



# A General Plan for Nashville & Davidson County

Adopted June 22, 2015

## Volume II: Elements



# Arts, Culture & Creativity

  
Certified per TCA 13-4-202 as a part of the Nashville-Davidson County General Plan adopted by the Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County Planning Commission and including all amendments to this part as of June 22, 2015.

  
Executive Secretary

  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION OF NASHVILLE-DAVIDSON COUNTY  
A GREAT CITY DEPARTMENT

**METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION  
OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

**Resolution No. RS2015-256**

**"BE IT RESOLVED by The Metropolitan Planning Commission that NashvilleNext is approved in accordance with the staff report and recommendations in the staff report with the following amendments: 2; 3; 4; 5; 14; 15; 16; 18; 20; 22a; 22c; 23; 24; 25; 31; 32; and the deferral of 11 areas identified in the Whites Creek area until the August 13, 2015 Planning Commission meeting with the Public Hearing closed. (9-0)"**

Resolution No. RS2015-256

WHEREAS, Section 13-4-203 of the Tennessee Code, Annotated, authorizes a General Plan "with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the municipality which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and the general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development, and identify areas where there are inadequate or nonexistent publicly or privately owned and maintained services and facilities when the planning commission has determined the services are necessary in order for development to occur;" and

WHEREAS, Chapter 5, section 11.504 (c) of the Metro Nashville Charter gives the Metro Planning Commission the power to "Make, amend and add to the master or general plan for the physical development of the entire metropolitan government area;" and

WHEREAS, Section 18.02 of the Charter of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requires that zoning regulations be enacted by the Council "only on the basis of a comprehensive plan prepared by the Metropolitan Planning Commission;" and

WHEREAS, the last General Plan, *Concept 2010, A General Plan for Nashville/Davidson County* was adopted in 1992; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Karl Dean, seeing fit to update the General Plan, announced on May 22, 2012 that the General Plan would be updated, assigning the task to the Metro Planning Department; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of the *NashvilleNext* Steering Committee and the Community Engagement Committee, the staff of the Metropolitan Planning Commission worked with stakeholders in Nashville/Davidson County, holding over 420 public meetings and events and soliciting input through online forums, engaging over 18,500 participants in providing public input to update the General Plan;

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Planning Commission, empowered under state statute and the Charter of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County to adopt master or general plans for smaller areas of the county, finds that the process followed to develop the *NashvilleNext* General Plan included diverse, widespread, and meaningful community participation and substantial research and analysis and therefore finds that replacing the *Concept 2010* General Plan with the *NashvilleNext* General Plan is warranted; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Planning Commission hereby ADOPTS *NashvilleNext, A General Plan for Nashville/Davidson County* in accordance with sections 11.504 (e), (j), and 18.02 of the charter of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville, and Davidson County as the basis for the Commission's development decisions in the county.

  
James McLean, Chairman

Adoption Date: June 22, 2015

Attest:

  
J. Douglas Sloan, III, Secretary and Executive Director

# PARTS OF THE PLAN

Each part of the plan has a role to play. Some parts are broad and visionary, while others are specific and detailed. This section helps users of the plan understand how the parts fit together and support one another. No part of the plan is intended to stand alone; each can be understood only as working together with the rest of the plan.

## I Vision, Trends & Strategy

Volume I presents the role and powers of the plan, key trends and issues that the plan addresses, a summary of the plan’s strategy and approach to the future, and implementation goals and policies.

## II Elements

- » Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure
- » Arts, Culture & Creativity
- » Economic & Workforce Development
- » Education & Youth
- » Health, Livability & the Built Environment
- » Housing
- » Natural Resources & Hazard Adaptation

## III Communities

Nashville’s Community Plans provide history and context for Nashville’s 14 Community Planning Areas, along with community-specific issues, strategies, and sketches of how different places in the community could change over time. Detailed Community Character Maps link the broad, countywide Growth Concept Map to character policies that guide zoning and development decisions.

### *Community Character Manual*

The Community Character Manual provides detailed explanations of the character policies used in the Community Character Maps.

## IV Actions

Specific tasks for Metro departments and partners to undertake, within a recommended timeframe.

## V Access Nashville 2040

Volume V is the overarching vision of how transportation works under NashvilleNext.

## Volume II

### Arts, Culture & Creativity

#### Contents

<i>Arts and culture as an economic driver</i> .....	73
<i>Arts, culture, creativity, and quality of life</i> .....	74
Key ideas shaping this chapter .....	78
<i>Arts access for all</i> .....	78
<i>Healthy and thriving creative workforce</i> .....	79
<i>Lifelong arts education</i> .....	80
<i>Vibrant cultural neighborhoods and districts</i> .....	82
<i>Relationship to other Elements</i> .....	85
Goals and policies .....	86
Related plans .....	86



# ARTS, CULTURE & CREATIVITY

Arts, culture, and creativity reflect a city’s spirit and values—they are its pulse. Since its founding, arts and cultural participation have been central to Nashville’s history and economy livelihood. Even Nashville’s nickname, “Music City,” is said to originate from a compliment handed to the Fisk Jubilee Singers by Queen Victoria during the gospel troupe’s 1873 European tour. Music and its writing, production, and distribution have been an anchor of the city brand and economy for decades. Music’s infrastructure created an informal culture of sharing and collaboration between creative people. This culture generates social capital, new ideas, and community identity. The music industry has served as a magnet attracting visual artists, actors, fashion designers, print makers, and coders to this “Athens of the South.”

