



Arts Vision 2020

Charles County, Maryland



*A Strategic Plan for the Arts
in Charles County, Maryland*



About the CHARLES COUNTY ARTS ALLIANCE

The Charles County Arts Alliance (CCAA) is celebrating its 20th Anniversary Year during 2007-08. In preparation for this celebration, it spearheaded the *Arts Vision 2020* effort during 2005-2006 to develop a strategic plan for the continued enhancement and expansion of the arts in Charles County through the year 2020 – for use by current and future arts stakeholders and decision-makers. It is also hoped this strategic plan will be a lasting legacy for future generations as well, to use as a reference to guide further action in the arts in the years beyond 2020.

The CCAA has a unique mission: to stimulate, promote, encourage, and provide recognition of the arts and the creative spirit. Founded in 1987, the CCAA promotes ALL the arts in Charles County: music, visual art, drama, dance and literature.

The CCAA is the designated arts council of Charles County and is recognized as such by the Maryland State Arts Council, an agency of the Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) of the State of Maryland. In this capacity, the CCAA serves as the “umbrella” organization for the arts community in Charles County. The CCAA promotes Charles County arts organizations and individual artists, provides grant support to nonprofit organizations and the schools, presents regional artist workshops and master classes, sponsors cultural events and arts festivals, provides arts scholarships, and ensures that Charles County’s underserved population, people with disabilities, residents with limited income, minorities and senior citizens have access to the arts. The CCAA also is responsible for long-term strategic planning for the arts in Charles County, to ensure the continued forward momentum of the arts in the years ahead. The CCAA builds partnerships with local government, the business community, and the educational community, in an effort to enhance the overall quality of life for the citizens of Charles County.

The CCAA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, tax-exempt organization managed by an all-volunteer Board of Directors and a small professional staff. It has a current membership of over 240 arts stakeholders and supporters in Charles County, consisting of arts organizations, visual, performing and literary artists, arts patrons and businesses. Its office is located in La Plata, MD.

For more information about the CCAA, contact:

Charles County Arts Alliance, Inc.
Post Office Box 697
White Plains, MD 20695
Phone: 301.392.5900
Email: info@charlescountyarts.org
Website: www.charlescountyarts.org

Cover Art: *Crescendo* by artist Jane Bush, Charles County

Graphic Design: Jennifer Pinto, Corner Studio ArtWorks, Charles County

Text: *Arts Vision 2020* Writing Team, Charles County

Printer: Quality Printers, Charles County

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

June 2008

Dear Friends,

Charles County is home to some of the most talented, creative, dedicated and delightful artists in the entire State of Maryland. Artists of all kinds live among us, passionately pursuing their individual and group interests in music, visual art, drama, dance and literature. Perhaps you are one of them, or perhaps you are an enthusiastic patron of the arts in our county. The Charles County Arts Alliance, as the umbrella nonprofit organization and chief advocate for ALL the arts in our county since 1987, decided several years ago that it was time for us to come together as a true “arts community” and work cooperatively to begin to address our common interests, issues, hopes and dreams for the future. The impetus for this endeavor took place in October 2005, when the Charles County arts community was awarded the highest honor in its history, the *Public Sector Merit Award*, at the *Eighth Charles County Economic Development Summit*.

One year later, the *First Charles County Arts Summit* was held in October 2006, with over 80 arts stakeholders in attendance. Since that time, we have been engaged in visioning, brainstorming, debating and deliberating – not in an exclusive, stove-piped manner, but using an inclusive, synergistic approach. It was agreed that what was really needed was not a long wish-list of everyone’s favorite “pet rock,” but a true “strategic plan” for the future of the arts in Charles County. To ensure that we stayed on track in our discussions, we hired an outstanding professional facilitator, Mr. Sherwood Shankland, to assist us. Over time, this grassroots effort became known as *Arts Vision 2020*, and now, three years later, we present to you the results of our strategic planning project.

To guide our deliberations, we asked one simple question repeatedly, to ourselves as arts stakeholders in our county, and to the general public: *What do you envision for the arts in Charles County by the year 2020?* It is a powerful question. This final report: *Arts Vision 2020: A Strategic Plan for the Arts in Charles County*, is the answer.

Our choice of the year 2020 as the end-date for our strategic planning effort was quite deliberate:

- It is 12 years away from today – far enough in the future to ensure we “dream big” and set forth some exciting, ambitious goals, but not so far that we will all be dead when they come to fruition!
- It was planned as part of our celebration of our 20th Anniversary Year for the Charles County Arts Alliance, so all the numbers match up!
- And, if we do an outstanding job on this major effort, our vision will be perfect – it will be 20/20!

It is our greatest desire that you, our fellow citizens of Charles County, will read this final report and endorse *Arts Vision 2020*. We hope that our findings and recommendations resonate with you and inspire you as well. If they do, then we invite you to take action – join us and work together with us as a strong, united team in the months and years ahead as we begin to implement this exciting, creative vision of the future of the arts in Charles County. It is a very ambitious plan we, the arts community, have proposed, one that will require sustained long-term commitment and energetic support from all key sectors – local government, the business community, the educational community and the general public – in order to be successful.

With our shared spirit of cooperation, collaboration, mutual benefit and mutual respect, we are dedicated to making Charles County the very best it can be in the years ahead. Quality of life is our top priority.



Diane Rausch
President, Charles County Arts Alliance, Inc.



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Chapter One

Introduction and Background

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction

As Charles County continues to grow economically, the presence of a thriving arts scene plays a key role in this economic development, and makes our county more attractive for companies, corporations, young professionals and families to locate here. It is clearly a quality of life issue, and the business community recognizes this. The “arts industry” in Maryland last fiscal year (FY 2007) contributed over \$1.2 billion to the state’s economy, and every \$1 of direct spending in the arts generated \$2.13 in secondary spending on goods and services in Maryland. The presence of concert halls, galleries, live theater, music, drama and dance ensembles, writer’s groups, ethnic festivals, and arts classes of all kinds, is a source of civic pride for our current residents, builds community, and encourages new people to move here and become part of the action.

Arts Vision 2020 has been an ambitious project to bring together the entire arts community and arts stakeholders to develop a shared, long-term vision for the future of the arts and arts infrastructure in Charles County. It has been a three-year, three-phase effort under the guidance of a professional facilitator to brainstorm, envision, research, data-gather, evaluate, interpret, discuss and prioritize a set of findings and recommendations in ALL the arts for the next 12 years. The goal is to help make Charles County a

better, more interesting, more dynamic, more culturally-diverse place in which to live, work and play.

This final report, *Arts Vision 2020: A Strategic Plan for the Arts in Charles County*, is being presented to the Charles County Government and to the citizens of Charles County. It consists of a series of strategic goals, objectives and recommended actions for further consideration and implementation in the years ahead. The time horizon for this report is the next 12 years – in three-to-four year increments. “Short-term” objectives are identified for implementation within the next 1-3 years, “mid-term” objectives are identified for implementation within the next 4-8 years, and “long-term” objectives are identified for the next 9-12 years. It is not envisioned nor expected that any one institutional entity – Charles County Arts Alliance, Charles County Government, nonprofit organizations, the education community, the business community – will bear the burden of implementation alone. Rather, it is hoped that a “shared vision” of the future will emerge as a result of this effort, and that a new dynamic, synergistic “public-private partnership” will be stimulated, developed and nurtured, to ensure the continued forward momentum and sustainability of the recommendations presented in this final report, for the next 12 years and beyond.

Background

On October 25, 2005, the Charles County arts community received the highest honor in its history, when it was selected to receive the *Public Sector Merit Award* during the *Eighth Annual Charles County Economic Development Summit*. The Economic Summit is sponsored by the Charles County Government in partnership with the Charles County Chamber of Commerce, and represents the largest single annual gathering of the “business community” of the county. The Charles County Arts Alliance accepted this award on behalf of the entire arts community of Charles County, and its President, Diane Rausch, was invited to deliver a speech to the 400+ members of the Charles County business community. Local and state elected officials and other dignitaries were also in attendance at this important event.

In her prepared remarks, Ms. Rausch took the opportunity to introduce the business community to the arts community of Charles County, comprised of performing, visual and literary artists, arts patrons and enthusiasts. She noted the important role of the arts in economic development, and stressed that the presence of an active, vibrant and diverse “arts scene” contributes to an improved quality of life for Charles County residents. During the previous year alone, arts activities supported in part by Charles County Arts

Alliance grant programs – in the community and in the schools – had touched the lives of over one-third of the county’s population, and the return on investment (ROI) had been ten-fold. All subsequent speakers at the Economic Summit took the opportunity to highlight the positive, demonstrable economic impact of the arts in American society through sharing personal testimony, research results and professional experience. The arts, and its critical role in the quality of life of vibrant, desirable communities, became the common theme highlighted at the Economic Summit.

Shortly after the Economic Summit, a small group of individuals who were leaders of several local arts organizations – the Charles County Arts Alliance, Ballet Arts Academy at the Old Waldorf School, Chesapeake Bay Floating Theatre, Chesapeake Choral Arts Society, Mattawoman Creek Art Center, Port Tobacco Players, Southern Maryland Concert Band – met informally to consider next steps, in an effort to continue to develop stronger ties between the arts community, the business community, the education community and local government. They concluded that the next logical step in Charles County’s arts development would be to spearhead an “arts summit,” the first-ever attempt to bring together all the arts



Charles County arts community receives the *Public Sector Merit Award*, at the Eighth Annual Economic Development Summit, October 2005
Photo courtesy of the Maryland Independent

stakeholders – organizations, individual artists, arts patrons and other concerned citizens – for a day of brainstorming, networking and visioning the long-term future of the arts in Charles County. The overall effort was named *Arts Vision 2020*, and the strategic planning project thus was born. The Charles County Arts Alliance spearheaded the formation of a larger Steering Group, sought and received grant funding from the Maryland State Arts Council to support this effort, and hired a professional facilitator (Sherwood Shankland, of *Shankland and Associates*, Fairfax, Virginia) to assist in this major effort.

Following a series of meetings, a three-phase strategic planning project was conceptualized and agreed-upon: *Phase 1* (planning phase) was for the purpose of developing the overall scope, methodology and approach for the project, and acquiring initial raw data from arts stakeholders in Charles County. *Phase 2* (implementation phase) would be focused on presenting the first-ever *Arts Summit* in the history of Charles County, a major event and focal point for the overall strategic planning effort. It would be open to all citizens in the county – not just the arts community – and would be a day of brainstorming, visioning and sharing one’s hopes and dreams for a bright future in the performing, visual and literary arts. The Arts Summit would be immediately followed by the establishment of Action Teams to conduct further work on the key focus areas identified at the Summit. Included in this phase would be a series of meetings, research and public data-gathering, site-visits, surveys and of course, discussions and deliberations by the Action Teams. Finally, *Phase 3* (final report writing/

publishing/dissemination phase) would seek to integrate, synthesize and prioritize the voluminous public input, data-gathering and research results into a concise, cohesive final report that encapsulated the overall effort into a logical, longitudinal “strategic plan for the arts” in Charles County through the year 2020.

On October 21, 2006, the *First Charles County Arts Summit* was presented, in partnership with the College of Southern Maryland. Over 80 arts stakeholders were in attendance, including representatives of all the key arts nonprofit organizations and for-profit arts businesses in the county, as well as State and County elected and administrative officials. After a morning plenary session, the attendees broke into small groups and brainstormed their individual and collective visions for the future of Charles County arts, through the year 2020. A final plenary wrap-up session involved sharing of this explosion of creative, stimulating, and diverse ideas, leading to an integrated whole picture, within the framework of 13 major categories. A thoughtful pattern and logic began to emerge from the mist, and in the end, a series of powerful written statements were crafted by the attendees to capture the exciting vision of the future of Charles County in the arts.

This heartfelt expression of 13 “vision statements” was very inspiring and extremely moving to those in attendance at the *Arts Summit*. Therefore, these statements are being included in this final report, to help capture and share the special oneness and creative spirit of that day for posterity:

FIRST CHARLES COUNTY ARTS SUMMIT

VISION STATEMENTS

Collaboration: *We envision an overall collaborative effort encompassing a variety of artisans and performing venues to fluidly and harmoniously bring a full array of artistic endeavors to fruition.*

Money: *We envision substantial public and private funding for the arts; building effective relationships with government, the business community and foundations to provide new and exciting opportunities for arts facilities, programs and projects that will enhance the quality of life.*

Advertising/Outreach: *We envision collaborative efforts to reach out to the entire community, including the underserved and all other demographics for the purpose of promoting, advertising, and encouraging participation in the various arts opportunities, centers and programs.*

Development: *We envision a multi-purpose facility with necessary resources for mentoring, education, and artistic development from under-represented arts. This will include literary art, broadcasting and independent film, digital media, opera and classical music.*

Arts Schools: *We envision a visual arts center modeled after The Torpedo Factory, where resident artists teach classes as part of their obligation, and a performing arts center modeled after the Wolf Trap Barns programs for the performing arts.*

Public Arts Education: *We envision a robust arts education program in the Charles County Public Schools that involves every student from pre-K through Grade 12 in some aspect of the arts every year. This will include traditional music and dance, visual arts, theater and creative writing.*

Mentoring: *We envision a fruitful blending of experience and generations through mentoring, including connections of youth to seniors and intentional encouragement for beginners by seasoned artists.*

Heritage: *We envision preserving the cultures of our community – past, present and future – utilizing all art forms. This will include an historical village, Charles County historical drama, history of the arts in Charles County, and living history.*

Festivals: *We envision a festival in Waldorf and creating awareness for existing festivals. This will include having use of the proposed county baseball stadium, offering drama, visual arts, music, dance, readings, and promoting diversity of cultural traditions.*

Arts Centers: *We envision a dynamic multi-generational arts center that provides access for all residents and visitors, while illuminating the soul of the region and promoting development and sustainability of local arts and artists. This will include sculpture and traditional art gardens, outdoor/indoor performance space, practice/workshop areas, exhibits and merchandising.*

Places to Go: *We envision several Arts and Entertainment Districts throughout the county that would provide an atmosphere of artistic expression and enjoyment. These will include galleries, museums, artisan market, museums, shops, cafes, and outdoor venues.*

Performance Venues: *We envision public access to multiple performing arts venues that are both fixed and mobile on land and water; visual arts would also have access to these facilities. These will include a portable band shell, barge-based floating theater, tiered amphitheater with electricity and storage, and an art-mobile similar to a library bookmobile.*

Public Art: *We envision that Charles County will be renowned for its infusion of art in all private and public spaces. In 2020, Charles County will celebrate its history, culture and creativity through permanent art dispersed liberally throughout the county. This will include artistic road signs and sculpture, permanent outdoor art/sculpture gardens, public art, statues, murals and fountains.*

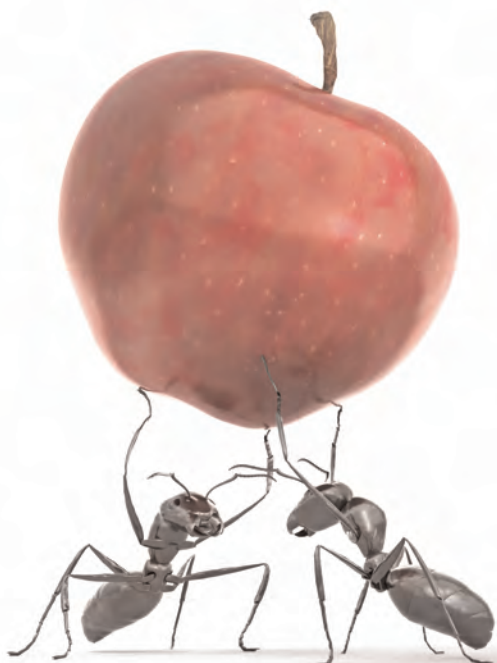
By the end of the day at the *First Charles County Arts Summit*, the arts stakeholders left this gathering highly stimulated, energized and excited by the prospects of the future forward momentum and development of the arts in Charles County – and committed to working collaboratively, contributing their time and talent, to help make these dreams a reality in the years ahead.

