remain affordable and events seem attractive to younger generations.
- Establish working relationship with developers to initiate new projects that are affordable and welcoming to artists.
- Develop a focus group of young professionals and residents to establish the wants and needs of the younger population.
- Make events affordable and welcoming to young attendees.
- Promote a closer relationship with schools.
- Reach out to high schools and colleges, and have contests which offer scholarships/fellowships.
- Bring artists to the schools to talk to the students, similar to the Nashua International Sculpture Symposium's recent program.
- Have events that are both contemporary and classical.
- Hire Art teachers. Confront the prevailing thinking that the purpose of education is to train people for jobs in technology.
- Assist nonprofits in getting the word out on how this demographic can support and participate in their activities.
- Utilize the web, social media, and smartphone apps.
- Combine art with social activities at a bar or restaurant, incorporate art into a dating or mixer event.

- Sponsor a “date night” with reduced prices and music.
- Sponsor an event showcasing local artists in their working environment (studios) and map out where the studios are. Display artworks in a prominent area and make it a large event so that residents will be aware of what is in the community.
- Host community dance lessons on Main Street.
- Encourage more street performers in Nashua.
- Build a new museum for the city.
- Concentrate efforts on developing downtown as a community that invites and fosters the art scene. See Lowell, Massachusetts.
- There is an organization in Boston that is for younger generations. An entrance fee or drink ticket at a monthly or bi-monthly event would give you both a drink as well as a vote for your choice of artistic endeavors to support that cycle: Visit <http://opusaffair.org/>.
- Support and promote more and diverse free or low cost music and arts festivals throughout the city.
- Find out what younger people consider “art” and try to match those interests to programs and activities. Make activities social events.
- Organize creative contests with cash prizes (i.e: a graffiti contest).

## **6. What can be done to attract visitors to the arts community in Nashua?**

- Have an organization perform the administrative tasks involved with art events to ensure artists spend maximum time creating art and receive maximum return on investment.
- Create a relationship with businesses to support local artists with food, materials, etc.
- Host a round-table discussion about the identity of the Nashua art community and its unique qualities.
- Have more participatory events where visitors can make something to take home with them.
- Offer free parking on Saturdays.
- Help artists get recognized and promoted. The Chamber of Commerce won’t help because artists aren’t paying members. That is shameful. We are creating our own artist failures because of a lack of interest.
- Promote more school field trips to “higher” art performances to instill appreciation of the arts, comfortability in arts venues, and admiration of the efforts of artists.
- Attract world class artists to generate larger crowds.
- Work with Department of Cultural Resources to make sure Nashua-based organizations are included in their tourism publications.
- Make performance venues more audience/experience friendly.

- Have high quality events to attract artists from beyond the area.
- Create more street festivals and outdoor concerts.
- Utilize Holman for a larger scale concert or Blues Festival.
- Host multiple art shows in Greeley Park.
- Utilize the web and social media to promote events.
- Involve the League of NH Craftsmen in programming future events.
- Promote the city as the epicenter of arts in New England.
- Advertise in other local arts communities such as Lowell, Boston, Manchester, and Portsmouth.
- Include listings in tourist brochures, hotels, and web pages.
- Have an artistic, eye-catching gateway to promote art in Nashua.
- Create a Nashua arts walking map. Include paper and Internet access.
- Place more articles in papers both in and outside of Nashua. Preview more local performances in these written segments.
- Advertise in tourism packets at local hotels.
- Generate paid marketing, refreshments, and family-oriented entertainment to attract more people.
- Advertise in the Boston community. Bring in visiting artists to hold public showings in Nashua. Keep the cost of attending exhibits as low cost as possible.
- Create a free, dedicated constant meeting place for the arts in Nashua
- Build a world class performing arts center in Downtown and/or on the river to integrate it with the riverwalk and the millyard development. To help with the funding, use federal transportation money to supplement (from the Broad Street Parkway project).
- Update the Keefe Auditorium, both in the lobby for patrons and behind stage for performers.
- Create a clear message to advertise the arts community in Nashua.
- Have a cultural event to support the location of a new or renovations of, a building that houses theater arts as well as all types of art media.
- Partner with the Pheasant Lane Mall for exhibitions.
- Create an alliance with landlords to use empty storefronts for temporary galleries.
- Have an annual art award to compete for and be recognized.
- Remove Keefe Auditorium from the School Department and make it an independent Arts Center.
- Form a nonprofit group to open a hands-on art and science museum for people of all ages to allow opportunities for local artists to display their work and teach/demonstrate their craft.