Art and culture in Nashville are created and consumed in an abundant ecosystem composed of artists, more than 100 cultural nonprofits, and businesses like record shops, clubs, and galleries. The Nashville Children’s Theatre is the oldest professional children’s youth theater in the country,<sup>1</sup> the Chinese Arts Alliance works to educate citizens on Chinese cultural traditions like dance and song, while the Nashville Jazz Workshop educates professionals and amateurs in jazz vocals and performance. Nashville has a Grammy award-winning symphony, and the Belcourt is one of the most respected independent movie theaters in the country.

Alongside a vast network of cultural providers, Nashville boasts some of the most innovative technology businesses. SongSpace and Artiphon are two startups inventing the next generation of instruments and music production, while companies like Emma, one of the largest email marketing companies in the country, started and stayed in Nashville. In this creative soup are hundreds of informal groups who coordinate open mic poetry readings and neighborhood festivals and

<sup>1</sup> [Nashvillechildrenstheatre.org](http://Nashvillechildrenstheatre.org)



Figure 2-4: Fisk Jubilee Singers, circa 1870



Figure 2-5: Nashville Children's Theatre



Figure 2-6: Ryman Auditorium



**Figure 2-7: Arts ecosystem**

**Figure EWD-8: Arts Vibrancy Index**

Among cities with populations of 1 million or more, the five most vibrant arts communities are as follows:

1. Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV
2. **Nashville-Davidson-Murfreesboro-Franklin, TN**
3. New York-Jersey City-White Plains, NY-NJ
4. Boston, MA
5. San Francisco-Redwood City-South San Francisco, CA

Source: National Center for Arts Research, Arts Vibrancy Index report, 2014

gatherings that celebrate heritage and community like CultureFest: a Celebration of the African Diaspora or the Tomato Art Festival. These groups gather and host events in neighborhood and regional parks, bringing people together from all walks of life. Nashville’s diverse creative ecosystem is one of the many reasons it has become a cultural “It City” and international tourist destination.

This combination of cultural production and culture-based tourism employs more than 28 percent of the workforce and reflects incalculable brand value. The National Center for Arts Research recently cited Nashville as the second most vibrant creative city in the U.S.—beating out Los Angeles and New York.<sup>2</sup> Arts and culture are Nashville’s unique competitive edge in both economy and quality of life. Like all cities, Nashville faces critical challenges that must be addressed through collaboration and public policy to ensure that this dynamism continues to ground our city and reflect its cultural and demographic changes over the next 25 years.

<sup>2</sup> NCAR Arts Vibrancy Index Report, Meadows School of the Arts and Cox School of Business at Southern Methodist University, 2014.

## Arts and culture as an economic driver

The development, design, and production of for-profit music and nonprofit cultural activities account for \$13 billion in economic activity each year, or 12 percent of Nashville’s overall economy. This makes it the region’s second largest economic base, led only by health care and ahead of advanced manufacturing. Nashville is behind only New York and Los Angeles in the concentration of our economy devoted to creative industry, and far exceeds any other cities in the relative concentration of people working in music.

Music anchors a more diverse network of creative industries including artisanal food, craft spirits and beer, fashion, film, and transmedia that are growing the Music City brand and emerging as viable industries and sources of jobs in this traditional “music town.”

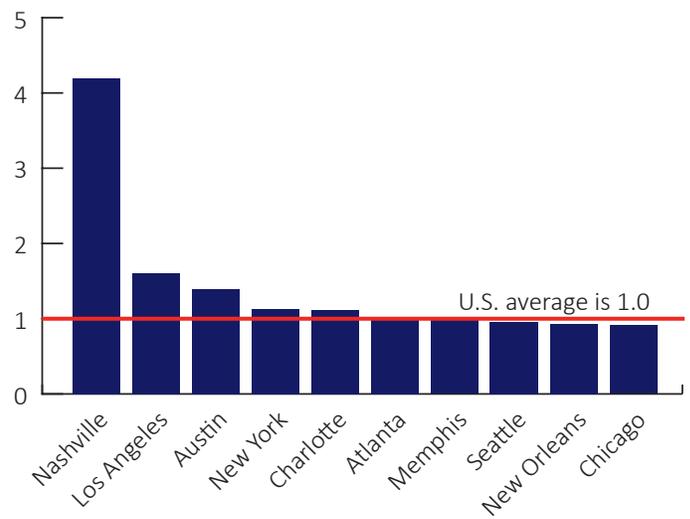
Nashville’s tourism and hospitality industry is driven by cultural destinations like the Frist Center for the Visual Arts and the Grand Ole Opry, historic destinations like The Hermitage and sites significant to the civil rights Movement, and districts like 5th Avenue of the Arts. Cultural tourism alone generates over \$6 billion annually and 4,500 jobs. More and more people are traveling to Nashville for the music, but staying for the full cultural experience.