Following the Arts Summit, *Phase 2* continued with the Arts Vision 2020 Steering Committee meeting in followup planning sessions in November 2006, January 2007 and March 2007. In-between these meetings, meetings of the four Arts Vision 2020 Action Teams (Arts Development, Arts Education, Arts Programming, Arts Venues and Facilities) took place in February 2007, April 2007, May 2007 and June 2007) to further explore ideas, initiate more research data-gathering activities, and converge on a set of common understandings – all under the continued guidance and leadership of our professional facilitator. These monthly meetings were attended by 25-30 people (on average) from all walks of life and arts interests – an excellent level of continued interest in participation. They have been very

enthusiastic and appreciative to be part of such a unique activity, a chance to be part of “arts history” in Charles County and leave a lasting legacy.

In July 2007, *Phase 3* began, consisting of writing, editing, printing and disseminating drafts of the final report. A Writing Team was formed, consisting of two representatives from each of the four Action Teams, plus the Charles County Arts Alliance President and the Administrator. An editor, Mary Jo Comer, PhD, was also selected. The writing process for the final report began in July 2007, with first draft submissions completed in August 2007. The Writing Team met as an editorial group from September 2007 to February 2008, whereupon its final draft product was submitted to the Arts Vision 2020 Steering Committee for review, approval and final publication several months later.

It is with great pride, pleasure and shared anticipation of a very bright future in the arts that this final report is hereby being presented: *Arts Vision 2020: A Strategic Plan for the Arts in Charles County, Maryland.*



Collaboration: We envision an overall collaborative effort encompassing a variety of artisans and performing venues to fluidly and harmoniously bring a full array of artistic endeavors to fruition.

*Vision Statement from
First Charles County Arts Summit*



Ballet Arts Academy at the Old Waldorf School



Chapter Two

*The Critical Role of the Arts
to Quality of Life*

Chapter II

THE CRITICAL ROLE OF THE ARTS TO QUALITY OF LIFE:

For Individuals, Community and Economic Development

One of the most important and longstanding rationales given for justifying the presence of the arts (music, visual art, drama, dance and literature) in our society has been that the arts contribute to an improved quality of life for our civilization. Exposure to arts and culture helps to “soothe the savage beast,” elevates our thinking to higher levels, and contributes a much-needed aesthetic sensitivity and awareness to the world around us. The arts are a universal language, a means of nonverbal and verbal communications that help us to understand our common humanity. The arts express the “soul” of a society. They contribute a “cultural identity” and “sense of place” to a given geographic region and its people. The arts have the unique ability to bring together diverse people of different backgrounds, educational and

socioeconomic levels, ethnicities and cultural heritages in a shared experience of mutual understanding and enjoyment, whether it be through direct participation in performing arts, visual arts or literary arts activities, or as an active spectator, enjoying and appreciating the fruits of these various artistic labors. In recent years, the presence of a thriving arts community and cultural amenities is a key indicator for states, cities, counties and municipalities in attracting new businesses and new people.

For all of these reasons, it is appropriate to examine in greater detail the critical role of the arts to an enhanced “quality of life” in three specific areas: for individuals, for communities, and for economic development.

Individuals

The arts bring beauty, joy, peace and understanding to all our lives. The arts emerge from and express the creative spirit that each of us has embedded within us as human beings. The arts enrich us as individuals, and bring us into contact with each other in shared aesthetic experiences that are unique, ennobling and unforgettable. Who can forget that first time they sang a song, played a musical instrument, painted a picture, danced a dance, wrote a poem, acted in a play? The arts provide magical, memorable experiences for all of us, and for many people, the arts are truly what make life worth living. The arts provide a means of personal self-expression for youth, a creative outlet for adults that jobs and careers often lack, and a passion for senior citizens to pursue. The arts are truly inter-generational.

What kinds of arts opportunities are available generally for youth to pursue? For many youth, the first exposure to the arts is informal and takes place at home, through active parenting that includes such activities as singing, dancing, drawing, bedtime stories and “pretend” games of imagination. For others, the first exposure to the arts is more formal, taking place at day care or nursery school. For yet others, it takes place in church, whether it be singing in church youth choirs, drawing and coloring in Sunday School, or acting in the annual Christmas pageant, for example. As time continues, these youth enter formal schooling (K-12) and have many more options to pursue the arts. Elementary, middle and high schools offer significant exposure to music, visual art, drama, dance and literature, during the school day and as extracurricular activities (e.g., symphony orchestra, concert band, jazz band, concert choir, madrigals and chamber singers, studio art classes and clubs, thespian groups, dance troupes, school newspapers, yearbook staff, writer’s clubs). While some exposure to the arts is required by State law (e.g., in Maryland, there is a mandatory one-

credit Fine Arts Requirement at the high school level), most exposure to the arts is voluntary, at the option of students and their parents. And for those students who are strongly attracted to the arts, additional opportunities and training are available in the surrounding community, in the form of participation in local arts organizations such as community theatres, youth orchestras, show choirs and individual private lessons.

What kinds of arts opportunities are available generally for adults to pursue? For many adults, the level of time spent in pursuing the arts in any of its various forms is a direct reflection of the time spent in such pursuit during their youthful years. The options to participate actively in the arts that are available to adults, particularly those that live in or near major metropolitan areas, are astounding. They range from formal classes and degree/certificate programs covering all arts genres, to more informal activities such as participation in community-based performing arts groups, visual artist workshops, master classes, visiting art galleries and exhibitions, attending concerts, plays and dance recitals, and the like. For those adults who are strongly attracted to the arts, they often join community theatre groups and perform regularly onstage as amateur actors, attend weekly rehearsals and perform with community orchestras and bands, join visual artist registries and are featured in local gallery shows, and form book clubs and writer’s groups to critique each other’s works. Some highly talented adults choose to become professional performing, visual and literary artists, earning income and pursuing full-time careers in the arts, either as practitioners or educators.

What kinds of arts opportunities are available generally for seniors to pursue? Many of the above-listed arts activities and options for adults continue to be pursued in later years,

after retirement. In fact, for many seniors, this time of life, after the time-consuming decades of career, commuting and child-rearing have ended, becomes a much-awaited “renaissance” for personal pursuits, and the arts are often at or near the top of many seniors’ list of priorities. Finally, there is sufficient time in the daily schedule for active learning and participating in the arts. Learning to paint, taking piano lessons, auditioning for a play, joining a square-dance group, writing the “great American novel” – all of these options and many more are now possible for the first time in years. Another important option for seniors is the presence of senior centers in virtually every region throughout the United States. These senior centers offer a

wide variety of arts classes, interest groups, field trips and travel vacations related to the arts, often with significantly reduced prices, and many seniors avail themselves of these opportunities. Moreover, the inter-generational aspect of the arts is becoming more and more recognized, and senior centers are developing arts programming much more with this inter-generational aspect in mind, involving younger families – children and grandchildren of the seniors – in special events and activities.

In sum, the possibilities are endless for lifelong participation in the arts.

Community

The arts, by their very nature, help to establish a “sense of place” and “community spirit” in small towns and cities alike. They typically emerge from the bottom-up – not top-down – in communities, and as such, are a direct reflection of the talents and creative energy of the local citizenry. The arts, whether they are performing, visual or literary in nature, express the “soul” of a community, and help to present a “public face” to the world at large which is unique to that area or region. With increasing levels of education, financial support, sophistication, and demand by the local citizenry, the arts are afforded more professional opportunities and venues.

A landmark 2002 study by the National Endowment for the Arts concluded that arts participation overwhelmingly correlates with positive individual and civic behaviors. The study states:

“Put simply, Americans who read books, visit museums, attend theatre, and engage in other arts are more active in community life than those who do not. Something happens when an individual actively engages in the arts – be it reading a novel at home, attending a concert at a local church, or seeing a dance company at a college campus – that awakens

both a heightened sense of identity and civic awareness. We must banish the stereotype that reading books or listening to music is passive behavior. Art is not escapism but an invitation to activism.”¹



Think of how closely intertwined the arts are with our common perceptions of locale and “local color” in America. Using music as just one example, consider such mental images as:

- New England – bandstands, community bands
- New York City – classical, opera, hip-hop, rap
- New Orleans – Dixieland jazz
- Chicago – blues
- San Francisco – psychedelic rock, new age
- Los Angeles – rock & roll, pop
- Memphis – Elvis
- Nashville – country
- Appalachia – bluegrass

Moreover, the arts have the tremendous potential to serve as a healing force, both for individuals and for entire communities. Diverse in nature, the arts appeal to every population and ethnic group, and are the universal language that brings disparate cultures together in a shared appreciation of talent, creative energy and aesthetic awareness.

Perhaps the most profound expression of the importance of the arts to the community comes from Jonathan Fanton, the President of the MacArthur Foundation. While it reflects a “city” point of view, the views he expresses are universal to both city and small towns alike, to the sense of “community”:

“There is no better indicator of the spiritual health of our city, its neighborhoods, and the larger region than the state of the arts. The arts deepen our understanding of the human spirit, extend our capacity to comprehend the lives of others, allow us to imagine a more just and humane world. Through their diversity of feeling, their variety of form, their multiplicity of inspiration, the arts make our culture richer and more reflective.”²

In short, the arts are absolutely fundamental to community and humanity.

¹ *The Arts and Civic Engagement: Involved in Arts, Involved in Life.* National Endowment for the Arts. Washington, DC: National Endowment for the Arts, 2007 (second reprint).

² *Arts & Economic Prosperity III: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Culture Organizations and Their Audiences.* Americans for the Arts. Washington, DC: Americans for the Arts, 2007.

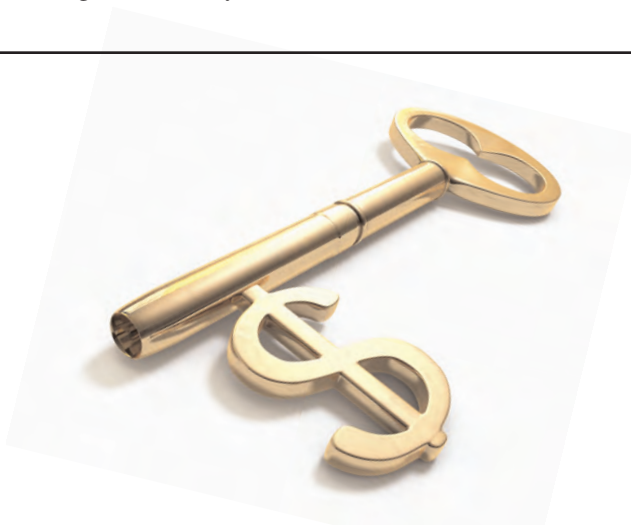
Economic Development

One of more recent and compelling rationales in favor of the arts in society is based on practical, pragmatic considerations: the important role of the arts in economic development. Much of the impetus for this argument was brought forward as the result of the 2002 ground-breaking book, The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life,³ by Richard Florida. In this study, Florida notes that the "Information Age" economy is now changing and transforming into the "Creative Economy." This new economy of the future will be characterized by non-traditional "out of the box" thinking and problem-solving and will be dominated by talented, creative, multi-disciplinary and multitasking individuals with little regard for traditional boundaries in the marketplace and in the marketplace of ideas.

More recently, in the 2005 provocative book, A Whole New Mind: Why Right Brainers Will Rule the Future,⁴ Daniel H. Pink further postulates the emergence of the "Conceptual Age" in which right-brained thinkers (artists, scientists, writers, those that create and connect) will rule. He outlines six fundamentally human abilities that are essential for professional success and personal fulfillment: Design, Story, Symphony, Empathy, Play and Meaning. Individuals that master these six aptitudes will reap society's greatest rewards and share its greatest joys. Then in 2006, in the best-seller, Five Minds for the Future,⁵ Howard Gardner, the author of "multiple intelligences" theory (in a

1983 book of the same name), argues that professional and personal success in the future economy will be based upon the following characteristics: The Disciplinary Mind, the Synthesizing Mind, The Creating Mind, the Respectful Mind, and the Ethical Mind. Clearly, the third type, the "creating mind," is influenced powerfully by exposure to the arts, arts education, arts programming and direct participation in arts activities.

Without question, the arts are an important component of economic development, and contribute significantly to the overall attractiveness, desirability and livability of a given municipality, county, state or region. It is one of the key attributes of a location which corporations assess before deciding whether to locate or relocate their operations. Along with excellent schools and attractive natural environment, the presence of an exciting, thriving, vibrant "arts scene" – with cultural amenities, active and creative programming such as visual arts workshops/classes, live theatre and dance ensembles, a symphony orchestra, summer concerts "under the stars," and with key venues such as a community-based multidisciplinary arts center, a professional performing arts center, art galleries, museums – all contribute to the overall perception that a given community is a great place to live, and a place to which corporations, their senior management team, their workers and families would willingly choose to move.



Money: We envision substantial public and private funding for the arts; building effective relationships with government, the business community and foundations to provide new and exciting opportunities for arts facilities, programs and projects that will enhance the quality of life.

*Vision Statement from
First Charles County Arts Summit*

³ The Rise of the Creative Class, and How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life. Richard Florida. New York: Basic Books, 2002.

⁴ A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future. Daniel Pink. New York: Penguin Group, 2005.

⁵ Five Minds for the Future. Howard Gardner. Boston: Harvard Business School, 2006.