## 7. What public policies should be changed or added to improve the arts in Nashua? What potential funding sources could be used to assist the arts?

- Update the Keefe Auditorium, especially lobby, bathrooms, backstage.
- Secure more private funding with the understanding that it responds to the quality of the arts.
- Positive Street Art should be given more funding/financial support.
- There should be more competition public arts like street chalk and painting classes where materials are covered and winning piece is displayed on City buses.
- Apply for more grants and corporate sponsorships.
- Hold art shows on Main Street or along the river.
- Greeley Park policies could be improved to allow selling from booths. Nashua needs to fix its vendor license issues.
- Allow artists to use more public spaces.
- Look at initiatives such as <http://detroitssoup.com> or <http://sundaysoup.org/start-your-own> for Nashua.
- A portion of beer sales at an art event should go to the arts.
- Have a state art alliance, especially with Concord.
- Hire a lobbyist to act as a liaison to the state.
- Remove restrictions that impede the freedom of artists and their events in the city.
- Create tax rebates for artist space.
- Legislation and state advocacy should become part of policies for the arts and could help increase funding.
- Revise permit policies for nonprofits.
- Solicit a large company to put in a performing arts center or have it be part of a movie chain venue like in Orange County New York.
- Focus on arts budgeting and city sponsorship.
- Add to existing fees on car registrations, transportation, health care, and new construction permits to fund the arts.
- The high cost of rent at the Hunt building and other fees for vendor licenses should be reevaluated.
- Arts coordinator and marketing specialist positions should be added.
- Organize and hold a gala kickoff event.
- Have local industries like BAE and Fidelity become more involved in arts in Nashua.
- Have a Nashua Reads program where the mayor picks a book.
- Art should be displayed in the atrium at City Hall and the DMV.
- Allow wine and other alcohol to be served at events at Keefe Auditorium to increase revenue in off hours for the school so that it becomes more of a performance center.
- Institute a Percent for the Arts program.

- Offer free parking for events.
- Have a central location that can feature local, national, and international talent.
- Expand exhibition of artwork to other businesses and buildings.
- Have a donation box in different businesses to help fund the arts.
- Target and reward philanthropy in the arts.
- Look at the curriculum at schools and parent involvement to increase arts education.
- Partner with large museums in Boston.
- Bring murals and more public art to the city.

**8. Considering the arts organizations currently in the city, what can be done to encourage more collaboration between groups?**

- Have shared spaces and materials for art groups.
- Maintain distinctions between groups so that they can focus on what they do well.
- Better advertise art classes in the millyard and by other organizations.
- Have each group host a breakfast, luncheon, or cocktail party to discuss and exchange ideas.
- Have more interdisciplinary shows and juried exhibitions or hold dinner theaters and street festivals as collaborative events.
- Eliminate red tape for events.
- Hold quarterly brainstorming meetings and assessment of the area to discuss events and other topics.
- Use CAN act as the umbrella for groups/individuals.
- Have an arts endowment fund that offers scholarships.
- Bring more awareness of what arts organizations exist in the city.
- Have a deeper conversation so that everything isn't fragmented and work towards serving the community rather than individual interests.
- Start an annual initiative for an artist collective with leaders.
- Build a centralized location or venue.
- Have workshops to teach artists how various mediums work together.
- Use a similar format for CAN as for GAD for funding.
- The government needs to take the lead to make collaboration happen.
- Have programs for struggling programs to prevent them from closing and to help them (Studio 99) and educate organizations on why collaboration is important.
- Create representatives from each organization.
- Offer free parking for events.
- Have one umbrella organization (CAN and NAC).
- Educate artists on how to be more business-oriented.
- Target more ethnic groups and small neighborhood interests.