Nashville has the opportunity with natural population growth and regional expansion to cultivate a revival in urban artisan manufacturing, technology, and media arts as companion industries to music. The city established the Music City Music Council (MC2) in 2009 and the Film, Television and Transmedia Council in 2013, to support and advise these growing areas of the economy. Similar trade associations have grown out of the technology and fashion industries. Overall cultivation of workforce development, production infrastructure, targeted policies, and investments and coordination with area universities and private industries will grow and deepen our existing

**The development, design, and production of for-profit music and nonprofit cultural activities account for \$13 billion in economy activity each year, or 12% of Nashville’s overall economy.**

### Figure EWD-9: Music industry location quotient

Location quotient is a measure of how many jobs there are in a place compared with the U.S. overall. A value over 1 means more jobs in the music industry are located in the city; a value less than 1 means fewer jobs are located in the city compared with the U.S.



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

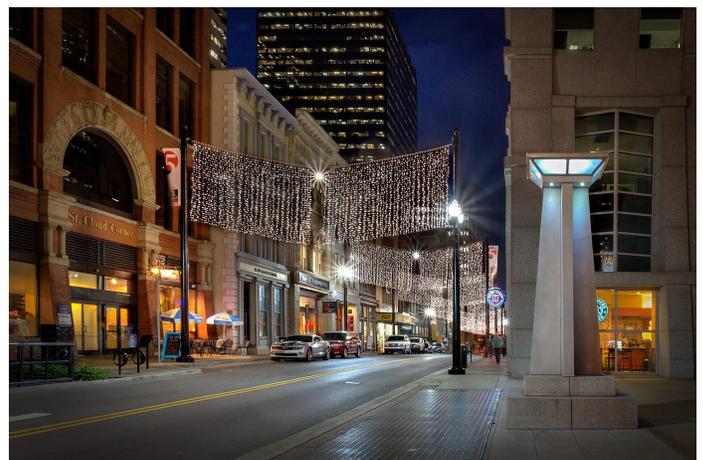


Figure 2-10: Fifth Avenue in Downtown Nashville, also known as the Avenue of the Arts



**Figure 2-11: Revelers at the Tomato Arts Festival in East Nashville**



**Figure 2-12: Gateway to Heritage Plaza on Jefferson Street in North Nashville**

cultural economy. If Nashville remains on this trajectory, it will bring a wide array of “creative class” professionals, who place high value on “place amenities” such as arts and culture opportunities, in addition to high wages and skills. Nashville’s creative economic power then runs a parallel path with our quality of life.

### **Arts, culture, creativity, and quality of life**

Quality of life means how individuals feel safe, healthy, and connected in their community. Arts and culture are vital to quality of life in their ability to connect individuals to a place and to facilitate exploration of differences and ideas between people through creative practice.

Creative placemaking seeks to connect places and communities through arts, culture, and creative activation. Nashville has a strong tradition of formal and informal placemaking driven by residents and artists that knit together a sense of pride and belonging in neighborhoods. From the Shakespeare Festival in Centennial Park to 4<sup>th</sup> of July on Whitland Avenue, to the Flatrock Heritage Festival, or the Red Caboose Concert Series—parks, community centers, home studios, schools, and neighborhoods provide a canvas for concerts, performances, art-making, and festivals that create meaning and identity and help us feel connected.

Growth puts pressure on landmarks, parks, public spaces, dive bars, gathering places, and cultural traditions that many communities have developed over time. Rapid gentrification in neighborhoods like Music Row, Inglewood, and Wedgewood-Houston demonstrate that Nashville must achieve a balance between growth and “placekeeping” and “placemaking” to ensure vibrant cultural communities for the future. A balance must be established between preparing for growth while maintaining the attributes that make our communities unique.

In addition to framing a sense of place, arts and cultural participation provide a means for individuals from different racial and socioeconomic backgrounds to explore issues and collaborate through creative participation. In recent years, Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) has added mariachi and world percussion to its music course offerings. Several public high schools have specialized curricula through The Academies of Nashville that help students identify and prepare for future careers in a number of creative fields. Religious organizations, from Salama Urban Ministries to Rejoice School of Ballet, to the Center for Refugees and Immigrants of Tennessee, have integrated art/dance practice into traditional community programs. Nashville must continue to cultivate, support, and celebrate a wide network of artists and cultural providers so that our arts, our music, and our identity reflect a “Nashville for All of Us.”



**Figure 2-13: The Nashville City Cemetery is one of the historic assets of Nashville that attracts tourists and locals alike. Many prominent Nashvillians are buried here. The cemetery is located near the Wedgewood-Houston Neighborhood.**



**Figure 2-14: Mayor Karl Dean, Nashville for All of Us and the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, mark the fifth anniversary of the victory against English Only with a celebration at Casa Azafrán January 22, 2014, in Nashville, Tenn.**

*Source: Dipti Vaidya, Metro Photography Services*

## NashvilleNext Community Conversations – Culture and Placemaking



Table from the Culture & Placemaking Community Conversation

On July 10, over 70 Nashvillians gathered to discuss the diverse cultural qualities of the county, and how to enhance them through cultural placemaking. Participants were given the task of identifying where cultural activities occur, and how these activities could be enhanced.

The following options were provided:

1. Improved access and participation
2. Build, attract, and retain artistic talent
3. Creative placemaking to spur economic development.