Economic Impact of the Arts in Maryland

In Maryland, the economic impact of nonprofit arts organizations is quite substantial. The Governor of Maryland, Martin O'Malley, has stated in the [Maryland State Arts Council \(MSAC\) Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2007](#):

*“ . . . the Arts are both integral to a civilized society and vital to an outstanding quality of life. An economic force that creates jobs, revitalizes communities and increases tourism, the Arts also preserve our identity and create an engaged and responsive citizenry.”*⁶

Each year, the MSAC publishes a summary and full report on the *Economic Impact of the Arts in Maryland*, and emphasizes the important role of the arts in the state's economy. The most recent report for FY 2007 states:

*“The arts play an important role in the quality of life Maryland offers its citizens. This is as true for citizens living in small towns and rural areas as it is for those who live in our major metropolitan areas. Since the arts make our cities and communities better places to live and work, they are often an important factor used by businesses in their decision to locate in Maryland.”*⁷

Specifically, the MSAC has reported the following economic impact of the arts in Maryland for FY 2007:

- A total of 14 million people attended arts events in Maryland.
- Arts audiences generated \$385 million in direct spending on goods and services.
- Arts organizations generated \$170 million in direct spending on goods and services.
- Arts audience spending and arts operations combined generated a total of \$556 million in direct spending on goods and services, and generated a total economic impact of \$1.2 billion.
- Every \$1 of direct spending of this arts industry generated a total of \$2.13 in secondary expenditures on goods and services in Maryland.
- A total of more than 15,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs were generated by the arts industry.
- Total arts-related employment generated \$418 million in salaries.
- The arts industry generated \$43 million in state and local taxes.⁸

To assess the regional economic impact, Maryland is divided into six regions. The following lists total expenditures (the sum of direct and secondary expenditures) and the total number of jobs (part-time and full-time) in nonprofit arts organizations receiving MSAC operating grants and their audiences in each region during FY 2007 (in descending order):

- **Central Maryland** (Anne Arundel, Carroll, Cecil, Harford, Howard counties and Baltimore City): \$705 million, 9112 jobs
- **Capital Maryland** (Frederick, Montgomery and Prince George's counties): \$351 million, 4,379 jobs
- **Lower Eastern Shore** (Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties): \$56.1 million, 734 jobs
- **Western Maryland** (Allegany, Garrett and Washington counties): \$35 million, 457 jobs
- **Upper Eastern Shore** (Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot counties): \$31.8 million, 394 jobs
- **Southern Maryland** (Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's counties): \$8.4 million, 107 jobs⁹

It is disappointing that Southern Maryland is ranked at the bottom of the above list. Southern Maryland holds the dubious distinction of being the poorest region in the state of Maryland in terms of this most basic economic benchmark for assessing the health and vitality of the arts. This is particularly disturbing when one considers that Southern Maryland is one of the fastest growing regions of the state and Charles County has the distinction of being one of the richest counties in Maryland, in terms of per capita income levels in FY 2007.



Renovated home of the Port Tobacco Players, La Plata

⁶ Page 2, [Maryland State Arts Council Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2007](#). Maryland State Arts Council. Baltimore: Maryland State Arts Council, 2007.

⁷ Page 28, [Maryland State Arts Council Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2007](#). Maryland State Arts Council. Baltimore: Maryland State Arts Council, 2007.

⁸ [MSAC Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts Organizations in Maryland](#). Maryland State Arts Council (summary card). Baltimore: Maryland State Arts Council, 2008.

⁹ [MSAC Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts Organizations in Maryland](#). Maryland State Arts Council (summary card). Baltimore: Maryland State Arts Council, 2008.



Indian Head Center for the Arts

The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC), an agency of the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, is dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive. The MSAC provides financial support and technical assistance to designated county arts councils and nonprofit arts organizations across the state in pursuit of this important goal. In Charles County, the nonprofit Charles County Arts Alliance, as the “designated county arts council,” receives an annual general operating grant from the MSAC under its Community Arts Development program, which provides basic administrative, subgrant program and other support. This grant is based on current population levels and fluctuates in amount from year to year. This state support of the arts in Charles County is absolutely critical to ensure stability and basic services each year. In addition, the Charles County Government provides financial support to the Charles County Arts Alliance. But additional support is needed – from local government, the business community, foundation grants, fundraising, private benefactors, and the like – to ensure the continued forward momentum of the arts in the future. This support serves as the “seed money” for investing in a better quality of life for all through providing enhanced arts and cultural offerings in Charles County, thereby making Charles County a more attractive place to live.

As Charles County’s population continues to grow rapidly and per capita income increases dramatically, there is tremendous pent-up demand in Charles County for “more arts” in each of the five main areas: music, visual art, drama, dance and literature. There is a need to ensure that our local arts offerings, arts programming, arts venues and facilities keep up with this growing demand for services, especially among our newest citizens, many of whom come from other areas of the country wherein the arts are well-placed and well-supported by local government. One thing is for certain: if the “arts stakeholders” in Charles County – artists, arts organizations, local government, the educational community and business community – do not commit to working together in the months and years ahead to address and meet this increased demand, it will not get done. Our economic development will be negatively impacted, and our fellow citizens will either go elsewhere – out of county – for these arts opportunities and experiences, if they have the financial wherewithal and wheels to do so, or they will be deprived of such access, and their lives will be the poorer for it.

Quality of life is our top priority.



Advertising/Outreach: We envision collaborative efforts to reach out to the entire community, including the underserved and all other demographics for the purpose of promoting, advertising, and encouraging participation in the various arts opportunities, centers and programs.

*Vision Statement from
First Charles County Arts Summit*



Stageworks Festival 2008, Indian Head



Mattawoman Creek Art Center, Smallwood State Park, Marbury



Chapter Three

*Current State of the Arts in
Charles County*

Chapter III

CURRENT STATE OF THE ARTS IN CHARLES COUNTY

The arts in Charles County are experiencing rapid growth. The first-ever *Charles County Arts Summit* held in October 2006 served as an eye-opener for just how much is happening in the arts, and how much more can be done to ensure that the arts are not only alive, but are thriving in our community.

The arts involve and enrich our fellow citizens, and enhance our overall quality of life in Charles County. The arts make Charles County a more interesting, exciting and culturally diverse place in which to live, work and play.

Arts for Children

The *Schubert Singers*, a concert choir for children (grades 3 and up), is open by audition to boys and girls who like to sing beautiful music. The singers learn and perform folk songs, spirituals, rounds, and music by classical and contemporary composers that is especially suited to the young voice. They are taught how to sing with a lovely tone, to read music, and to work together to create musical beauty. The directors believe that singing is very important to the human spirit.

The Port Tobacco Players *Encore Kids* theater program provides children with the opportunity to perform for audiences of all ages in a variety of locations throughout the year. Every January children, ages 6 -12, audition for this group which challenges kids in the areas of theater, dance, and music.

The College of Southern Maryland's *Children's Theatre*, part of the Fine Arts Center, offers area children the opportunity to perform in a main stage show annually each January. Usually auditioning in November, children experience the intensive rehearsal schedule of a full-length production and the excitement that comes with performing from Opening Night through the closing performance.

For young string players, the Port Tobacco Players *Charles County Youth Orchestra* and *Encore Strings* programs offer wonderful opportunities for ensemble playing and musical growth. *Encore Strings* is the preparatory orchestra for the *Charles County Youth Orchestra*. Players in *Encore Strings* have normally played in public school for at least one year, or have had private study. For some players, this orchestra is their first ensemble experience. The *Charles County Youth Orchestra* consists of advanced string players. This orchestra's repertoire has become increasingly challenging for its members, providing them with a rewarding and educational orchestral experience.

For those who prefer the pop and rock scene, *My Brother's Place* provides a safe haven for local bands to perform and for area youth to enjoy a variety of bands each weekend. *My Brother's Place* has been adding audio/visual equipment to allow the groups to record demo CDs and videos as well.

There are a variety of dance studios throughout the county offering quality lessons in many dance disciplines. Of particular note are the nonprofit dance opportunities that

exist. The nonprofit *Ballet Arts Academy at the Old Waldorf School* was established in 2005 for the purpose of providing the community with a dance environment devoted exclusively to the study of classical ballet and its related arts. In addition to dance training for students, the *Ballet Arts Academy* also strives to engage local and regional artists, musicians, dancers, poets, actors, theatre technicians, and master teachers for workshops and seminars which are available to *Ballet Arts Academy* students and members of the community as well. The *Charles County Dance Ensemble* is another nonprofit dance organization housed in Charles County with opportunities for children.

And arts education in the *Charles County Public Schools* provides students with cultural enrichment and a variety of ways to express themselves through the arts. Active in the All County, Tri-County, and All State performing arts programs, students receive opportunities for arts education during the normal school day, as well as a wide variety of after-school programs in the visual and performing arts. Students are encouraged to excel and be recognized for their talent and dedicated efforts in the arts. After-school drama clubs and music ensembles provide additional opportunities for students to pursue artistic expression in the performing arts. Also, through a partnership with *Mattawoman Creek Art Center*, high school visual artists are featured in the annual *Six Picks High School Exhibit*. The *Chesapeake Bay Floating Theatre* (Black Box Theatre at the Indian Head Center for the Arts) conducts a community outreach program called the *Stage Training Apprentice Mentor Program*. It is an innovative after-school program for at-risk middle school youth. Targeting children with greatest need in Charles County, adults assist the children in receiving support and guidance via this mentor-based theatrical apprentice program.

Various arts-related programs are also offered to local children through arts and crafts workshops at *Charles County Community Centers* operated by the *Department of Community Services*. A variety of performances by entertainers and storytellers are presented at various branches of the *Charles County Public Library* and the *College of Southern Maryland*. A variety of *Summer Arts Camps* exist for children as well, usually through the *College of Southern Maryland*, the *Port Tobacco Players*, *Charles County Department of Community Services*, area dance studios, and more.

Arts for Adults

But arts events and opportunities in Charles County are not for children alone. Opportunities for adult visual artists exist with the *Mattawoman Creek Art Center*; carving and painting carousel horses with the *Southern Maryland Carousel Group*; attending *Regional Visual Artist Workshops* through the *Charles County Arts Alliance*; taking classes with the *Charles County Senior Centers*; and exhibiting work at a variety of galleries and festivals throughout the area.

High school and adult instrumentalists perform with the *Southern Maryland Concert Band*, the College of Southern Maryland's *Latin Ensemble* and *Solid Brass* jazz ensemble, as well as a variety of smaller ensembles and numerous bands throughout the county. Vocalists sing close harmonies with the *Southern Mix Barbershop Chorus* and choral pieces with the *Chesapeake Choral Arts Society* and various *College of Southern Maryland Choirs*. And of course, there are a number of church choirs in the area as well.

Opportunities to perform onstage or to utilize one's technical and even business-related skills abound in the theater arts at



Chesapeake Choral Arts Society

the *College of Southern Maryland Fine Arts Center*, the *Black Box Theatre* in the Indian Head Center for the Arts, the *Port Tobacco Players*, and the county *Senior Centers*. And for those with an interest in the literary arts, there is the College of Southern Maryland's *Connections* literary magazine. *Connections* magazine is a regional literary journal published twice a year that features the very best poems, stories, artwork and photography of Southern Maryland. Also included in each issue is featured material from visiting writers. Publication readings take place in December and May each year, and submissions from the general public are encouraged.

Arts for All Ages

Perhaps most unusual of all the arts offerings in Charles County are the various multicultural events offered here throughout the year. Of particular note is *Celebrations* sponsored by the Black Leadership Council for Excellence. *Celebrations* is a series of concerts and festivals designed to increase awareness and access in Southern Maryland to the folk and traditional performance arts of Latin Americans, Asians/Pacific Islanders, Africans, Caribbean Islanders, and African Americans. The Korean American Association of Southern Maryland has also become very active in recent years, sponsoring festivals and events open to the general

public. The Maryland Indian Heritage Society's Annual *Pow-Wow* is a unique cultural enrichment opportunity, as well as dance workshops offered by the *Piscataway Spirit Dancers*. Additional cultural events are sometimes sponsored by the College of Southern Maryland and/or the Charles County Arts Alliance.

The arts community of Charles County really comes together in early June each year for *River Artsfest*. Sponsored by the Charles County Arts Alliance in partnership with the Town of Indian Head and supported in part by grants from the



Development: We envision a multi-purpose facility with necessary resources for mentoring, education, and artistic development from under-represented arts. This will include literary art, broadcasting and independent film, digital media, opera and classical music.

*Vision Statement from
First Charles County Arts Summit*

Maryland State Arts Council and Charles County Government, *River Artsfest* is a full-day outdoor celebration of ALL the arts, as well as Charles County's rivers that serve as a major source of inspiration to our local artists. It takes place on the Village Green in Indian Head, and is a "free gift" each year to the community.

The *Charles County Fair* provides an opportunity for some healthy competition in arts and crafts of all kinds. Here the public has the opportunity to show recent work from the past year and strive for the blue ribbon in his/her category of choice. In recent years the Fair Board has also incorporated many more hands-on arts experiences at the fair, and of course, performing arts groups are frequent participants on various stages throughout the fairgrounds.

Opportunities also exist for exposure to various types of music through the *Christ Church Concert Series*, sometimes in partnership with the Music Teachers Association of Charles County. Whether piano or organ recitals, string or wind ensembles, brass quartets, or vocalists, the public is welcome to attend these monthly offerings between October and April each year. The College of Southern Maryland Fine Arts Center offers a diverse set of guest performances throughout the year, from bluegrass groups, to the U.S. Navy Band and the Washington Ballet, as frequent visitors. Grace Brethren Church offers a unique *Grace Ole Opry* each year, and Habitat for Humanity offers a *Concert Series*.

Recently, non-arts organizations are partnering with arts organizations to incorporate the arts in a variety of different

events: the *Festival of Scarecrows*, coordinated by the Charles County Chamber of Commerce; the inaugural *Bass Bash*, sponsored by the Charles County Economic Development and Tourism Department; the *Arts and Crafts Show*, sponsored by Century 21 New Millennium; and coming soon at the end of 2008, the inaugural *First Night Charles County 2008*, sponsored by the Center for Children. A new, nontraditional venue for performing arts events is the recently opened Regency Furniture Stadium and Entertainment Complex, which is presenting its first rock concert in August 2008 (*REO Speedwagon*).

The arts-scene of Charles County is alive and growing in all directions. With growth come new opportunities and new challenges, many of which are discussed in this report. Arts organizations are always looking for more participants/members as well as larger audiences at exhibits, concerts, performances, recitals, readings, and festivals. A culturally vibrant community is a healthy community, rich in artistic expression, and a magnet to those who desire to live a full and satisfying life.

The current inventory of nonprofit arts and heritage organizations in Charles County, plus related festivals may be found at Appendix B.¹⁰ More information and links to many of the organizations noted above are available at the website of the Charles County Arts Alliance, the "arts umbrella" nonprofit organization promoting ALL the arts in Charles County: music, visual art, drama, dance and literature (www.charlescountyarts.org).