- Have a museum for adults and children.
- Have events that appeal to a younger demographic.

## **9. What new initiatives are important to add to Nashua's arts community?**

- Have quality art education that is advertised for all age groups.
- Create a walking guide for Downtown's art and architecture.
- Build a venue for the arts, such as a PAC, opera house, museum, gallery, indie movie theater or poetry venue.
- Hold a raffle or fundraiser to offer free art lessons.
- Add a publicity initiative.
- Increase funding and funding initiatives.
- Have a uniformed schedule for the year with season tickets to different types of events.
- Offer duct tape sculpturing, squirt art, etc. to make arts more accessible to the public.
- Make Nashua welcoming as an artist colony and embrace the arts.
- Increase outreach to various arts organizations.
- Hold more events in Downtown.
- Hire and provide funding for paid staff and/or director.
- Increase collaboration at existing events and hold more events: Artwalk, Taste of Downtown, Greeley Park Art, and Ribfest.
- Make affordable rental spaces for studios.
- Decrease membership paywalls; by making the arts become part of social and networking circles like the Chamber of Commerce.
- Add a program similar to <http://www.tappsartscenter.com>.
- Have a jazz club somewhere in Downtown.
- Promote more collaboration for July 4th festivities to include an arts festival/concert/fireworks.
- Bring more popular entertainers to Nashua.
- Train artists in marketing through workshops or other sessions.
- Have an arts gallery space that can double as a space for small performances or other events.
- Increase police presence at night events.
- Offer more education and active art programs in schools.
- Make the Keefe Auditorium an independent arts center.
- Add a murals initiative.
- Increase performances at the Silver Knights events.
- Offer street events and festivals in the summer months.

**10. What kind of infrastructure/facilities improvements does Nashua need to be competitive?**

- Update the Keefe Auditorium including lobby, bathrooms, and backstage, while allowing alcohol to be served at events.
- Have a museum like the Currier in Manchester New Hampshire with new exhibits that are interesting to those under the age of 25.
- Build a PAC or arena.
- Artists should assist in urban renewal efforts.
- Have painting in the park workshops.
- Partner with the local farmer's market.
- Encourage more street performers in Nashua.
- Offer better parking for events.
- Build a YMCA-type facility for the arts.
- Engage the river in Nashua for arts to be displayed.
- Reuse the fire station on Crown Street for the arts.
- Try to coordinate more with the food vendors at the art show in Greeley Park to allow visibility for the artists.
- Improve the Court Street area.
- Use the Hunt Building for meetings and make it a space for exhibition space, classes, and art education efforts.
- Organize and promote art residencies.
- Offer affordable renting space for theaters.
- Encourage studio spaces, especially in the millyard where the rents are not very high.
- Add more promotional signage.
- Create gallery space in the old mills which is off the beaten path.
- Have a shuttle from the transit station on event nights.
- Encourage more pop-up events to coordinate with businesses.
- Take advantage of Nashua's location on the river.
- Offer transportation between Elm Street garage/parking garages and Keefe Auditorium.
- Retrofit or build a movie theater like Wilton which could also be used for performing arts.
- Have discounts associated with restaurants and shops Downtown.
- Foster better bike access.

**11. What does culture mean to you? Give one or more definitions rather than a set of action items.**

- "Culture" is a shared experience of artistic expression.
- The term refers to a unique set of traditions.
- Culture denotes different types of art.