Increasing access and participation was the most mentioned method of enhancement, for all types of activities, whether in rural, suburban or urban areas. Transit was noted as the most appropriate way to achieve greater access.

### Comments tagged by type of place

Type of Place	Number of Mentions
General Comment	44
Rural	68
Suburban	147
Urban	175

### Comments tagged by enhancement strategy

Engagement Strategies	Number of Mentions
No solution identified	182
Improve access and participation	117
Attract and retain creative talent	37
Creative placemaking to spur economic development	43
All of the above	37
Other	12



Figure 2-15: Tourists and locals alike enjoy a weekend on Broadway.



Figure 2-16: Horseback riding (above) and Square dancing in Bells Bend.

## Radio and Music City

Radio has been a major factor in the growth and development of Nashville over the past 95 years. Using the music industry—one of the building blocks of our city—as an example, radio can be credited with reinforcing Nashville’s identity as Music City in the modern era. The role music would play in Nashville’s business community began with the Union Gospel Tabernacle (later known as the Ryman Auditorium), the large hymnal publishing industry, and the world tour of the Fisk Jubilee Singers; and grew with the record labels (Dot Records and Randy Wood; RCA and Steve Sholes and Chet Atkins; Starday Records), recording studios (Harold and Owen Bradley), and publishing companies (Tree and Buddy Killen; Acuff-Rose and others), becoming major players in Nashville’s economy. With the introduction of radio broadcasting in Nashville in the early 1920s, the connection between Nashville and the music industry grew even tighter.

By 1922, radio stations were being established all over the country, by newspapers, churches, city governments, educational institutions, and even commercial businesses. WSM, owned and operated by the National Life and Accident Insurance Company, was established in 1925 to make rural listeners more receptive to the company’s door-to-door insurance salesmen. Other radio stations were formed in this time – WTNT by “**The Nashville Tennessean**,” WCBQ, by Nashville’s First Baptist Church; and WBAW, owned by **B**raid Electric and **W**aldrum Drugs. The most significant and longest running station other than WSM, is WLAC, which was owned and operated by **L**ife and **C**asualty Insurance (launched in 1926).<sup>3</sup>

Regardless of their ownership, each radio station played a very important role in the Nashville community, and worked hard to serve their community. Thousands of people listened to dramatic programs, sermons, music, and news of what was happening next door or across the country, from their living rooms. WSM brought country music to the masses with its Saturday night program “WSM Barn Dance,” more commonly known as the “Grand Ole Opry,” in 1925. WLAC in Nashville was one of the first 50,000 watt radio stations to play music by black artists, in the 1940s. At night, it could be heard as far away as Canada, and helped change the musical tastes of American youth in the 50’s.<sup>4</sup> In Nashville today, there are a number of radio stations that air programming by and for minority populations on both AM and FM.

As pointed out above, radio has had a significant impact on the music industry. While the record labels, publishing companies, songwriters, and singers were indispensable parts of what led to Nashville’s leadership role in the music industry, none of it would have been possible without the radio stations that played the records recorded here. Listening to those records on their favorite radio station was what led to record sales, concert attendance and fame for those singers and songwriters. Without radio, Music City would never have grown to its current status.

Nashville/Davidson County currently has over 30 radio stations offering a variety of programming to serve the needs of our diverse population. More than 90 percent of adults in Nashville listen to at least one or more of the stations at least ten hours every week, so radio continues to be of paramount importance to our community. Despite the growth of the Internet, iTunes, MP3 players and satellite radio, local hometown radio stations will always be inextricably tied to our city, its residents and its growth, providing a way to connect to and share culture.

---

<sup>3</sup> *The bolded letters indicate the origin of a station’s call letters. WSM stands for the National Life and Accident Insurance Company’s motto: “We Shield Millions.” WCBQ stands for “We Can’t Be Quiet.”*

<sup>4</sup> *<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/african-americans-many-rivers-to-cross/partner-content/npt-nashville/>*

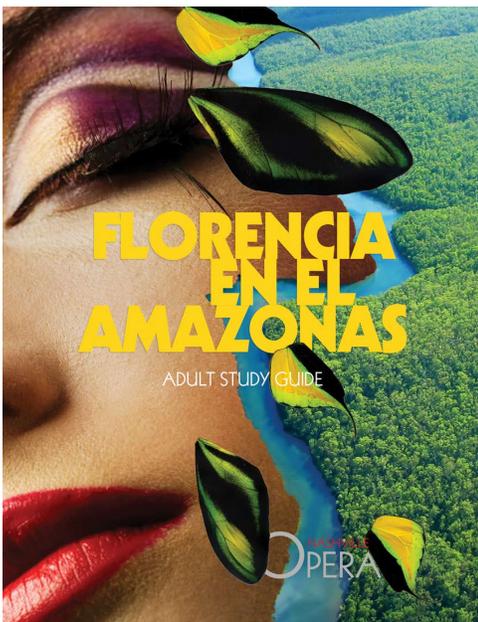
**In order to continue to drive our economy and quality of life, we must ensure that everyone in our community has equal access to cultural life and experiences.**

## **Key ideas shaping this chapter**

### **Arts access for all**

Nashville is in flux—our population is growing and diversifying rapidly. To continue to drive our economy and quality of life, we must ensure that everyone in our community has equal access to cultural life and experiences. Nashville currently invests approximately \$4.12 per capita in public cultural investments, and that rate has remained flat over the last decade, while the population has grown more than 5.1 percent. Peer cities like Austin, Charlotte, and Portland spend more than double what Music City does on cultural grants, festivals, and public art. Younger audiences are demanding new ways to participate in culture. Mobile cultural programming, pop-up and temporary exhibits, and creative experiences fit into a multimodal life and are all diversifying how Nashvillians experience culture.