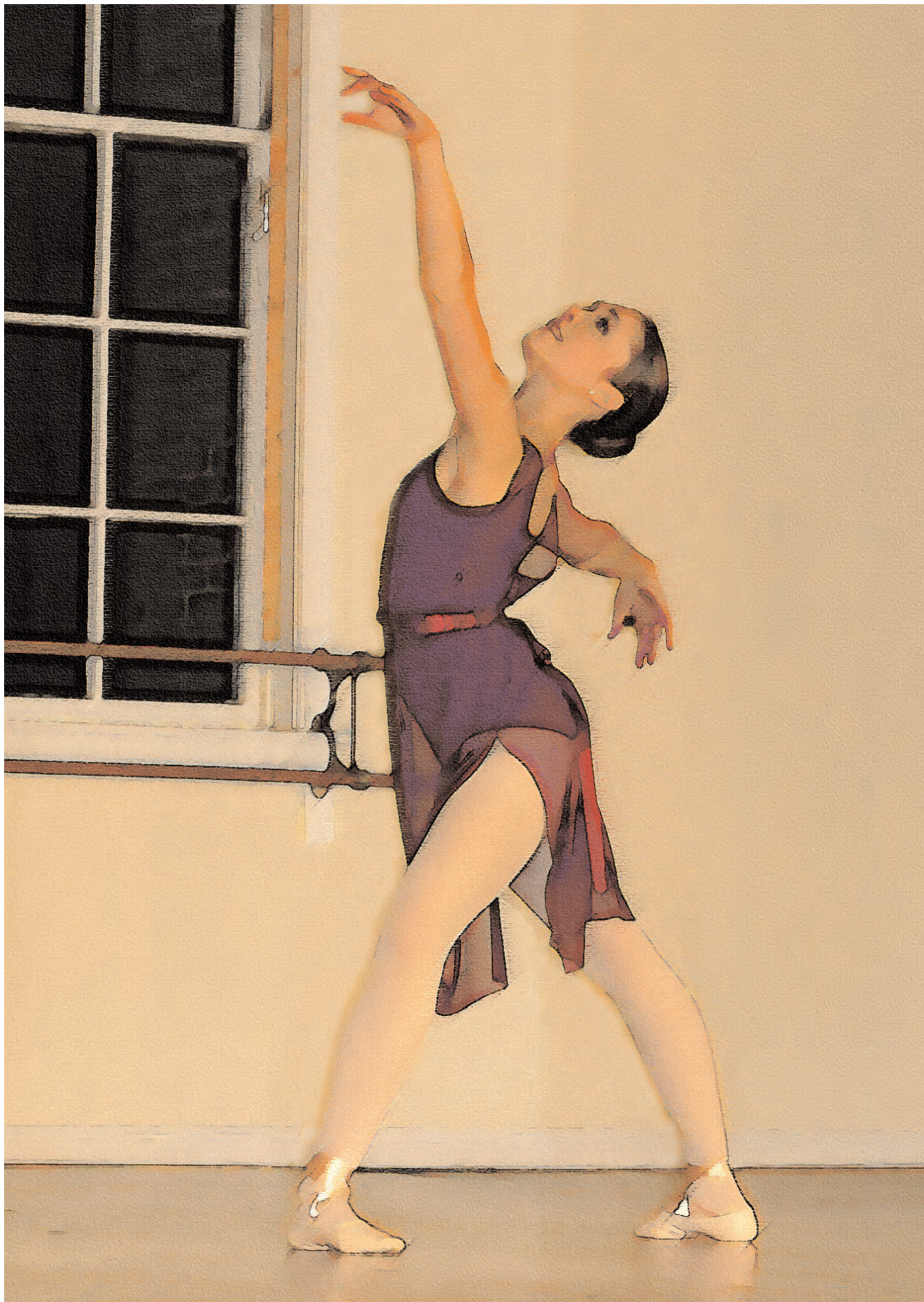


Torpedo Factory, Alexandria, VA
www.torpedofactory.org

Arts Schools: We envision a visual arts center modeled after The Torpedo Factory, where resident artists teach classes as part of their obligation, and a performing arts center modeled after the Wolf Trap Barns programs for the performing arts.

*Vision Statement from
First Charles County Arts Summit*

¹⁰ The many organizations mentioned in this chapter do not comprise an all-inclusive list, but rather just a sampling of the Charles County arts community. The most comprehensive list assembled to date of Charles County nonprofit arts and heritage organizations and annual festivals is found in Appendix B. Please note that private studios (music, dance, photography, etc.), schools, other nonprofits, for-profit galleries and other arts-related businesses are also an integral part of the arts community in Charles County, but are beyond the scope of this report.



Ballet Arts Academy at the Old Waldorf School



Southern Maryland Carousel Group at woodcarvers' shop in the Davis Building, La Plata



Chapter Four

*Strategic Goals, Objectives and
Recommended Actions*

Chapter IV

STRATEGIC GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: ARTS DEVELOPMENT (AD)

Support and develop performing, visual and literary arts in Charles County.

The arts in Charles County are thriving in ways that are truly astounding considering how little focused support is given to them. Volunteers are the backbone, heartbeat, and muscles that keep the body of the arts viable. The very active Charles County Arts Alliance provides the “life support system” for the arts, and it is run by volunteers who are supported by two part-time paid assistants. (The second one has only been added in FY 2008.) It is the commitment of the volunteers in the Charles County Arts Alliance and the many groups and individuals who produce plays, put on concerts, hold recitals, make films, create visual art, dance, and publish poems, stories, memoirs, that gives reason to be proud of the arts in Charles County.

Having outgrown the small county, agricultural way of life, it is time to grow our arts as we have done in our infrastructure, shopping venues, eating establishments and other amenities that make Charles County a magnet for businesses, commuting workers, and families seeking a safe and satisfying environment in which to live. It is time to put arts on an equal footing with athletic recreation, since arts are also a re-creation – of the mind, of the soul, and of the whole person. Just as the Department of Community Services has various divisions – Aging and Community Centers Division, Recreation Division – and administers various programs to improve the quality of life in the county, ultimately a separate Department of Arts Development

should be considered for establishment, with various divisions to support the variety of programs needed. As a first step, the position of Director of Arts Development should be created within the Charles County Government and filled with a permanent staff member.

Becoming an integral part of the governmental structure will give the arts legitimacy and ensure that they will receive the same consideration as the other quality of life amenities supported by the county. The Charles County Arts Alliance should continue to be the connector between the county government and the arts community, a function it has served for two decades, during which it has earned the trust and respect of both entities. With additional support, it can continue to provide support to the arts entities in the county and increase the collaboration between them that is needed to move to the next level of excellence.

In addition, the various arts organizations, individual artists, and arts stakeholders need sustained and dedicated support to develop collaborative working relationships with one another. Partnerships with local government, businesses, organizations, and individuals need to be created and nurtured so that together they can develop sustainable funding sources and promotional vehicles which will help develop and strengthen the arts community of Charles County.

Public Arts Education: We envision a robust arts education program in the Charles County Public Schools that involves every student from pre-K through Grade 12 in some aspect of the arts every year. This will include traditional music and dance, visual arts, theater and creative writing.

*Vision Statement from
First Charles County Arts Summit*



To meet the Arts Development strategic goal, the following objectives and actions are recommended (not in priority order):

| OBJECTIVE | RECOMMENDED ACTION (RA) |
|---|---|
| Work collaboratively with local governments, businesses, organizations, educational entities, and individuals to develop sustainable funding sources to expand and strengthen the arts community of Charles County. | <p>Create within the Charles County Government a permanent position for arts and cultural development (“Director of Arts Development”). (RA-1-AD)</p> <p>Create a Business and Arts Council to advocate for the arts and to focus on the importance of the economic impact of the arts. (RA-2-AD)</p> |

| OBJECTIVE | RECOMMENDED ACTION |
|--|--|
| Ensure the development and equitable dissemination of funds for sustaining and expanding the arts in Charles County. | Develop an Implementation Plan for arts development in Charles County. (RA-3-AD) |

| OBJECTIVE | RECOMMENDED ACTION |
|--|--|
| Encourage the creation of new and innovative events that showcase Charles County arts, history, and culture. | <p>Seek and develop opportunities for increased collaboration among Charles County arts organizations, utilizing the Charles County Arts Alliance and its contacts as a rich resource and partner in that endeavor. (RA-4-AD)</p> <p>Create a Charles County edition of a literary journal, similar to the former <i>Potomac Review</i>. (RA-5-AD)</p> <p>Create a directory of current arts, local history, and cultural organizations and a calendar of their activities to determine where areas of new growth are needed. (RA-6-AD)</p> <p>Partner with local non-arts organizations to showcase Charles County history and culture. (RA-7-AD)</p> |

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: ARTS EDUCATION (AE)

Provide life-long learning opportunities in all the arts.

There is much positive information about the arts in Charles County. Many individuals and groups of committed artists in all genres live, work, and perform here. The public and private schools in the county include arts education as part of their comprehensive curricular programming. The College of Southern Maryland offers courses in visual arts, dance, music, theatre, communications, and composition. Private lessons and small group instruction are available in a variety of locations around the county. Due to the county’s close proximity to the nation’s capital, Washington, DC, many of these private teachers are top professionals working in the fields of performing, visual and literary arts.

Hence, it appears that a solid foundation for building a robust arts presence is already in place. There is still work to be done, however. Some areas that need strengthening include: building a stronger network of information sharing

between and among artists, audiences, and potential participants; broadening offerings and opportunities for participation for all county citizens; and supporting those involved in the arts by providing educational opportunities for them to deepen and expand their knowledge and expertise.

For many, the first introduction to the arts occurs in school settings. This is as it should be. Educational research has demonstrated both the positive effect instruction in the arts has on overall academic performance and on specific learning in other academic areas. Therefore, in addition to teaching art and music classes in K-12 schools, the arts need to be integrated into all the core subjects offered. There is a natural connection, for instance, between music and mathematics; between art and history; between theatre and literature, which should be utilized to help students better understand the core concepts being taught in each area.

Charles County must compete with many other jurisdictions for well-qualified and capable teachers. Providing incentives for new teachers to make Charles County their professional home is a good step in attracting those teachers. A second educational challenge is retaining teachers new to the profession once they have acquired a few years of experience. Many leave the field by the end of their fifth year of experience. One way to help stem the flow of teachers out of the county and out of the profession is to provide growth and professional development opportunities that are convenient and affordable. Many arts teachers in the public schools, especially at the elementary and middle school level, are scheduled to teach at more than one school each week – even sometimes each day – which makes the possibility of identifying strongly with school administrators and staff, parents and students, difficult.

To meet the goal of providing life-long learning opportunities in all the arts, stimulating participatory learning opportunities need to be provided for people of all ages, abilities, ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds in Charles County. In addition to the traditional visual arts, dance, music, theatre, and literary arts, the 21st century requires an expansion of definition to include multi-media presentations such as radio and television broadcasting, independent film production, and online as well as print publications. In the rapidly growing technology field, arts educators will need to stay abreast of new developments in, for instance, digital applications, and incorporate them into their instructional programs.

To foster cohesion and support in neighborhoods and less accessible areas of the county, learning opportunities in the arts should not always require a trip to Waldorf, La Plata, or

Indian Head. Nor should a desire to learn more about or participate in a particular art form be denied to citizens because of a lack of transportation. There are many entities already in place that could ease those concerns by careful planning and communication between them. The VanGo country wide bus system (aptly named, “The Art of Transportation”), the parks and recreation system, public schools, the College of Southern Maryland, and the various community centers can plan satellite programs in outlying areas and provide access to programs through coordination of transportation and program scheduling.

An untapped and potentially very strong support for arts education in the county resides in the willingness of volunteers to share their knowledge and passion for their fields with others. Developing a cadre of volunteers to become mentors, tutors, and supporters of novice learners could benefit both the givers and recipients of that knowledge and experience. The gaps between formal classroom instruction, private lessons, competing academic and extracurricular needs and interests, often keep talented and interested learners from growing in the art form of particular interest to them. On the other hand, there are polished professional-level artists who, as retirees or people new to the community, would welcome the opportunity to share with novices that which has enriched their lives. Creating a network of such artists, private teachers, and public and private schools could greatly benefit individuals and the community.

To meet the Arts Education strategic goal, the following objectives and actions are recommended (not in priority order):

| OBJECTIVE | RECOMMENDED ACTION (RA) |
|--|--|
| Provide stimulating and participatory learning opportunities in the arts for people of all ages, abilities, ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds. | <p>Expand arts offerings beyond the traditional fine arts to include multi-media (radio and television broadcasting, independent films, publishing) and new technologies (digital, internet). <i>(RA-8-AE)</i></p> <p>Develop a network of artists (retirees, senior citizens, etc.) who would serve as mentors, working with students of all ages to demonstrate the particular art in which they have knowledge and experience. <i>(RA-9-AE)</i></p> |

| OBJECTIVE | RECOMMENDED ACTION |
|--|--|
| Create learning opportunities in the arts that are accessible to all citizens in Charles County. | Work with community outreach, transportation, and education organizations to create a cohesive and dynamic arts culture in Charles County. <i>(RA-10-AE)</i> |

| OBJECTIVE | RECOMMENDED ACTION (RA) |
|---|---|
| Develop and strengthen stimulating and academically challenging arts programs as part of the core curriculum in both the public and non-public school systems | Broaden the types of arts classes offered in public and non-public schools. (RA-11-AE) Provide opportunities for students in all grades to experience a variety of arts classes each school year. (RA-12-AE) |

| OBJECTIVE | RECOMMENDED ACTION |
|---|--|
| Develop fully-funded educational programs for school-based K-12 arts educators to enhance their exposure to, or skill level in, a variety of art forms. | Develop incentives for arts educators to participate in continuing education programs. (RA-13-AE) Develop courses to provide instruction and information to arts educators on safety-related issues. (RA-14-AE) |

| OBJECTIVE | RECOMMENDED ACTION |
|--|---|
| Integrate the arts into all curricular areas to strengthen both arts and other content learning. | Provide teacher education in curricular integration. (RA-15-AE) Encourage creativity in teacher planning and delivery of instruction as well as “buddy planning” and team teaching. (RA-16-AE) |

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: ARTS PROGRAMMING (AP)

Expand opportunities for showcasing and publicizing the arts so that Charles County becomes known as a leader in and encourager of the arts.

One has only to check out the weekly listing of arts activities going on in Charles County and nearby areas to know that there is a thriving arts community here. Members of the Charles County Arts Alliance and others who request it receive the organization’s weekly calendar, *Arts Newsflash*, via e-mail at their homes. However, it can be challenging to reach wider audiences that might enjoy the many offerings available. As one of the fastest growing jurisdictions in Maryland, Charles County is gaining new citizens rapidly. Many artists and organizations are at a loss as to how to effectively let interested patrons know of the opportunities.

One significant way to make the arts more visible and accessible to Charles County citizens is to make Public Art a priority. Current arts venues consist of exhibit spaces and small galleries featuring local artists are established at the College of Southern Maryland, public libraries, the County Government Building and several businesses, and are rotated regularly so that many visual artists’ works are showcased. Much more could be done in this area. Public Art would be an excellent addition and make a major impact to the cultural landscape of Charles County.

Public Art is defined as:

“Works of art in any media that have been planned and executed with the specific intention of being sited or staged in the public domain, usually outside and accessible to all. The term is especially significant within the art world, amongst curators, commissioning bodies and practitioners of Public Art, to whom it signifies a particular working practice, often with implications of site specificity, community involvement and collaboration. The term is sometimes also applied to include any art which is exhibited in a public space including publicly accessible buildings.”¹¹

Monuments, fountains, memorials, murals, sculpture and civic statuary are among the oldest and most popular forms of Public Art. In recent years, a movement has taken hold, entitled, “Percent for Art” policy, in which 1% of the construction cost for new publicly-funded buildings is devoted to creation and display of public artworks. Many major cities across the country now embrace this policy, and indeed, a number of municipalities in Maryland implement an “Art in Public Places” program. In 2008, the state of Maryland inaugurated the Maryland Commission on Public Art, and announced Public Art project grants available through the Maryland State Arts Council.¹²

¹¹ “Public Art,” Wikipedia, May 31, 2008.

¹² “Public Art Project Grant,” Maryland State Arts Council website.

In neighboring counties, Public Art and arts gardens are supported and open to the public. Not only landscaping, but also sculptures, water features, and outdoor performances are incorporated into the gardens, making them a lovely and relaxing place for enjoyment and relaxation.