- It means opening ones eyes to different ideas, histories, etc.
- Culture is a way of life.
- The beliefs of the city are dependent on the people of an area and their backgrounds.
- Culture is understanding, appreciating, and enjoying art of all forms.
- Culture means diversity.
- It is an expression of ideas through different mediums.
- It is an essence of the city, flavor, and vigor which defines the people.
- Culture promotes a more well-rounded individual, opening doors to different thoughts and wider views of the world.
- It is an acquaintance with and taste in fine arts including patterns of human knowledge, belief, and behavior as well as customs, social forms, and religious or social groups.
- It represents collective individuals experiences, beliefs, and values as well as a shared vision.
- Culture is at the root of a community and is an expression of the community's history, living, and future.
- For Nashua, culture is fluidic and changing.
- The term refers to a broad knowledge of different arts and the expression of the creative mind.
- More than observing, culture is about participation.
- Culture should be inclusive rather setting up boundaries.
- Culture is the awakening feeling inside to slow you down and immerse in being.
- It is a celebration of artistic vision for all kinds of people.
- Experiencing culture means sharing expressions of the human heart and mind.
- Culture is a deepening of one's understanding of humanity and community as well as art and beauty.
- It nourishes us and helps us appreciate what is beautiful in life.
- The meaning is expressive in tones that emerge from a community.
- Arts open up your imagination.
- Culture represents artistic achievements of a particular civilizations and are grounded in a shared history.
- It is an umbrella term covering community's cultivation of visual, literary, performing and culinary arts.
- Culture is like a yeast and relies on people, faith, hope, and charity.
- It is about meaning and connecting as well as embracing diversity.
- To define the word, it is music and visual art.
- It is the fabric of society, being devalued but is important.
- Beliefs, actions, and critical components are the heartbeat of a society.
- Culture is the styles and behaviors of a group of people.
- It refers to community, humanity, spirituality, livability, individuality,

respect, and love.

- It means interest, beauty, excitement, entertainment, and education.
- Culture causes an improvement in lifestyle.
- Creative impulse in specific modes of expression within an environment defines culture.
- True culture is inclusion, education, and exposure.
- It is part of what makes life enjoyable.
- As something to be passed on to future generations, it includes our history, languages, customs, passions, and desires as well as our reverence for beauty and expression.
- The essence of the arts, whether in music, paintings, plays, sculpture, dance, or poetry, is what makes up our culture.
- It is a celebration or recognition of food, fine art, and performing art causing awe with the ability to span ages, continents, races, and class.
- Culture is a recognition of food and other types of arts.
- We need it as an enhancement of the human experience.
- Thriving businesses participate in the arts process and culture gives, opportunities for artists to perform in different places.
- It is integration of arts, manners, and thoughtfulness in a community.
- What an individual or group holds as important is culture.
- Culture shares talents with people from different backgrounds.
- It is the culmination of art, music, achievement within a community.
- Culture means understanding artistic endeavors and how they affect each other.
- It is the heritage and tradition of a group of people.
- Culture means fun, excitement, education, relaxation, engagement, understanding the world, etc.

**12. Do you see any obstacles to the arts in Nashua? Do you have any other comments or actions that you would recommend?**

- Minimize obstacles.
- Generate more money and funding.
- Advertisement is an enormous obstacle, including restaurants, stores, library, grocery stores, transport system, schools and churches.
- Arts need more space and facilities.
- More support from the government and commerce is critical.
- To flourish, arts should include young professionals.
- More variety in open mic nights and live music is important.
- The major concern is a centralized focus and competition.
- Arts in nashua need a vision and must believe in it.
- The arts play a small role and more focus should be on those struggling to survive. What is the point of arts?