Our lead cultural organizations have increased their programs and their offerings to incorporate these new content platforms and the diversity of our community. Grassroots cultural groups like the Princely Players, Poverty in the Arts, and the Global Education Center celebrate the arts and practices of ethnic and low-income communities. Fueled by a grant from Metro, the Nashville Opera, Casa Azafrán, the Vanderbilt Center for Latin American Studies, and the Arts Company launched a partnership to engage Hispanic audiences in the Opera's premiere of "Flores en el Amazonas." Together, the partners facilitated a visual art show with more than 20 emerging Latino painters, conducted bilingual teacher education, and offered free public screenings and programs of the Spanish language opera. The Economic Club of Nashville (ECON) initiated the Cultural Access Project (CAP) in 2014 to assist community partners in providing low income families with tickets and funding to remove other barriers to participation such as transportation, parking, and lack of refreshments at venues like the Tennessee Performing Arts Center (TPAC) and Cheekwood. The Parks Department and Nashville Public Library offer a wide variety of bilingual and cultural arts programs, and Metro Arts awards Arts Access grants each year to support engagement of youth, seniors, and people with disabilities in the arts. Metro Planning, Metro Historical Commission, and nonprofits like the Nashville Civic Design Center explore ways to maintain the character of the built environment, to ensure there are places that support the needs of the community in all aspects of life.



**Figure 2-17: Cover for the study guide to "Flores en el Amazonas," the Spanish language opera performed in January, 2015.**



**Figure 2-18: Ryman Lofts on Rolling Mill Hill, affordable housing for artists**



**Figure 2-19: Front door of Fort Houston, a resource for makers located in the Wedgwood-Houston Neighborhood**

Nashville is ready to connect the dots and drive innovation that increases cultural participation and equity. However, scaling programs, adding new offerings, and reaching emerging audiences requires Nashville to increase public and private funding for the arts and commit to training, coordination, and a new cultural infrastructure that allows all Nashvillians to thrive through the arts.

### Healthy and thriving creative workforce

In order for cities to compete in the 21st century, a concerted effort must be employed to increase a region’s capacity for talent, tolerance, and technology.<sup>5</sup> Long range research by the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP) indicates that key factors influencing success and satisfaction among artists and creative workers include access to professional training, manageable cost of living and artistic production, and connectivity to the larger cultural community.<sup>6</sup> Nashville’s universities have responded to the demand for professional exploration by expanding both undergraduate and master’s level programs such as Lipscomb’s new Master of Fine Arts in Film and Creative Media degree. However, the region claims only a handful of MFA offerings despite its large concentration of creative workers and universities. The private sector has responded with peer-to-peer professional development through the Nashville Creative Group and Make Nashville, among others. Partnerships with universities outside of Middle Tennessee help fill the void in the building arts and community planning and contribute free tools such as the artist registry on NowPlayingNashville.com and Periscope, a collaboration between the Arts & Business Council of Greater Nashville

<sup>5</sup> Author Richard Florida refers to the “three T’s,” Talent, Technology, and Tolerance as the cornerstones of the Creative Class and their contributions to economic development in his book, *The Rise of the Creative Class, and other research*.

<sup>6</sup> Strategic National Arts Alumni Project, “*Making it Work: The Education and Employment of Recent Arts Graduates, 2014 Annual Report.*”

## **MUSIC MAKES US®**

A joint effort of Metro Nashville Public Schools, Mayor Karl Dean, and music industry and community leaders, the Music Makes Us® initiative aspires to be a national model for high quality music education. With a focus on music literacy and student participation, Music Makes Us® is strengthening traditional school music while adding a contemporary curriculum that embraces new technologies and reflects a diverse musical landscape.

The Music Makes Us® Online Hub is a listing of professional musicians and organizations, vetted by a selection panel, which will enhance teaching and learning opportunities for students and teachers in Metro Nashville Public Schools. Direct experience with the music community brings the curriculum to life beyond classroom walls. The Hub is designed to promote awareness of quality programs available in the community and help facilitate communication and scheduling. Music Makes Us® will maintain a pool of funds to assist teachers with the cost of programs.

The goal of the Online Hub is to re-imagine the way students experience music and connect with the many working artists in the Nashville community.

(ABC Nashville), the Entrepreneur Center (EC), the Mayor's Office of Economic Development, and Metro Arts. This collaboration allows 25 artists each year to receive business development training from leaders at the EC and pairs them with a professional mentor to scale the success of their artistic business.

Artists and creative entrepreneurs tend to drive the small business economy for many communities, representing a large portion of sole proprietors, contractors, and microbusinesses. Cities like Denver that have invested in fueling creative businesses, with revolving loan funds and startup space, have seen increases in both the attraction and retention of new talent.