A thriving arts community is the linchpin of a healthy and satisfying community culture. It is also an economic boon, as noted previously in Chapter II. As the arts community

becomes better known and supported, it will be one of the driving forces to make the Charles County Government's Vision Statement a reality: *Charles County is a place where all people thrive and businesses grow and prosper; where government services to its citizens are provided at the highest level of excellence; and where the quality of life is the highest in the nation.* The health of the arts of an area is a signature measure of the quality of life enjoyed by the citizens of that area.

To meet the Arts Programming strategic goal, the following objectives and actions are recommended (not in priority order):

| OBJECTIVE | RECOMMENDED ACTION (RA) |
|--|---|
| <p>Work collaboratively with local governments, businesses, organizations, educational entities, and individuals to develop promotional avenues to expand and strengthen the arts community of Charles County.</p> | <p>Work closely with the Charles County Economic Development and Tourism Department and the Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium to ensure Charles County arts, historical, and heritage programs are marketed broadly across the region and state. (RA-17-AP)</p> <p>Create a public access channel for the arts that will allow groups and individuals to produce arts programming. (RA-18-AP)</p> <p>Air a weekly television show that highlights events and public art exhibits. (RA-19-AP)</p> <p>Advertise, through local media, schedules of classes and workshops to show the scope and choices available locally. (RA-20-AP)</p> <p>Create materials (print and non-print) to improve communication regarding arts opportunities, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Directory of Charles County Arts Organizations with contact information. • A calendar of arts events which could be distributed by the Economic Development and Tourism Department and/or local newspapers. • A prominent link on the Charles County Government website to the Charles County Arts Alliance, which maintains an online calendar of arts events and happenings. • A listing of local practitioners who are interested in providing information, education, and inspiration in all arts disciplines and genres. (RA-21-AP) |

| OBJECTIVE | RECOMMENDED ACTION |
|---|---|
| <p>Infuse art in all public places in Charles County and encourage those who control private spaces to do the same.</p> | <p>Create a Public Art program to showcase art in all areas of Charles County. (RA-22-AP)</p> <p>Provide arts gardens as a means of encouraging the professional development of local artists and for the enjoyment of the citizens. (RA-23-AP)</p> |

| OBJECTIVE | RECOMMENDED ACTION |
|--|--|
| <p>Attract talented professional artists to live and work in Charles County.</p> | <p>Include artists in special incentive programs to make living and working in Charles County both attractive and affordable. (RA-24-AP)</p> <p>Create a resident artist program in Charles County. (RA-25-AP)</p> |

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: ARTS VENUES AND FACILITIES (AVF)

Plan new structures and facilities and use existing venues to create a cohesive and dynamic arts culture that is easily accessible to all citizens of Charles County.

There are many more artists and performing groups in Charles County than there are places to display and showcase their work. There are few available venues for performing groups to use and the performers often feel like “interlopers” since the venues are primarily designed for other purposes like worship, educational activities, meetings, and athletic events. Often performances cannot be rehearsed in the spaces in which they will be performed, so supporting equipment like lights, microphones, and scenery are only available for a one- or two-time rehearsal or run-through. These severe limitations use up time, energy, and enthusiasm which is not then available for the actual performances. Most venues which can be used require fees to pay for utilities, security personnel, and/or set-up/clean-up personnel. At other venues the group using the facility must have liability insurance that is beyond the shoestring budgets most such groups can sustain.

Charles County has made significant investment in providing a wide variety of amenities for the sports, physical fitness and recreational needs and enjoyment of its citizens. These include the White Plains Golf Course, the Capital Clubhouse Recreation Center, which offers ice hockey, skating, soccer, field hockey, baseball, basketball, and rock climbing; numerous Community Centers which offer a variety of sports-related teams and practice sessions, County Parks that offer outdoor opportunities for physical exercise such as hiking, biking, horseback-riding and nature trails, community swimming pools which offer aquatic programs year round, and active plans for hiker/biker trails along former railroad lines in the near future. With the opening of the Regency Furniture Stadium and Entertainment Complex in May 2008, an outstanding 4500-seat venue is now host to minor league baseball in Charles County: the Southern Maryland Blue Crabs team.

It is gratifying to see that the Stadium is also planned as an “entertainment complex” as well, with the first special events planned for summer 2008 (the *REO Speedwagon* rock concert being the inaugural event). The stadium is a major venue and step forward for both sports and the arts in Charles County; the plans for its mixed-use will ensure that this venue is utilized broadly by the local citizenry. The Department of Community Services Gymnastics and Dance Recreation Center is another example of a venue with sports and the arts under one roof, in a mixed-use mode. These are two excellent examples of the good strides in this direction of providing more amenities for the arts in Charles County. We would like to see it continue and grow in the years ahead. In addition however, some dedicated venues and facilities for the arts are critical as well, such as a multi-disciplinary arts center and a professional-level performing arts center. This will continue the tradition of making this fast-growing and affluent community one in which residents wish to spend time and enjoy its cultural amenities.

One does not have to travel very far from Charles County to see some of the professional-level cultural amenities and venues that were developed with government support – places like *Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts* (in Fairfax County), *Merriweather Post Pavilion* and *Strathmore Music Center* (both in Montgomery County), for instance. Not only have these venues filled a need and desire for enjoyment of the performing arts for their local residents, they also draw visitors from many places – including Charles County – to enjoy their diverse offerings. Conversely, the unique geographic position of Charles County makes travel from Northern Virginia and its Northern Neck region, Washington, DC, Calvert and St. Mary’s counties, as well as southern Prince George’s County, an easy choice for entertainment and leisure



John Merritt mentoring students in set painting at Port Tobacco Players’ Theater Camp

Mentoring: We envision a fruitful blending of experience and generations through mentoring, including connections of youth to seniors and intentional encouragement for beginners by seasoned artists.

*Vision Statement from
First Charles County Arts Summit*

activities for those who reside there. It is easy to envision Charles County as an entertainment magnet for the entire Southern Maryland/Northern Virginia/Washington, DC area.

Charles County also has some sparsely populated and rather isolated areas containing citizens who often feel cut off from the various venues that exist for sports and other activities. To serve these communities, the county provides Senior Centers and Community Centers, where a variety of classes, programs, and activities are made available. Making available the various arts programs and instruction in small group settings and larger community settings will help unify the county and improve the quality of life for those who find it difficult or impossible to get to the higher population centers of the county for such activities.

Several years ago, the State of Maryland was the first state in the country to sponsor a new program called “Arts and Entertainment Districts” (A&E Districts) as a way to stimulate the economy and improve quality of life. An A&E District is defined as,

“A well recognized, labeled, mixed-use area of the city in which a high concentration of arts and cultural facilities serve as the anchor attraction.”¹³

Maryland legislation permits local jurisdictions, municipalities, counties, or a combination, across the state to apply for state designation as an A&E District within their boundaries

and offer tax incentives. The benefits include property tax credits for renovation of certain buildings that create live-work space for artists and/or space for arts and entertainment enterprises, an income tax subtraction modification for income derived from artistic work, and the like. In Maryland, there are currently 17 A&E Districts:

- Station North (*Baltimore City*)
- Highlandtown (*Baltimore City*)
- Bethesda (*Montgomery County*)
- Cambridge (*Dorchester County*)
- City of Salisbury (*Wicomico County*)
- Cumberland (*Allegany County*)
- Downtown Frederick (*Frederick County*)
- Gateway (*Prince George’s County*)
- Hagerstown (*Washington County*)
- Silver Spring (*Montgomery County*)
- Denton (*Caroline County*)
- Berlin (*Worcester County*)
- Wheaton (*Montgomery County*)
- Elkton (*Cecil County*)
- Snow Hill (*Worcester County*)
- Annapolis (*Anne Arundel County*)
- Havre de Grace (*Harford County*)¹⁴

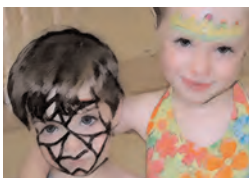
Pursuing designation of an A&E District for Charles County is of high priority for the future, with several locales appropriate for further consideration.



Port Tobacco Courthouse

Heritage: We envision preserving the cultures of our community – past, present and future – utilizing all art forms. This will include an historical village, Charles County historical drama, history of the arts in Charles County, and living history.

*Vision Statement from
First Charles County Arts Summit*



Pat Lally's art booth (above) & face painting (below) at *River Artsfest*



Celebrations' Juneteenth Festival
of the Black Leadership Council for Excellence



¹³ “Maryland Arts and Entertainment Districts Program,” Maryland State Arts Council website.

¹⁴ “Maryland Arts and Entertainment Districts Program,” Maryland State Arts Council website.

To meet the Arts Venues and Facilities strategic goal, the following objectives and actions are recommended (not in priority order):

| OBJECTIVE | RECOMMENDED ACTION (RA) |
|---|---|
| Develop a large, multidisciplinary arts center with the spaces and resources necessary for mentoring the educational and artistic development for performing, visual and literary arts. ¹⁵ | <p>Establish that the use of this center is controlled by the Charles County Government or other nonprofit organization, which will ensure that its primary use is by organizations and members of the Charles County arts community. (RA-26-AVF)</p> <p>Incorporate low rent studio space for artists who, in return, will teach classes in their areas of expertise. (RA-27-AVF)</p> <p>Renovate and restore historic buildings/sites for arts and performance purposes as they become available. (RA-28-AVF)</p> <p>Pursue the development of future Arts and Entertainment District(s) in Charles County. (RA-29-AVF)</p> |

| OBJECTIVE | RECOMMENDED ACTION |
|---|---|
| Bring arts performances to all areas, including underserved areas, of the county. | <p>Acquire a “Showmobile” – a portable stage, light and sound system that can be transported to various venues. (RA-30-AVF)</p> <p>Work closely with community centers to choose arts activities appropriate to the various venues and regular users of those venues. (RA-31-AVF)</p> |

| OBJECTIVE | RECOMMENDED ACTION |
|--|--|
| Develop a professional major arts venue on the Potomac (similar to Wolf Trap) to serve Charles County residents and inspire interest from surrounding areas. | <p>Research possible available locations. (RA-32-AVF)</p> <p>Seek government, corporate, nonprofit and philanthropic support for this venue. (RA-33-AVF)</p> <p>Develop and build the professional major arts venue. (RA-34-AVF)</p> |

Festivals: We envision a festival in Waldorf and creating awareness for existing festivals. This will include having use of the proposed county baseball stadium, offering drama, visual arts, music, dance, readings, and promoting diversity of cultural traditions.



Regency Furniture Stadium and Entertainment Complex, Waldorf
www.somdbluecrabs.com

*Vision Statement from
First Charles County Arts Summit*

¹⁵ A proposal to create a large, multidisciplinary arts center at Smallwood Village shopping center in Waldorf was announced in May 2008. It is currently under consideration between three parties: B.F. Saul Centers, Inc. (owner/developer), the Charles County Government and the Charles County Arts Alliance.



Southern Maryland Concert Band at the Charles County Fair, La Plata



Chapter Five

*Next Steps: Plan of Action and
Implementation Timeline, 2008 – 2020*

Chapter V

NEXT STEPS

PLAN OF ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE 2008-2020

The four Strategic Goals outlined in the previous chapter, together with their associated Objectives and Recommended Actions, comprise the key outcomes from the *Arts Vision 2020* strategic planning effort of the past three years. The arts stakeholders of Charles County have met, have expressed their thoughts, hopes and dreams for the future, have discussed and debated priorities extensively, and this final product is, from our perspective, the best summation and integrated view of our findings and recommendations for the next 12 years. It was designed to be a public policy document and roadmap for the future, to be referred to often, to ensure that Charles County arts development stays on track. It is not a “wish list,” not yet another report to be shelved and forgotten. It is a “call to action” and its purpose is to serve as a strategic handbook, a reference document to guide our planning for a very bright future in the arts in Charles County in the years ahead.

What kind of action and reaction do we envision for this *Arts Vision 2020* final report? What do we, the arts stakeholders in Charles County, expect to do, and when do we expect to do it? What are the next steps, and how shall we proceed in an orderly fashion to consider implementation of the specific recommendations contained therein? And who is ultimately responsible? How do we measure success? These and other questions must be answered, or we run the risk of *Arts Vision 2020* becoming just another visionary document that was never implemented by anyone.

How do we avoid this fate?

We are proposing an overall “plan of action” together with an “implementation timeline” for this report, to ensure its continued viability and sustainability in the years ahead. The recommended elements of the “plan of action” are provided below, and our proposed “implementation timeline” is found at the end of this chapter.

Plan of Action

- **First**, we recommend the broadest possible dissemination of this *Arts Vision 2020* final report in Charles County, to inform and stimulate action by the Charles County arts community, the Charles County Arts Alliance, the Charles County Government, the business community, the educational community and the Charles County citizenry.

- **Second**, we recommend that the Charles County Government designate a single departmental unit with primary responsibility for the arts portfolio, a “go-to” organization with arts policy and arts planning as part of its standing day-to-day portfolio of responsibility. At present, the arts community must interact sporadically and on an ad-hoc basis with nearly every organizational unit of the Charles County Government in its day-to-day operations: Economic Development and Tourism, Planning and Growth Management, Community Services, Public Facilities, Fiscal Services, and the County Commissioners Office. Our own view is that we believe that the arts are a most appropriate fit within the portfolio of the Economic Development and Tourism Department. This mirrors the organizational role and responsibility at the state-level, wherein the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) is a separate agency under the state Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED). Moreover, the key role of the arts in stimulating economic development is clear and undisputed, hence, as a practical matter, the arts and economic development belong together. If past experience is a predictor of the future, the relationship between the

Charles County arts community and the Economic Development and Tourism Department of the Charles County Government is strong, with mutual respect, mutual benefit and a shared outlook on the bright future that lies ahead in Charles County. Within this context, one of the first areas to consider might be the proposed recommendation concerning the creation of a new permanent position devoted to arts development (“Director of Arts Development”), as noted in the previous chapter.

- **Third**, we recommend the formation of an Arts Advisory Council, formed under the joint aegis of the Charles County Government and the Charles County Arts Alliance, to carefully review, assess and implement this *Arts Vision 2020* final report, work closely with arts stakeholders in the county, and advise the County Commissioners on arts opportunities and issues, to ensure the continued forward momentum and development of the arts infrastructure in Charles County in the years ahead.

- **Fourth**, we further recommend that the Charles County Commissioners identify and formally designate one of the Commissioners with lead responsibility for interacting with the arts community and understanding the opportunities and issues thereto. This would assist in development of an expertise and greater insight into the needs and requirements of this community, and communicating this knowledge to the other Commissioners as appropriate.

- **Fifth**, we recommend that the Charles County Government take *Arts Vision 2020*, our “grassroots” strategic plan for the arts, and develop it further by commissioning a “professional” feasibility study for the arts, along the lines of the *Fermata Report*. What the *Fermata Report* did for eco-tourism planning in Charles County is remarkable, and we believe a parallel effort for arts planning would yield equally impressive results.

- **Sixth**, we recommend that the next *Charles County Comprehensive Plan* revision include a new chapter on the arts. The 2006 Update contained several paragraphs (under Economic Development) but this is inadequate, and a much more comprehensive treatment of this subject is required. Either a major discussion of this topic under the Economic Development chapter or, since the arts are a crosscutting enterprise, a separate chapter would be preferable.