- There is a lack of fun or spirit about the arts.
- More arts are needed in the school system.
- The city needs an orchestra program in Nashua schools.
- A children's Arts and Science Center should be built.
- Bring in bands and big acts to Nashua.
- Arts need to be important to people and there needs to be a commitment and a lifestyle.
- Arts need to be part of the experience from an early age and schools play a huge role in assuring it happens.
- Attendance at Greeley Park shows had been slipping but it's an issue of community involvement with Rotary, Rivier, etc.
- Nashua is a bedroom community that doesn't need its own arts scene.
- Nashua is viewed as having surrendered its downtown night life scene to alcohol fuelled venues and events.
- Arts in Nashua need to work together and coordinate.
- There is a lack of integration or definition of the arts community.
- The arts lack friendliness.
- There is a dearth of opportunities to "do" art.
- More autonomy and control in the arts is critical to their survival.
- Having more grassroots movements and support is crucial.
- Education about the value of arts needs to be a focus.
- Parking fees affects galleries.
- The Chamber members casting off creatives because they aren't Chamber members.
- Vandalism is a key issue.
- Apathy is an obstacle.
- Arts need to develop diversity and interest in inner city residents.
- Capacity building is a key issue.
- Work/live space should be offered.
- Entertainment needs to match the quality of our restaurants.
- More scholarships in the arts
- Being close to Boston is a big challenge.
- There is a need to make arts not just accessible to the upper class.
- Leverage the parkway for the arts.
- Leadership needs to happen under one organization.
- Build a PAC (performing arts center).
- People need to get out of their cars and onto the sidewalks.

# ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

## CITY ARTS NASHUA

**Description:** City Arts Nashua is about promoting Greater Nashua's artistic and cultural community, including visual arts, theater arts, musicians, and writers and is about promoting cooperation and community to help the arts thrive in the city.

Projects they do include Artwalk, Art in Bloom, the Mural Project, Downtown Nights Uptown Jazz, as well as supporting other artist groups such as the Sculpture Symposium, Gallery at the Wall, etc.

## CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**Description:** Centered on business advocacy, the Chamber offers assistance and membership to businesses and organizations. It has several partnerships with other organizations in order to develop the vitality of businesses everywhere in Greater Nashua.

Projects include the Insider Series and partnering for events like Downtown Dinner and a Movie (sponsored by Bellwether Community Credit Union).

## COMMUNITY MUSIC SCHOOL

**Description:** The school creates a learning and performing atmosphere for music. The school has professors for their three semesters as well as ensembles and workshops throughout the year.

Programs include several ensembles, flute choir, jazz band, children's choir, African drumming, and private lessons.

## GALLERY AT THE WALL

**Description:** The Nashua Adult Learning Center near Rotary Common becomes an outdoor art gallery and a display for Nashua's past in illustration. Despite its listing, this will be a rotating gallery and is a program rather than an organization.

## NASHUA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

**Description:** The orchestra fills a niche between the full symphony and chamber ensemble. It creates an environment for talented amateurs to perform classical music.

Programs are typically in the format of concerts and galas.

## NORTHERN BALLET THEATER

**Description:** The Northern Ballet Theatre creates an atmosphere and training for dance students from pre-dance to adult to learn ballet, pointe, variations, pas de deux, modern dance, jazz, contemporary, and tap styles.

Programs at the school center around performances in addition to mentorship for students as well as community outreach in the form of performances at schools, nursing homes, and community centers.

## NASHUA INTERNATIONAL SCULPTURE SYMPOSIUM

**Description:** As one of only three symposia for sculpture in the United States (and the only one for a city on an annual basis), the Sculpture Symposium aims to bring public art to the public in Nashua, involving residents in the process from watching the sculptors work to talking with the community to producing final pieces for all to enjoy.

Programs focus on the event of the symposium itself, from opening to closing ceremony as a public event. The symposium also holds fundraisers to make its project possible, including cabaret to an iron pour and also reaches out to the community in a variety of different activities.

## SPARTANS DRUM & BUGLE CORP

**Description:** The Spartans were founded in 1955 as an organization for drum corps activity, promoting youth involvement and participation, winning various international gold medals. An organization that prides themselves on performance and music, they practice and hold camps to teach marching music activity.

Programs include camp and practice to put together performances at various venues and touring, both in Nashua and other locations.

## SYMPHONY NH

**Description:** Symphony NH was founded in 1923 as the Nashua Symphony Orchestra, the oldest professional orchestra in New Hampshire. They use music as a way to create pride and culturally serve New Hampshire.