Cities that have a higher concentration of artists are more competitive economically with their peers—both in creative industries and beyond. Nashville's recent success has threatened some of our county's qualities that allow arts and artists to thrive. Artists tend to lead the exploration of low cost communities that support the co-location of live/work spaces. Rising property values for homes and studio or manufacturing spaces in longtime artist enclaves like East Nashville and Wedgewood-Houston threaten to erode the strong base of creative talent that has kept Nashville competitive. Expansion of city-led efforts on affordable housing like Ryman Lofts and private sector efforts like the Housing Fund's "Make Your Mark" studio loan assistance program point in the right direction. To remain a leading city for importing and exporting creative talent, Nashville must streamline professional support and financial tools for artists while addressing the affordability chasm through coordinated leadership, policy, and public/private innovation.

## **Lifelong arts education**

An arts education introduces and strengthens understanding of arts and cultural traditions and instills a value for creative expression. Arts education readies children to be the next generation of arts consumers and producers, which is vital to Nashville's current and future economy. Regular exposure to arts as a student reduces truancy and increases test scores and graduation rates. Integration of the arts into non-art subjects drives innovative thinking, problem solving and teamwork. Investment in arts education from pre-school to adult education is the most direct way a city can build its diverse creative workforce.

MNPS currently provides visual art and music for all elementary students and offers a wide range of art, music, theater, and dance electives in middle

and high school. In 2011, MNPS initiated Music Makes Us®, a public-private partnership to diversify and deepen music education, teacher preparation, and student participation in the arts. The program includes an Online Hub where teachers can identify qualified teaching artists and volunteers who can augment classroom instruction. Continued growth of Music Makes Us® and expanding it to include visual art, dance, theater, and design will ensure that generations of Nashville students have a broad exposure to the cultural and artistic world around them.

Teacher training on arts integration in non-arts subjects and connection of arts and design to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programs can address the deficit of students prepared for high tech jobs in our city and beyond. Both Rose Park Math & Science Magnet and Isaac Litton STEM Middle include art in STEM courses linking visual arts and design with technology (to create Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math, or STEAM, programs) and The Academies of Nashville (high school small learning communities) offer numerous opportunities for students to link art and design with health care, urban planning, and tourism career exploration.

Nashville offers a range of creative and arts education opportunities beyond MNPS. For example, Nashville Public Library’s Nashville After-Zone Alliance (NAZA) integrates teaching artists and brings in nonprofits like the Nashville Ballet and Southern Word to pair academics, sports, and arts at most of their 25 program locations. Metro Parks offers a wide range of cultural programs in community centers, including dance, music, theater, and visual arts classes. Nashville Community Education and area colleges and universities offer continuing education for personal and professional enrichment. In recent years, new models of artist-driven cultural education have emerged. Spaces like The Skillery and Fort Houston offer courses taught by artists in everything from woodworking to Arduino to fabric felting. By incorporating arts education within multiple frameworks, the city can maximize the exposure to and the benefits of art for future generations. Nashville’s



Figure 2-20: Screenprinting class



Figure 2-21: Casa Azafrán, cultural center with pre-K



Figure 2-22: Watermarks is a series of public artworks located in Nashville neighborhoods affected by the 2010 flood. “Emergence,” by artist Buddy Jackson, can be found in Hartman Park.

current arts education baseline is strong and provides both a robust canvas for learning and necessary revenue for cultural nonprofits, but can be threatened by changes in federal and state funding and policy. Focusing on relevant offerings that ensure lifelong, affordable arts education will ensure Nashville continues as one of the most vibrant cities for arts participation in the U.S.

### Vibrant cultural neighborhoods and districts

Arts access, creative workforce development, and arts education intersect in our neighborhoods. When cultural programs and amenities are located in neighborhoods, they fuel social capital, identity, quality of life, and economic vibrancy. The Memphis Music Magnet initiative includes more than 30 city, university, cultural, and philanthropy partners working through a long range, arts-based neighborhood development plan to revitalize the Soulsville community. Focused on an area long plagued by intergenerational poverty, high crime, and low educational attainment, the partnership has resulted in a community development corporation, a new arts charter school, the expansion of the STAX Museum of American Soul Music, and dozens of new private businesses. Austin initiated Independent Business Investment Zones to help brand and elevate the role of creative and arts businesses as part neighborhood redevelopment. This included creating a new zoning designation and coordination with tourism marketing and branding around “Austin made” cultural products. Areas such as Wedgewood-Houston, which has become an unofficial “maker” community, and Jefferson Street, a longtime center for African American music and commerce, could benefit from these types of investment.

Public art plays a major role in neighborhood placemaking. In response to the 2010 floods, Nashville’s One Percent for Art Program issued a call for neighborhood public art in heavily damaged neighborhoods. The “Watermarks” project is a series of six pieces by regional artists that create reflective spaces in parks and greenways within these neighborhoods. Each piece evokes the struggle and resilience of residents

### Our Town Nashville, Portraits of a City



Since 2012, two groups have traveled across Davidson County empowering its citizens through public participation and policymaking. Determined to create a collective representation of Nashville, one Nashvillian at a time, they met in community centers, police stations, school buildings, concert halls, bus stations and online portals. One group consisted of government departments, consultants, and community leaders. The other was led by Bryce McCloud, a letterpress printmaker and artist, born and raised in Nashville. Although their processes differed, McCloud’s Our Town public art project and NashvilleNext both actively engaged Nashville in a conversation about community and the future of Music City.