- **Seventh**, we recommend that the Charles County Government join efforts with the Charles County Arts Alliance and co-sponsor a *Second Charles County Arts Summit*, with the goal of continuing the expansive dialogue of the past three years, but this time with a partnership formation focus for implementing the goals, objectives and

recommended actions of this final report. This Summit should take place no later than the first half of 2009, to ensure that the *Arts Vision 2020* current momentum continues and is acted upon in a concrete manner. It should include those arts stakeholders that participated in the *First Charles County Arts Summit* (October 2006), but this time would have a much more prominent role played by local government, the business community and the educational community. Such key organizations as the Charles County Chamber of Commerce, Charles County Public Schools, and College of Southern Maryland would play a critical role in ensuring the success of this second summit meeting.

- **Eighth** and finally, we recommend that the Charles County Commissioners be formally briefed on the progress of implementing the *Arts Vision 2020* strategic plan at regular intervals, no less than annually, by appropriate leadership entity(ies) – for example, the Charles County Arts Alliance, the designated County Government Department with the arts portfolio, the Arts Advisory Council – to ensure that this report continues to serve as the strategic roadmap for the continued growth, vitality and successful implementation of key actions in a timely manner for the arts in Charles County.

Arts Centers: We envision a dynamic multi-generational arts center that provides access for all residents and visitors, while illuminating the soul of the region and promoting development and sustainability of local arts and artists. This will include sculpture and traditional art gardens, outdoor/indoor performance space, practice/workshop areas, exhibits and merchandising.

*Vision Statement from
First Charles County Arts Summit*



The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

Implementation Timeline 2008 - 2020

There are a total of 4 Strategic Goals, 14 Objectives and 34 Recommended Actions contained in this *Arts Vision 2020* final report. It is extremely difficult for the members of the arts community to determine the relative priority and timing for implementation of each of the 34 Recommended Actions, especially since the arts community itself is so diverse in nature (music, visual art, drama, dance and literature advocates). Nevertheless, without such an attempt, this report becomes overwhelming and potentially

meaningless – and an implementation process cannot begin. Hence, at some risk, we are attempting to categorize and prioritize our 34 recommendations into three main time-frames for implementation:

- Near-term (within 1-3 years)
- Mid-term (within 4-8 years)
- Long-term (within 9-12 years)

The proposed implementation strategy is based upon the input and feedback from all the arts stakeholders we touched over the nearly three years of our strategic planning effort, from the formation and first planning meetings of the *Arts Vision 2020* Steering Committee, to the several public surveys and feedback loops we led, to the Arts Summit, to the establishment and meetings of the four Action Teams,

to the Writing Team, and to the final debates among the Arts Vision Steering Committee leading to formal approval of this text. While one could quibble with the somewhat arbitrary durations of the three timeframes listed, we believe these timeframes will serve us well in the years ahead as we strive to implement most, if not all, of these recommendations.

The proposed implementation would proceed as follows:

Near-Term Implementation (within 1-3 years)

- Create within the Charles County Government a permanent position for arts and cultural development (“Director of Arts Development”). (RA-1-AD)
- Create a Business and Arts Council to advocate for the arts and to focus on the importance of the economic impact of the arts. (RA-2-AD)
- Develop an Implementation Plan for arts development in Charles County. (RA-3-AD)
- Seek and develop opportunities for increased collaboration among Charles County arts organizations, utilizing the Charles County Arts Alliance and its contacts as a rich resource and partner in that endeavor. (RA-4-AD)
- Create a Charles County edition of a literary journal, similar to the former *Potomac Review*. (RA-5-AD)
- Create a directory of current arts, local history, and cultural organizations and a calendar of their activities to determine where areas of new growth are needed. (RA-6-AD)
- Partner with local non-arts organizations to showcase Charles County history and culture. (RA-7-AD)
- Expand arts offerings beyond the traditional fine arts to include multi-media (radio and television broadcasting, independent films, publishing) and new technologies (digital, internet). (RA-8-AE)
- Develop a network of artists (retirees, senior citizens, etc.) who would serve as mentors, working with students of all ages to demonstrate the particular art in which they have knowledge and experience. (RA-9-AE)
- Work closely with the Charles County Economic Development and Tourism Department and the Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium to ensure Charles County arts, historical, and heritage programs are marketed broadly across the region and state. (RA-17-AP)
- Air a weekly television show that highlights events and public art exhibits. (RA-19-AP)
- Advertise, through local media, schedules of classes and workshops to show the scope and choices available locally. (RA-20-AP)
- Create materials (print and non-print) to improve communication regarding arts opportunities, such as:
 - * A Directory of Charles County Arts Organizations with contact information.
 - * A calendar of arts events which could be distributed by the Charles County Economic Development and Tourism Department and/or local newspapers.
 - * A prominent link on the Charles County Government website to the Charles County Arts Alliance, which maintains an online calendar of arts events and happenings.
 - * A listing of local practitioners who are interested in providing information, education, and inspiration in all arts disciplines and genres. (RA-21-AP)
- *[Develop a large, multidisciplinary arts center with the spaces and resources necessary for mentoring the educational and artistic development for performing, visual and literary arts]* Establish that the use of this center is controlled by the Charles County Government or other nonprofit organization, which will ensure that its primary use is by organizations and members of the Charles County arts community. (RA-26-AVF)
- Pursue the development of future Arts and Entertainment District(s) in Charles County. (RA-29-AVF)
- Acquire a “Showmobile” – a portable stage, light and sound system that can be transported to various venues. (RA-30-AVF)
- Work closely with community centers to choose arts activities appropriate to the various venues and regular users of those venues. (RA-31-AVF)
- *[Develop a professional major arts venue on the Potomac similar to Wolf Trap to serve Charles County residents and inspire interest from surrounding areas]* Research possible available locations. (RA-32-AVF)

Places to Go: We envision several Arts and Entertainment Districts throughout the county that would provide an atmosphere of artistic expression and enjoyment. These will include galleries, museums, artisan market, museums, shops, cafés, and outdoor venues.

*Vision Statement from
First Charles County Arts Summit*



Old Town Alexandria
Galleries, Shops & Cafés

Mid-Term Implementation (within 4-8 years)

- Work with community outreach, transportation, and education organizations to create a cohesive and dynamic arts culture in Charles County. (RA-10-AE)
- Broaden the types of arts classes offered in public and non-public schools. (RA-11-AE)
- Provide opportunities for students in all grades to experience a variety of arts classes each school year. (RA-12-AE)
- Develop incentives for arts educators to participate in continuing education programs. (RA-13-AE)
- Develop courses to provide instruction and information to arts educators on safety-related issues. (RA-14-AE)
- Provide teacher education in curricular integration. (RA-15-AE)
- Encourage creativity in teacher planning and delivery of instruction as well as “buddy planning” and team teaching. (RA-16-AE)
- Create a public access channel for the arts that will allow groups and individuals to produce arts programming. (RA-18-AP)
- Create a Public Art program to showcase art in all areas of Charles County. (RA-22-AP)
- Provide arts gardens as a means of encouraging the professional development of local artists and for the enjoyment of the citizens. (RA-23-AP)
- Include artists in special incentive programs to make living and working in Charles County both attractive and affordable. (RA-24-AP)
- Create a resident artist program in Charles County. (RA-25-AP)
- Incorporate low rent studio space for artists who, in return, will teach classes in their areas of expertise. (RA-27-AVF)
- Renovate and restore historic buildings/sites for arts and performance purposes as they become available. (RA-28-AVF)
- [Develop a professional major arts venue on the Potomac similar to Wolf Trap to serve Charles County residents and inspire interest from surrounding areas] Seek government, corporate, nonprofit and philanthropic support for this venue. (RA-33-AVF)

Long-Term Implementation (within 9-12 years)

- [Develop a professional major arts venue on the Potomac similar to Wolf Trap to serve Charles County residents and inspire interest from surrounding areas] Develop and build the professional major arts venue. (RA-34-AVF)

While this list of 34 Recommended Actions and related Implementation Timeline are indeed quite ambitious and success-oriented, we believe they can be accomplished through focused hard work, commitment and a spirit of

mutual support and cooperation among all the arts stakeholders – interested individuals, nonprofit organizations, the business community, the education community and local government.



Performance of *Singin' in the Rain* at Port Tobacco Players Theater, La Plata



Chapter Six

Conclusion

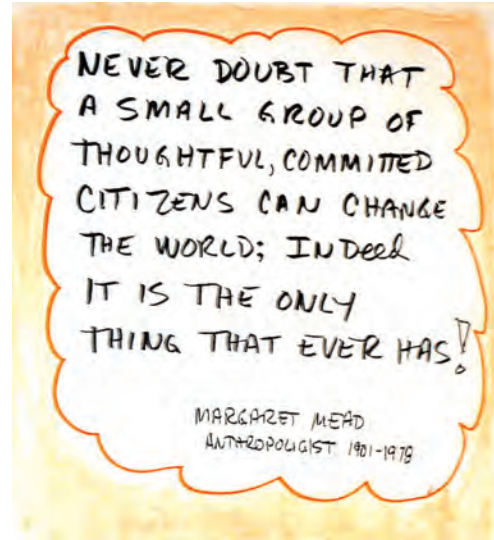
Chapter VI

CONCLUSION

This strategic planning effort, *Arts Vision 2020*, has been extremely ambitious and exhilarating for the arts stakeholders of Charles County, to envision, plan and execute. It is the first such attempt by our diverse cultural community to come together in an organized manner to express and share our hopes, dreams and desires in our respective areas of expertise, as well comprehensively on an integrated basis, for the broader “arts scene” in Charles County. It has been a challenge to reach agreement on the relative priority and timing which should be assigned to each area needing attention and further growth in the years ahead. This final report may not be perfect, but it is clearly our best effort to date. Of course, compromises had to be made – some excellent ideas and elaborations simply did not make it into this final report for a variety of reasons, and ended up “on the cutting room floor.” This is as it should be – this is a consensus-developed summary document describing where we are, and where we want to go, in the arts in Charles County over the next 12 years. We hope you appreciate the time, talent, dedication and sheer grit that went into this community-based strategic planning effort and into this final report, which documents the results of our unique, first-time effort for future reference and posterity. More importantly, we hope you will be inspired, as we were, by what we have learned along the way. Charles County’s arts community is definitely alive, but it is our strongest desire for it to truly thrive, in new and exciting ways, in the years ahead.

From the very beginning, and throughout our *Arts Vision 2020* strategic planning project over the past three years, we have understood, accepted and embraced its “grassroots” nature. In keeping with this approach, we have hung a simple “homegrown” newsprint poster at every meeting, taped to the wall before us, as we discussed and deliberated our perspectives, findings and recommendations. All this poster contained was a simple handwritten quotation – a single sentence – but as we know, words have awesome power. We have been truly inspired and guided for these

past three years by the immortal words of the renowned anthropologist, Dr. Margaret Mead:



It is our greatest aspiration that we, the “small group of thoughtful, committed citizens” of *Arts Vision 2020*, and you, our friends & neighbors, will join us in helping to “change the arts world” of Charles County, Maryland, from what it is today, to what it can be in a mere 12 years. Our shared future in the arts is indeed a whole new world, a fantastic place to be . . . a future where the arts thrive, and where the quality of our cultural life in Charles County is second to none.

Let us all work together in a spirit of cooperation to make *Arts Vision 2020* a reality in the years ahead. Our *Arts Vision 2020* final report is done, and we are ready. So let us now begin the journey of a thousand miles with the first steps today.

Tempus fugit – carpe diem!



Violinist Jennifer Hicks, of the Amore String Quartet, performing at Charles County Arts Alliance Grant Reception



Holiday Music Event at the Spring Dell Center



Acknowledgments

Arts Vision 2020 Participants

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ARTS VISION 2020 PARTICIPANTS

The Charles County Arts Alliance wishes to express its sincere gratitude to our friend, neighbor and fellow arts stakeholder, **Mr. Abbott Martin**, for his vision, leadership and tenacity in spearheading an initial meeting between the arts community and the business community in Charles County during April 2005. This meeting, and other meetings that followed, were instrumental in focusing attention on the important role of the arts in economic development that ultimately became the centerpiece of the *Eighth Charles County Economic Development Summit* held in October 2005. The *First Charles County Arts Summit* held one year later in October 2006, and our *Arts Vision 2020* strategic planning project held since that time, have been the direct outcomes of these initial visionary meetings.

The Charles County Arts Alliance wishes to extend its appreciation to the following individuals and organizations for their active, enthusiastic participation in our *Arts Vision 2020* grassroots effort and for their many contributions that were invaluable in the development and production of this final report, ***Arts Vision 2020: A Strategic Plan for the Arts in Charles County, Maryland.***

Arts Vision 2020 Steering Committee

Carol Charnock - *President, Chesapeake Choral Arts Society*
 Mary Jo Comer - *Chesapeake Choral Arts Society*
 William V. Derr - *Conductor, Southern Maryland Concert Band*
 Peggy Palmer - *President, Chesapeake Bay Floating Theatre*
 Jennifer Pinto - *Board of Directors, Charles County Arts Alliance*
 Diane Rausch - *President, Charles County Arts Alliance*
 Richard Reckeweg - *President, Port Tobacco Players*
 Debbie Stanley - *Administrator, Ballet Arts Academy at the Old Waldorf School*
 Mary Agnes Swann - *President, Mattawoman Creek Art Center*
 Therese Thiedeman - *Administrator, Charles County Arts Alliance*
 Sherwood Shankland - *Facilitator, Shankland and Associates*
 Marsha Back - *Shankland and Associates*

Arts Vision 2020 Writing Team

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Mary Jo Comer, PhD, <i>Editor</i> | Diane Rausch |
| Heather Bartlett | Nicole Stewart |
| Holly Bednar | Therese Thiedeman |
| Amy Blessinger | Ada Van Hecke |
| Sheila Geisert | |

First Charles County Arts Summit Attendees (registrants)

| | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Bonnetta Adeeb | Joe Comer | Alice Imlay | Peggy Palmer |
| Hassan Adeeb | Mary Jo Comer | Conni Leigh James | Jennifer Pinto |
| Mary Adler | Frank Comstock | Cindy Johnson | Dianne Porter |
| Paul Adler | Ray Davey | Jayne Keating | Bob Rausch |
| Marsha Back | Susie Davey | Timothy Keating | Diane Rausch |
| Heather Bartlett | Gene Davies | Marcia Keeth | Richard Reckeweg |
| Holly Bednar | Peter J. DiBona | Nancy Knudsen | Ed Rice |
| Sue Belmore | Stacey Gebler | Ann Maggi | Michael Santana |
| Kelly Boyd | Sheila Geisert | Danny Mayer | Sherwood Shankland |
| Diane Boyd-Davis | Sandra Germann | Pat McConkey | Debbie Stanley |
| Linda Bronsdon | Greg Gillooly | Connie Miller | Nicole Stewart |
| Byx Bullock | Trisha Grizzard | Richard C. Mortimer | Mary Agnes Swann |
| Bonita Bush | Vickie Grow | Elaine Moses | Therese Thiedeman |
| Brenda Bush | Millie Hamman | Lemon Moses | Karen L. Williams |
| Betty Carney | Jennifer Hicks | Peter Murphy | |
| Carol Charnock | Evie Hungerford | John O'Loughlin | |