Programs typically occur at the Keefe Memorial Auditorium and include a season schedule of performances. Their work includes the Summer Fun Concert and their own concerts.

## NASHUA AREA ARTIST ASSOCIATION

**Description:** Established in 1951, the NAAA is about the advancement of art through demonstration, scholarships, seminars, guidance on business aspects, and participation.

Projects that the Nashua Area Artist Association organizes include the Greeley Park Art Show. They post other upcoming events for their artists (like at the Nashua Public Library) or other free events or art shows in the area.

## ACTORSINGERS

**Description:** As an amateur community theater organization, Actorsingers creates stage entertainment of a musical nature and promotes relationships to other theater groups and as part of a lineage of theater in the United States.

Programs include different shows that include rehearsals and performances to the public. They also have some workshops and classes for the public and social events for its members.

## MERRIMACK VALLEY FLUTE CHOIR

**Description:** Founded in 1997, MVFC performs in Nashua and around the Merrimack Valley with a variety of different flute types. Programs include different concerts for the public and other events for a variety of different audiences.

## NASHUA FLUTE CHOIR

**Description:** The Nashua Flute Choir is a traveling organization which performs through the New England region, all on different types of flutes. Members come from Massachusetts and New Hampshire and have a large repertoire of pieces.

Programs include concerts for the public and for specific events and different audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

### STAGECOACH PRODUCTIONS

**Description:** A theater production, Stagecoach Productions includes music along with acting. The mission is “giving voice to the extraordinary.”

Programs start with auditions and rehearsals for performances that are given to the public.

### PEACOCK PLAYERS

**Description:** Peacock Players is a theater group meant to entertain, educate and inspire the community as well as offer theater arts educational programs. They include various smaller groups, like a comedy troupe and an a capella music group as well as the mainstage performances include musicals and other acting performances.

Programs done by the organization include the actual performances as well as classes and camps in addition to smaller performances by specific groups.

### NASHUA THEATRE GUILD

**Description:** The mission of the Nashua Theater Guild is to offer the community affordable, high-quality theater to the public while enriching the talents of its members.

Programs include the live performances and galas as well as competing in different festivals.

### ALLEGRO DANCE ACADEMY

**Description:** Formed in 2006, the academy offers a variety of classes with large studio spaces for all levels of students, recreational or pre-professional. They have an annual performance for all students to perform. They have all kinds of classes, from ballet to tap, to jazz to musical theater, to hip-hop to stretch and strength.

Programs include classes and performances.

## NASHUA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Description:** The Historical Society collects and preserves artifacts, properties, records, and documents from Nashua, Nashville, and Colonial Dunstable. They want to encourage the community to value the history of Nashua through different experiences and work towards community outreach and education. The society includes the Florence H. Speare Memorial Museum as well as the Abbot-Spalding Museum.

Programs offered by the Historical Society are tours and teacher workshops, support for all students in history and history activities, research resources, exhibitions, and a historic lecture series.

## PICKER BUILDING

**Description:** While this refers to a place, it is a conglomeration of galleries for artists that have an open studio event during the year.

## STREETWISE GRAFFITI, BIKE, AND PAINT SHOP

**Description:** While this is actually a business, it is a culturally oriented business. It is a shop dedicated to graffiti art, providing the correct types of spray paint and also contracts to do graffiti art in Nashua (like the Chicken and Chips graffiti). It is home to the only legal graffiti wall in the state and brings in different graffiti artists to paint.

## POSITIVE STREET ART

**Description:** As a nonprofit, Positive Street Art seeks to encourage passion for the urban art as a productive way to build stronger communities through educational workshops, community events, and artistic services.

Programs like the different murals and workshops are part of their work on positive street art. They worked on the holiday boxes for Main Street and continue to work closely with the Boys and Girls Club by teaching two art classes. They do benefits, cosponsor events with others (like Art in Bloom), work with high school students for different workshops, have paint nights, and hold various other activities to involve the community.

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# nashua arts and cultural plan

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