For nearly a year and a half, printmaker Bryce McCloud invited people from all walks of life to participate in Our Town Nashville. With funding and support from the Public Art Fund managed by the Metro Nashville Arts Commission, Our Town appeared in 50 locations, including the first round of NashvilleNext community meetings in July 2013. At each location, McCloud and his team set up their mobile art studio and gallery which operated out of a custom-made bike cart. Curious individuals were offered an opportunity to participate in the project by creating a self-portrait. Participants were supplied with grid paper, handmade rubber stamps, and black ink pads, but the most important tool was their own imagination. After making a portrait, participants were photographed with their completed artwork, which they would then trade for a letterpress print of another participant’s portrait created at a previous location. More than 1,200 portraits were created over the course of the public art project. The portraits you find in this NashvilleNext General Plan represent a handful of the Nashvillians willing to step out of their comfort zone and join in the community-wide art experience.

By creating a space where people unlikely to otherwise participate in a public process could share their stories, Our Town and NashvilleNext form a more inclusive picture of Nashville. Whether it’s art-making or city planning, the chance to share a human experience that links us together beyond the confines of class, race, gender, age, culture of origin, or neighborhood is a key factor in the success of any city.

during the flood and anchors collective memory. Bryce McCloud’s yearlong “Our Town” mobile portrait project generated more than 1,200 self-portraits of the homeless, seniors, immigrants, police officers, and elected officials through more than 50 neighborhood events in dozens of neighborhoods, many of which as part of the NashvilleNext community engagement process. Our Town created the city’s first “citizen portrait collection,” which will be archived in the Nashville Public Library’s permanent collection. Public art fuels creative participation and can facilitate wayfinding, animate gathering places, and enhance the visual story of a neighborhood.

Recent investments to remake Hickory Hollow Mall show what creative placemaking coordinated with

public investments can achieve. Metro Nashville, the Nashville Predators, Nashville State Community College, and private developers revived the mall by creating a library, park, ice center, and community college campus. The facility offers regular cultural programs, integrates public art, and facilitates economic reinvestment in area businesses. This coordination of planning, public policy, infrastructure, and programs provides a blueprint for scaling cultural placemaking through the county.

Creative placemaking cannot succeed without coordination with NashvilleNext’s other elements. Focusing only on arts and cultural amenities without also addressing housing and affordability, transportation access, education, and access to well-paying jobs is a recipe for repeating the past failures of revitalization.



**Figure 2-23: Public art in the Southeast Branch Public Library; “From the Four Corners” by Paul Vexler**

## Chicago Cultural Plan 2012

The impact of culture is visible across broad civic objectives including: economic development, strong neighborhoods, innovation, environmental sustainability, public health, education, public safety, and quality of life. A Cultural Plan outlines a broad framework for the role of culture in civic life. The Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) launched the *Chicago Cultural Plan 2012* to identify opportunities for arts and cultural growth for the city. The intent of the plan was “to create a framework for Chicago’s future cultural and economic growth” and “become the centerpiece for the City’s aim to become a global destination for creativity, innovation and excellence in the arts.”

The DCASE engaged a team of consultants to carry out the process of creating the Cultural Plan, a process which was completed in three phases. Phase one, research and analysis, laid the foundation for the planning process with a review of Chicago’s cultural environment. Phase two, public engagement, enlisted Chicagoans to join a dialogue about the future of arts and culture in the city. The methodology to reach the public was purposefully multi-faceted, creating ample opportunities for input, equalizing voices, and casting a wide net of citizen feedback. The final phase, visioning and setting direction, comprised a series of forums designed to provide direction and commentary on the appropriate priorities for the Cultural Plan.

Through parallel tracks of inquiry focused on public engagement and research, the cultural planning process identified key needs to be addressed and opportunities to be explored. For the Plan to serve as a blueprint for Chicago’s future cultural vitality, recommendations are underscored by the following major themes: access to arts and culture; a focus on neighborhoods; capacity of the cultural sector; achieving global potential; civic and economic impact; and a broad commitment to cultural sustainability.

The content and recommendations of the Chicago Cultural Plan 2012 were organized as follows:

- » **Categories:** Overarching concepts of the vision for the Plan as well as stakeholders whose needs must be considered. Four categories were identified and include: people, places, policies, and planning culturally.
- » **Priorities:** Specific goals that the Plan must address to achieve a culturally vibrant Chicago.
- » **Recommendations:** Broad strategic statements that can be accomplished in many ways.
- » **Initiatives:** Potential programs and actions both large and small.