Arts Vision 2020 Action Teams

Oversight - Sherwood Shankland and Diane Rausch

Arts Development

Takako Mato
Peggy Palmer
Richard Reckeweg
Mary Agnes Swann
Therese Thiedeman

Arts Education

Holly Bednar
Sue Belmore
Bob Boyce
Kelly Boyd
Brenda Bush
Mary Jo Comer
Diane Davis
Stacey Gebler
Jana Heyl
Nekeyshia Holmes
Dennis Murphy
Nancy Sinnes

Arts Programming

Nafissa Adeeb
Carol Charnock
Frank Comstock
Sheila Geisert
Elaine Moses
Nicole Stewart
Ada Van Hecke
Mary Janita Williams

Arts Venues and Facilities

Bonnetta Adeeb
Heather Bartlett
Amy Blessinger
Burkey Boggs
Peter DiBona
Sandra Germann
Will Hardy
Jennifer Pinto
Ed Rice
Karen L. Williams

Observers

The Honorable Peter Murphy, *Maryland House of Delegates*
The Honorable Samuel Graves, *Charles County Commissioner*
The Honorable Gary Hodge, *Charles County Commissioner*
Robin Finnacom



First Charles County Arts Summit, October 2006



Students from J.C. Parks Elementary School performing at River Artsfest, Indian Head



Special Thanks

SPECIAL THANKS

Maryland General Assembly

The Honorable Thomas Mac Middleton, *State Senate*
 The Honorable Roy Dyson, *State Senate*
 The Honorable Sally Jameson, *House of Delegates*
 The Honorable Murray Levy, *House of Delegates*
 The Honorable Peter Murphy, *House of Delegates*
 The Honorable John Wood, *House of Delegates*

Charles County Government

Charles County Board of Commissioners

The Honorable Wayne Cooper, *President*
 The Honorable Edith Patterson, *Vice President*
 The Honorable Reuben Collins II
 The Honorable Samuel Graves
 The Honorable Gary Hodge
 The Honorable Candice Quinn Kelly (*former*)

Commissioners Office

Denise Ferguson, *Clerk to the Commissioners*
 Connie Thompson, *Scheduler*

Community Services Department

Kathy Cooke, *Centers Administrator*
 Kathy Sheldon, *Senior Centers Coordinator*

Economic Development and Tourism Department

John Reardon, *Director (former)*
 Marcia Keeth, *Acting Director*
 Joanne Roland, *Chief of Tourism (former)*
 Donna Dudley, *Chief of Tourism*
 Jeff Nixon, *Chief of Client Services*
 Donna Conlon, *Economic Development Specialist*
 Catherine Carroll, *Tourism Marketing Specialist*
 Sherry Santana, *Special Events (former)*
 Amy Calvin, *Special Events*
 Joyce Maines, *Administrative Assistant III*

Planning and Growth Management Department

Cathy Hardy, *Community Planning Program Mgr*
 Amy Blessinger, *Planner*
 Sheila Geisert, *Planning Technician*
 Mary Grant, *Planner*

Fiscal Services Department

David Eicholtz, *Budget Director*
 Kim Bender, *Fiscal Services Specialist*

College of Southern Maryland

Dr. Bradley Gottfried, *President*
 Dr. Timothy Keating, *Vice President*
 Annie Suttan, *Facilities*

Maryland State Arts Council

Theresa Colvin, *Executive Director*
 Bonita Bush, *Community Arts Development (deceased)*
 Pamela Dunne, *Community Arts Development*
 Angela Lohr, *Arts in Education*

Howard County Arts Council

Coleen West, *Executive Director*

Maryland Citizens for the Arts

Pamela Holt, *Executive Director (former)*
 Philana Quick, *Executive Director*

The Maryland Independent

Angela Breck, *Editor*
 Jay Friess, *Staff Writer*
 Sara Taylor, *Staff Writer*
 Nancy Bromley McConaty, *Reporter*
 Kim Minopoli, *Director of Advertising*
 Gary Smith, *Photographer*

American Community Properties Trust

Americans for the Arts

Charles County Chamber of Commerce

Sally Jameson, *Executive Director (former)*
 Daniel Barufaldi, *Executive Director (former)*

Chaney Enterprises

Corner Studio Artworks

Jennifer Pinto, *Graphic Designer*
 Jane Bush, *Cover Artist*

National Endowment for the Arts

The Washington Post

Southern Maryland Extra



Gallery at Mattawoman Creek Art Center, Smallwood State Park, Marbury



Southern Maryland Decorative Painters painting commemorative miniature carousel horses for the Charles County 350th Anniversary Celebration



Appendix A

Chronology

Appendix A
CHRONOLOGY
ARTS VISION 2020
MEETINGS, PUBLIC INPUT OPPORTUNITIES
AND SURVEYS, 2005-2008

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Purpose</u> |
|------------------------|--|
| <u>CY 2005</u> | |
| April 12, 2005 | Initial meeting between Charles County arts community and business community re: economic impact of the arts |
| October 12, 2005 | Followup meeting of arts organizations: discussed next steps |
| October 25, 2005 | <i>Eighth Charles County Economic Development Summit</i> : Presentation of <i>Public Sector Merit Award</i> to Charles County arts community; acceptance speech delivered by President, Charles County Arts Alliance ¹⁶ |
| November 11, 2005 | Kickoff vision meeting of arts organizations (w/facilitator) |
| December 6, 2005 | Second vision meeting of arts organizations (w/facilitator) |
| <u>CY 2006</u> | |
| April 17, 2006 | <i>Arts Summit</i> kickoff vision meeting by CCAA Board (w/facilitator) |
| May 6, 2006 | <i>Arts Summit</i> Steering Committee: first planning meeting (w/facilitator) |
| May 20, 2006 | <i>Arts Summit</i> Steering Committee: planning meeting (w/facilitator) |
| June 10, 2006 | <i>River Artsfest</i> : first public data-gathering survey effort ¹⁷ |
| June 19, 2006 | <i>Arts Summit</i> Steering Committee: planning meeting (w/facilitator) |
| July 22, 2006 | <i>Arts Summit</i> Steering Committee: planning meeting (w/facilitator) |
| August 4, 2006 | Meeting with College of Southern Maryland (CSM) leadership re: <i>Arts Summit</i> venue |
| August 26, 2006 | <i>Arts Summit</i> Steering Committee: planning meeting (w/facilitator) |
| September 12, 2006 | <i>Arts Summit</i> Steering Committee: planning meeting (w/facilitator) |
| September 15-17, 2006 | <i>Charles County Fair</i> : second public data-gathering effort ¹⁸ |
| September 30, 2006 | <i>Arts Summit</i> Steering Committee: final walk-thru of CSM Center for Business & Industry (<i>Summit</i> venue) |
| October 14, 2006 | Final Steering Committee: final prep meeting before <i>Arts Summit</i> |
| October 21, 2006 | <i>First Charles County Arts Summit</i> held at CSM (w/facilitator) ¹⁹ |
| November 2, 2006 | Steering Committee post- <i>Summit</i> meeting: evaluation/lessons learned/next steps (w/facilitator) |
| <u>CY 2007</u> | |
| January 6, 2007 | <i>Arts Vision 2020</i> Steering Committee meeting (w/facilitator) |
| February 10, 2007 | First meeting of <i>Arts Vision 2020</i> Action Teams (w/facilitator) |
| March 3, 2007 | Second meeting of Action Teams (w/facilitator) |
| April 14, 2007 | Third meeting of Action Teams |
| April - September 2007 | <i>Charles County Arts Survey</i> conducted online and in public ²⁰ |
| May 12, 2007 | Fourth meeting of Action Teams (w/facilitator) |
| June 9, 2007 | <i>River Artsfest</i> : informal public data-gathering conducted |
| June 23, 2007 | Fifth meeting of Action Teams: <i>Arts Vision 2020</i> Writing Team formed |

¹⁶ Speech available upon request.

¹⁷ Survey results available upon request.

¹⁸ Survey results available upon request.

¹⁹ *Arts Summit Summary Report* available upon request.

²⁰ *Charles County Arts Survey* results, Appendix C.

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| June - August 2007 | Writing Team drafting process: <i>Arts Vision 2020</i> initial drafts completed |
| September 15, 2007 | First editorial meeting of <i>Arts Vision 2020</i> Writing Team |
| September 13-16, 2007 | <i>Charles County Fair</i> : third public input data-gathering effort |
| September 25, 2007 | Second editorial meeting of Writing Team |
| September 29, 2007 | Third editorial meeting of Writing Team |
| October 20, 2007 | <i>Arts Vision 2020</i> draft executive summary completed |
| November 2007 | <i>Charles County Arts Facilities Survey</i> conducted online ²¹ |

CY 2008

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| January 2008 | Remaining <i>Arts Vision 2020</i> draft chapters completed |
| January 26, 2008 | Charles County Arts Alliance President/Administrator meeting with <i>Arts Vision 2020</i> Editor |
| February 23, 2008 | Final editorial meeting of <i>Arts Vision 2020</i> Writing Team |
| March - June 2008 | Final revisions/text-editing of <i>Arts Vision 2020</i> consolidated final report |
| June 14, 2008 | Final meeting/approval of <i>Arts Vision 2020</i> final report text by Steering Committee |
| June 30, 2008 | Final graphic design/layout and printing of <i>Arts Vision 2020</i> final report |
| July 19, 2008 | Final meeting/celebration by <i>Arts Vision 2020</i> Action Teams; advance copy distribution of printed <i>Arts Vision 2020</i> final report |
| July 29, 2008 | Formal presentation of printed <i>Arts Vision 2020</i> final report to Charles County Government and citizens of Charles County |



Wenger Showmobile® Mobile Stage

Performance Venues: We envision public access to multiple performing arts venues that are both fixed and mobile on land and water; visual arts would also have access to these facilities. These will include a portable band shell, barge-based floating theater, tiered amphitheater with electricity and storage, and an art-mobile similar to a library bookmobile.

*Vision Statement from
First Charles County Arts Summit*

²¹ *Charles County Arts Survey* results, Appendix C.



Variety Show for the Charles County Special Olympics



Appendix B

*Current Inventory:
Nonprofit Arts and Heritage Organizations,
and Related Festivals in Charles County*

Appendix B

CURRENT INVENTORY

NONPROFIT ARTS AND HERITAGE ORGANIZATIONS AND RELATED FESTIVALS IN CHARLES COUNTY

Multidisciplinary Arts/Heritage

- African American Heritage Society of Charles County
- Black Leadership Council for Excellence, Celebrations
 - * Asian and Pacific Islander Festival
 - * Festival de las Americas – Latin and Caribbean Culture
 - * Juneteenth Festival – African American, Caribbean and African Cultures
- Center for Children
 - * First Night Charles County
(*in planning for 2008*)
- Charles County Arts Alliance
 - * River Artsfest
 - * Special Events
- Charles County Fair
 - * P.D. Brown Fine Arts Building
 - * Musical Performances
- Charles County Heritage Commission
- Charles County Historical Society
- Charles County Museum Consortium
- Charles County 350th Anniversary Committee
- Charles County Visitors Bureau
- Fine Arts Center, College of Southern Maryland
 - * Chautauqua Series
- Korean American Association of Southern Maryland
- Maryland Indian Heritage Society
 - * Pow-Wow
- Regency Furniture Stadium and Entertainment Complex

Music

- Chesapeake Choral Arts Society
- Christ Church Concerts
- Fine Arts Center, College of Southern Maryland
 - * Concert Choir
 - * Chamber Singers
 - * Jazz Festival
 - * Latin Ensemble
 - * Salsa Festival
 - * Solid Brass
 - * Twilight Performance Series
- Grace Brethren Church
 - * Grace Ole Opry
- Music Teachers Association of Charles County
- Habitat for Humanity
 - * Concert Series
- Indian Head Center for the Arts
 - * Folk Fusion Festival (*in planning for 2008*)
- Port Tobacco Players
 - * Charles County Youth Orchestra
 - * Encore Strings

- Southern Maryland Concert Band
 - * Southern Maryland Swing Band
- Southern Mix Barbershop Chorus
- Saltnote Stageworks
 - * Stageworks Music Festival
- Town of La Plata
 - * Summer Concert Series

Visual Art

- Charles County Antique Arts Association
- Charles County Arts Alliance
 - * Civista Medical Center Gallery
(with Mattawoman Creek Art Center)
 - * Charles County Commissioners Gallery
 - * Richard Clark Senior Center Gallery
 - * United Way of Charles County Gallery
 - * Regional Visual Artist Workshops
- Charles County Chamber of Commerce
 - * Festival of Scarecrows
- College of Southern Maryland
 - * Tony Hungerford Memorial Gallery
- Mattawoman Creek Art Center
 - * Art in the Park
 - * Monthly Gallery Exhibits
- Richard Clark Senior Center
 - * Senior Citizen Art Competition and Exhibition
- Southern Maryland Carousel Group
- Southern Maryland Decorative Painters
- Southern Maryland Woodcarvers

Drama

- Chesapeake Bay Floating Theatre (Black Box Theatre, Indian Head Center for the Arts)
 - * Stage Training Apprentice Mentor Program
- College of Southern Maryland Fine Arts Center
- Port Tobacco Players
 - * Encore Kids
 - * Adult Encore

Dance

- Ballet Arts Academy at the Old Waldorf School
- Charles County Dance Ensemble

Literature

- Charles County Public Library
 - * One Maryland, One Book
- College of Southern Maryland
 - * The Big Read
 - * *Connections* Literary Magazine



Artist Sandra German painting carousel animal, *Neptune, the Sea Dragon*, for the Southern Maryland Carousel Group



Open studio at the Corner Studio, La Plata



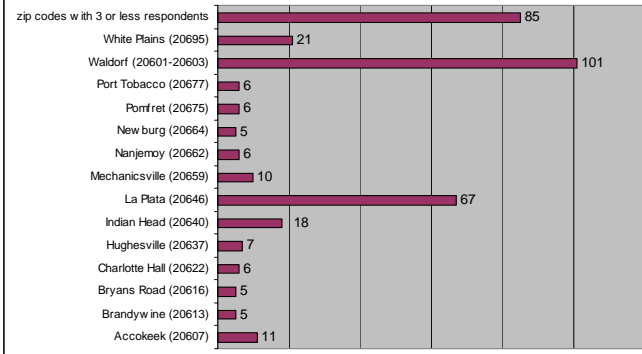
Appendix C

Charles County Arts Survey Results

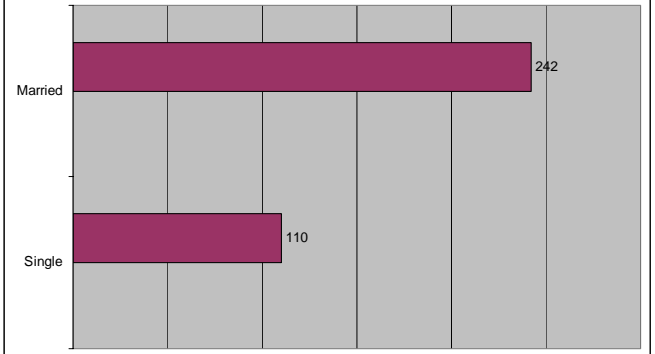
Appendix C

CHARLES COUNTY ARTS SURVEY, 2007 RESULTS

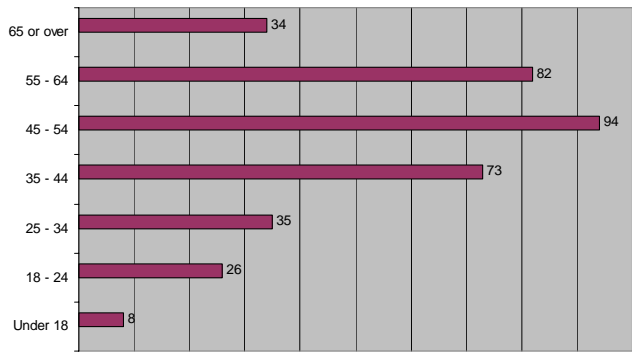
Q1. Zip Code of Current Residence:



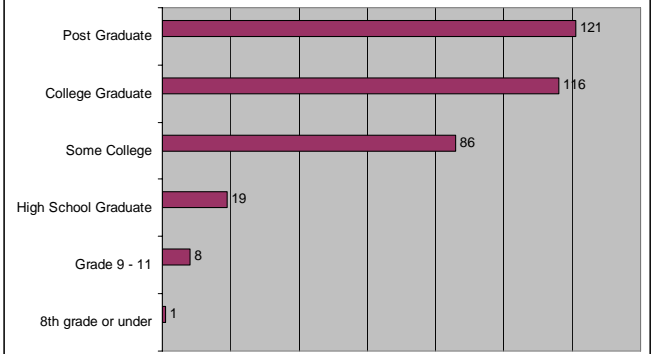
Q2. Marital Status:



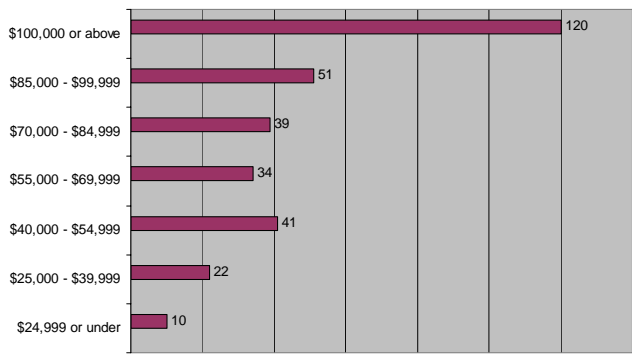
Q3. Age:



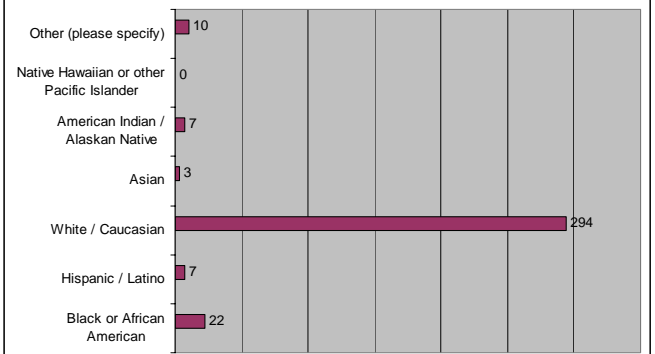
Q4. What is your last completed grade in school?



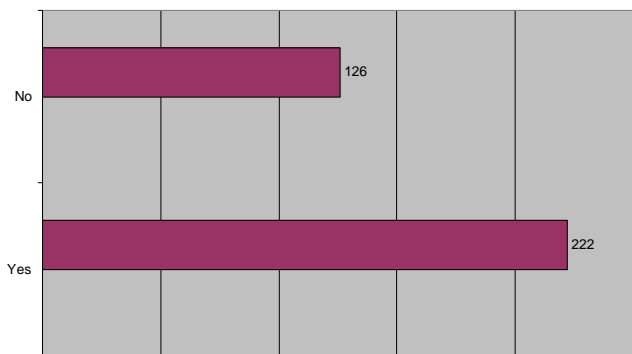
Q5. Average Household Income:



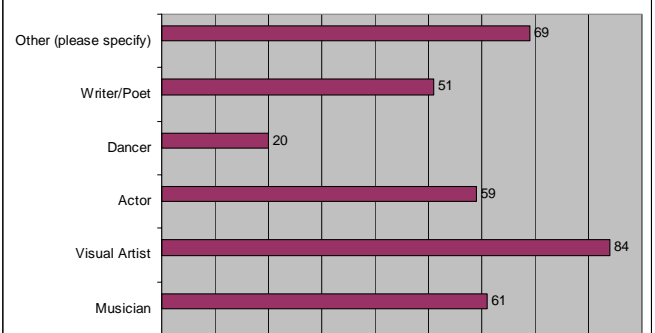
Q6. Ethnicity:

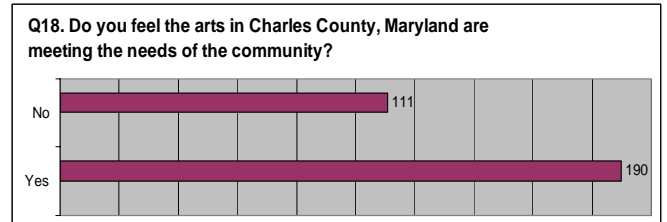
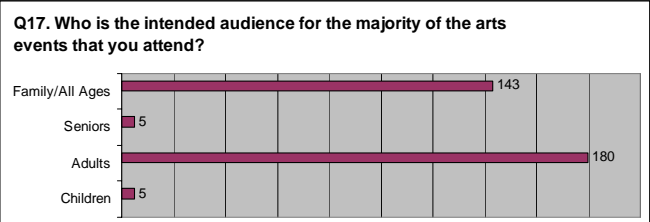
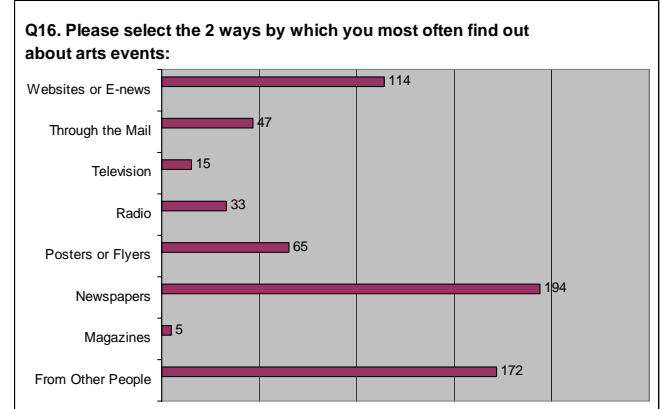
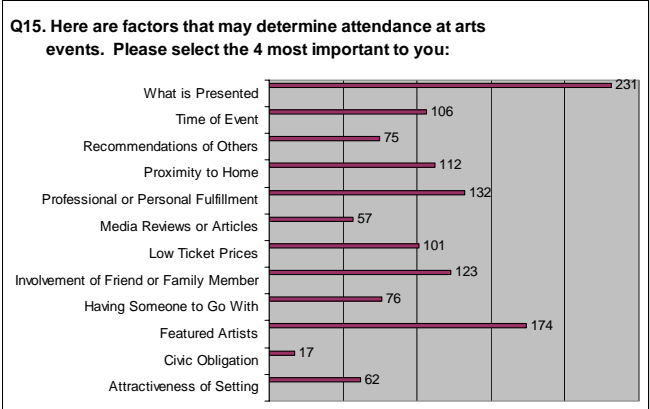
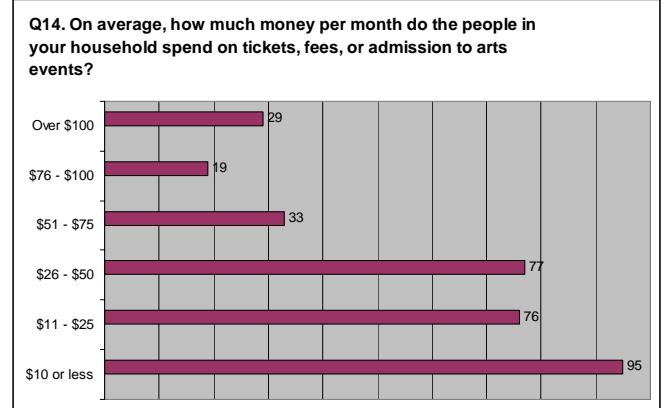
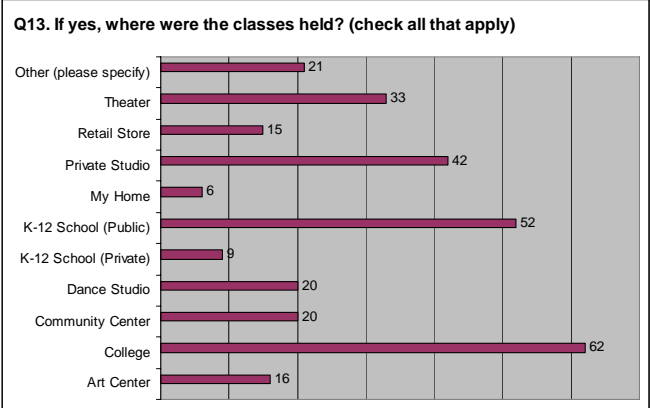
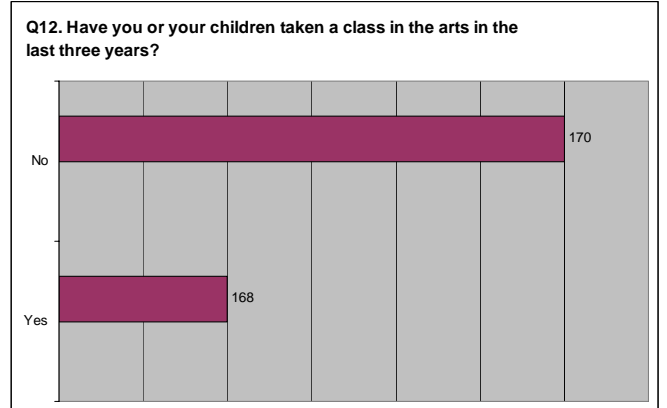
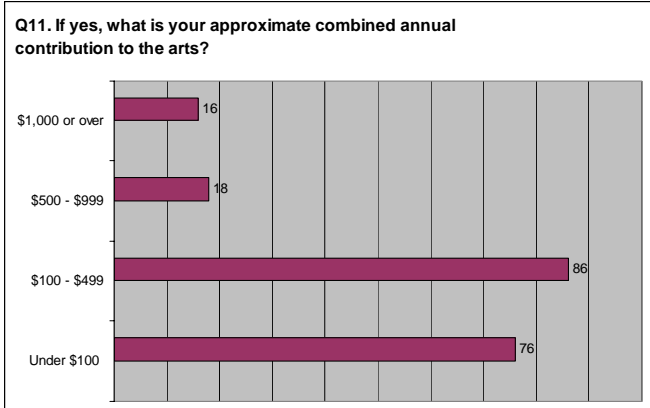
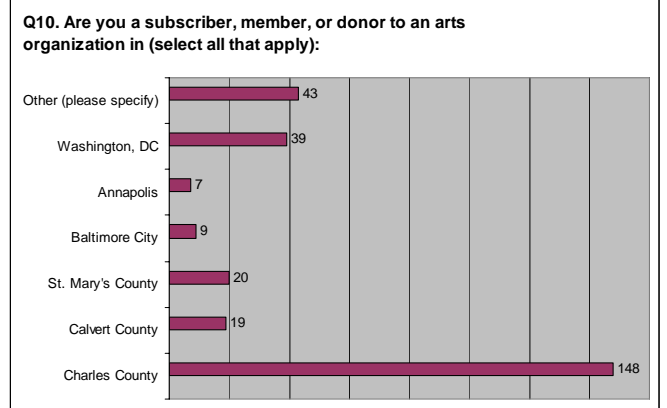
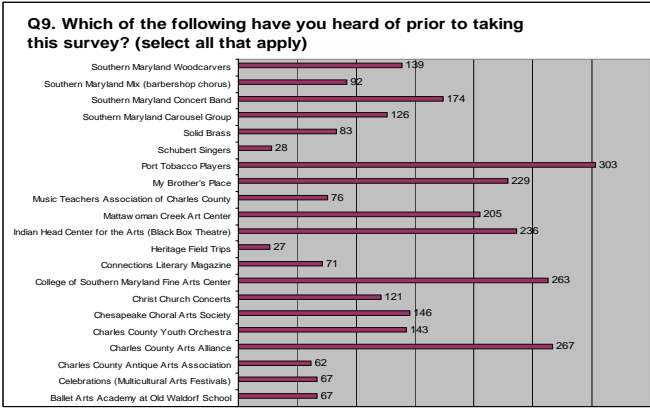


Q7. Are you an artist or do you participate in arts productions?



Q8. If yes, please select your area(s) of arts participation (select all that apply):







Puppet show at Charles County Public Library



Appendix D

Further Reading

Appendix D

FURTHER READING

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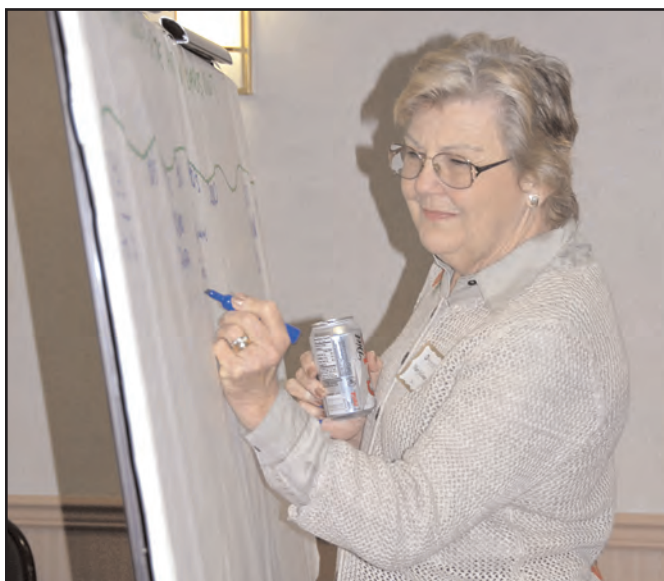


Anvil Man by Martin Ziner at
Mattawoman Creek Art Center, Marbury

Public Art: We envision that Charles County will be renowned for its infusion of art in all private and public spaces. In 2020, Charles County will celebrate its history, culture and creativity through permanent art dispersed liberally throughout the county. This will include artistic road signs and sculpture, permanent outdoor art/sculpture gardens, public art, statues, murals and fountains.

*Vision Statement from
First Charles County Arts Summit*

First Charles County Arts Summit, October 2006



"The work we are now doing is . . . done for posterity, in such a way that they need not repeat it. Those that come after us will extend the ramifications as they become acquainted with them, and fill up the canvas we begin."

- Thomas Jefferson, 1804



The Charles County Arts Alliance is funded by a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council, an agency dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive. An agency of the Department of Business & Economic Development, the MSAC provides financial support and technical assistance to non profit organizations, units of government, colleges and universities for arts activities.

Funding for the Maryland State Arts Council is also provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, which believes that a great nation deserves great art.

Arts Vision 2020 activities were sponsored by the Charles County Arts Alliance, in cooperation with the Maryland State Arts Council, College of Southern Maryland and Charles County Government.