In a similar manner as Nashville looked to 1909’s *Plan of Chicago* in preparing *The Plan of Nashville* in 2005, the city can use the city’s cultural plan as a model for creating its own. In its recently completed strategic plan, the Metro Nashville Arts Commission has indicated that identifying funds to create a citywide cultural and creative economy plan will be a part of their short term (2015-2017) planning as a means to fulfill the strategy of improving community-based creative infrastructure.<sup>7</sup>



**Figure 2-24: Cover of the Chicago Cultural Plan**

Source: City of Chicago, [http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp\\_info/cultural\\_plan.html](http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/cultural_plan.html)

<sup>7</sup> *Crafting a Creative City: The Metro Arts Commission Strategic Plan 2020*, Metro Nashville Arts Commission, page. 15

## Relationship to other Elements

### *Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure*

How land is used to connect people to places not only is important for meeting the basic needs of the community, it is important to providing equal access, to physical locations or through technology, to all of the cultural opportunities Nashville/Davidson County has to offer.

### *Economic & Workforce Development*

Arts and creative economic sectors are an essential component of Nashville's economy. However, affordable living and workspace, as well as workforce development for skilled artisans, are current challenges.

### *Education & Youth*

Cultivating artistic talent and appreciation of arts in youth is an indicator of future success and support of arts and culture.

### *Health, Livability & the Built Environment*

Creative placemaking is dependent on the qualities of the built environment in which we live, work, and play.

### *Housing*

The quality and affordability of housing has a significant impact on the quality of life of artists, manufacturers, and makers.

### *Natural Resources & Hazard Adaptation*

Nature has always been an inspiration to artists. The natural resources prevalent in Nashville/Davidson County are cultural assets that should be protected and enjoyed.

## Goals and policies

**Goals** set broad direction for the plan by applying the Guiding Principles to NashvilleNext's seven plan elements. They identify, for each element, what NashvilleNext is trying to achieve.

**Policies** extend goals by providing more detail. They give more direct guidance on community decision making, without specifying which tools to use. (Identifying and adopting which tool is a job for actions and implementation.) As implementation occurs, if one particular tool is rejected by the public, the policy guidance remains.

**Actions** (Volume IV) are short-term steps to carry out these Policies and achieve these Goals. The plan is structured so that the Action plan is updated the most frequently. During the annual update process, actions can be removed if accomplished or if they were deemed infeasible. Removing an action because it's infeasible leaves the overarching Policy in place. During the update, the Planning Department would seek to identify alternative ways of accomplishing the policy.

## Related plans

With a strong commitment to annual updates and review, the General Plan is able to play a key role in providing coordination between other agencies and plans. It helps other departments understand long term goals and how their work shapes that, even if they must focus on short term needs that are out of step with the long term plan. For example, the long term vision for transit is to build a high capacity transit network operating along major corridors, with few deviations from those corridors. In the short term, MTA needs to conduct its operations to connect to riders, who may not live along those major corridors. Eventually, MTA operations should merge with the long range vision, but it will take time to build the infrastructure and housing to support the high capacity network.

Thus, Element chapters highlight related plans when discussing NashvilleNext Goals & Policies.

Much of what Nashvillians want for the future goes beyond what Metro can achieve on its own. Partnerships with community groups, nonprofits, and the private sector are critical.

## Plans

- » Metro Arts Commission Strategic Plan
- » Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce Culture Here Study
- » Metro Arts Public Art Master Plan – Proposed
- » Music Makes Us Strategic Plan

## **ACC Goal 1**

Every Nashvillian has genuine access to opportunities to participate in the arts and cultural activities.

### **ACC Policy 1.1**

Grow public funding for arts and culture so that Nashville remains competitive with peer cities.

### **ACC Policy 1.2**

Expand cultural facilities and venues in neighborhoods.

### **ACC Policy 1.3**

Increase Cultural Equity and Inclusion practices within nonprofit and city cultural providers.

### **ACC Policy 1.4**

Better integrate art activation and public art into core city infrastructure planning for Parks, MDHA, MTA, and Public Health.

## **ACC Goal 2**

Nashville artists and creative entrepreneurs have clear pathways to grow their professional practices and businesses.

### **ACC Policy 2.1**

Establish the Mayor's Office of Cultural and Creative Economy to coordinate Metro and private sector planning and investments in creative economic development.

### **ACC Policy 2.2**

Expand existing workforce training and development for creative jobs.

### **ACC Policy 2.3**

Increase the visibility of local art and artisans through citywide marketing and branding.

### **ACC Policy 2.4**

Support funding and zoning practices that retain affordable housing and space for creating art throughout the county.

### **ACC Policy 2.5**

Expand professional training and tools for artists and creatives.

## **ACC Goal 3**

Nashvillians embrace arts education and lifelong cultural literacy as a core value.

### **ACC Policy 3.1**

Incorporate and fund arts and creativity as a key component in Metro School's core curriculum, as well as priority programs and activities.

### **ACC Policy 3.2**

Foster student career and technical training options in the arts, design and creativity in Nashville and Middle Tennessee.

### **ACC Policy 3.3**

Expand arts and cultural education opportunities for the general public.

## **ACC Goal 4**

Nashville has thriving creative and cultural neighborhoods dispersed throughout the region.

### **ACC Policy 4.1**

Integrate cultural amenities, facilities, and creative economic activation in all commercial corridors and neighborhoods.

### **ACC Policy 4.2**

Create or streamline land use, zoning, and permitting tools to encourage the creation and enhancement of creative neighborhoods and cultural districts.

