

Franklin County Region Arts, Cultural, and Heritage Plan

REINHOLT CONSULTING, OCTOBER 2019



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FOREWORD

Greater Franklin Development Council

A strong economy is at the heart of Greater Franklin Development Council's vision.

The American Planning Association states: "A flourishing arts and culture sector can affect where workers in the information economy, especially younger ones, want to live and, as such, is important for workforce recruitment and retention strategies." These are issues that are also at the forefront of our efforts at GFDC.

The Maine Arts Commission's Creative Communities grant allowed us and our partner, ArtsFarmington, to evaluate our Arts & Cultural assets and community. An immediate benefit of the planning process was the development of a continuously growing coalition of arts, cultural, and heritage leaders in the region. This coalition will provide us with the grassroots energy needed to take on some of the larger, more long-term projects detailed in the plan. The coalition will also serve as a way for local organizations to check in with each other, increase communication, and strengthen the unification of the sector as a whole.

The Creative Communities Phase I grant has given us the exceptional opportunity to connect with the creative sector in our region on every level, from independent artists to established arts and culture organizations. Our community is looking forward to prioritizing where we next invest.

CHARLIE WOODWORTH, GREATER FRANKLIN DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

ArtsFarmington

As President of ArtsFarmington, I have been interested in how our organization, which is an affiliate of the University of Maine at Farmington, relates to the University and to the community at large. Franklin County is a vibrant center for the arts but lacks any unified approach to promoting the arts, or to planning and promoting events. The need for this has been clear yet achieving it has seemed out of reach. Charlie Woodworth, Executive Director of the Greater Franklin Development Council, and I attended a program sponsored by the Maine Arts Commission and discovered that funds were available to communities seeking to promote the arts in their district. The potential for using grant funding to develop a comprehensive plan in our area of Franklin County was grasped by both of us. A grant was awarded and after a year of hard work the Franklin County Region Arts, Cultural, and Heritage Plan developed. Now that we know what the general public, the arts organizations, and the artists themselves want, we can move ahead with the implementation of a plan that fits our region and our needs. These are exciting times for the arts community in Franklin County!

BURT KNAPP, ARTSFARMINGTON

The Franklin County Region Arts, Cultural, and Heritage Plan was developed through a partnership between the Greater Franklin Development Council and Arts Farmington.

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The project was facilitated by Reinhold Consulting, a Maine based consulting firm.



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Farmington North Church



Photo Credit: Sandy River Players

INTRODUCTION

Cultural planning is an economic development tool designed to help communities respond to shifting economies and populations. In 2008, Arts Farmington and Greater Franklin Development Council were awarded the Maine Arts Commission Creative Communities = Economic Development Phase 1 grant to support creation of a cultural plan. Reinholt Consulting LLC was contracted to complete the study on cultural development in the Franklin County region.

The process was guided by an overarching goal:

Document an inclusive study to find new methods to increase the reach, value, and relevance of arts and cultural offerings in the Franklin County region.

Franklin County is a rural destination best known for its mountains, trails, lakes, agriculture, and natural beauty. This landscape has attracted and inspired many artists and performers to make this region their home. The cultural plan is a blueprint for guiding social and economic prosperity; a high quality of life and a durable creative economy. Socio-economic prosperity requires a steady flow of young people and families to help preserve a sustainable population and healthy workforce. Technological advances have brought flexibility in selecting workplace location, allowing value to be put on quality of place when selecting where to live and raise children. Young people and families are attracted to places that sustain arts and cultural offerings and places that provide jobs and opportunities for entrepreneurs.

With coordination and collaboration across sectors, the Franklin County region has an opportunity to position itself for multi-layered cultural destination development. This plan is intended to support and enhance initiatives that are already underway across sectors. Bringing creative components to existing projects will increase appeal and help reach more audiences.

The goals laid out in this plan are inspired by the wisdom of the Franklin County community. The action plan aims to breathe life into the creative sector by elevating arts and cultural resources for people across the Franklin County region.

The arts, culture and creative sectors contribute to a productive business climate, a diversified economic base, a competitive workforce, a desirable quality of life and an innovation habitat. Such effects have long been documented in urban environments, but a growing body of research points to the power of the creative sector to drive prosperity in rural settings, too.

- National Governors Association

METHODOLOGY

The cultural development study was conducted over fourteen months. At each phase of the planning process, feedback from the larger community was collected and used to inform the direction of the plan. Five key stages of plan development are listed below.

ASSESS

Initial Research

The first step entailed examining existing plans and documents to help ensure that the cultural plan would build upon existing action plans and support work already underway.

Research included the following:

Online research scans of Franklin County region cultural assets

Franklin County Towns' Comprehensive Plans

Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments CEDS Report

Strategic plans from regional institutions

Data Gathering

QUALITATIVE: A string of four public meetings and several key sector interviews were facilitated in Franklin County in order to collect community input. The consultant team explored what participants perceived as strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and realities. We heard from more than eighty community members.

QUANTITATIVE: The consultant team designed three surveys in order to vet common ideas that came out of the qualitative meetings. The three surveys included: Public Opinion Survey, Artist and Performer Survey, and Cultural Organization Survey. Greater Franklin Development Council and its partners promoted and collected online and hard copy surveys for four months across the region. Hardcopies were made available at town offices, public libraries, and places of business. Greater Franklin Development Council and its partners utilized e-blasts, press releases, social media campaigns, and e-newsletters on a monthly basis. Many partner organizations, such as the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce and Jay Livermore Falls Chamber of Commerce, included survey links on websites and e-newsletters. We received 194 Public Opinion Survey responses, 42 Artist and Performer Survey responses, and 16 Cultural Organizations Surveys.

LEARN

Identifying Goals

Goals and objectives were identified through careful analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. Feedback was sought on data findings and recommended goals through a series of public meetings. Over 30 community members participated in these meetings.

PLAN

Refining the Draft Plan

Meetings with the public and lead organizations were held to discuss and improve the recommended actions and strategies. More than 60 community members participated in these meetings.

Action Plan

ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW

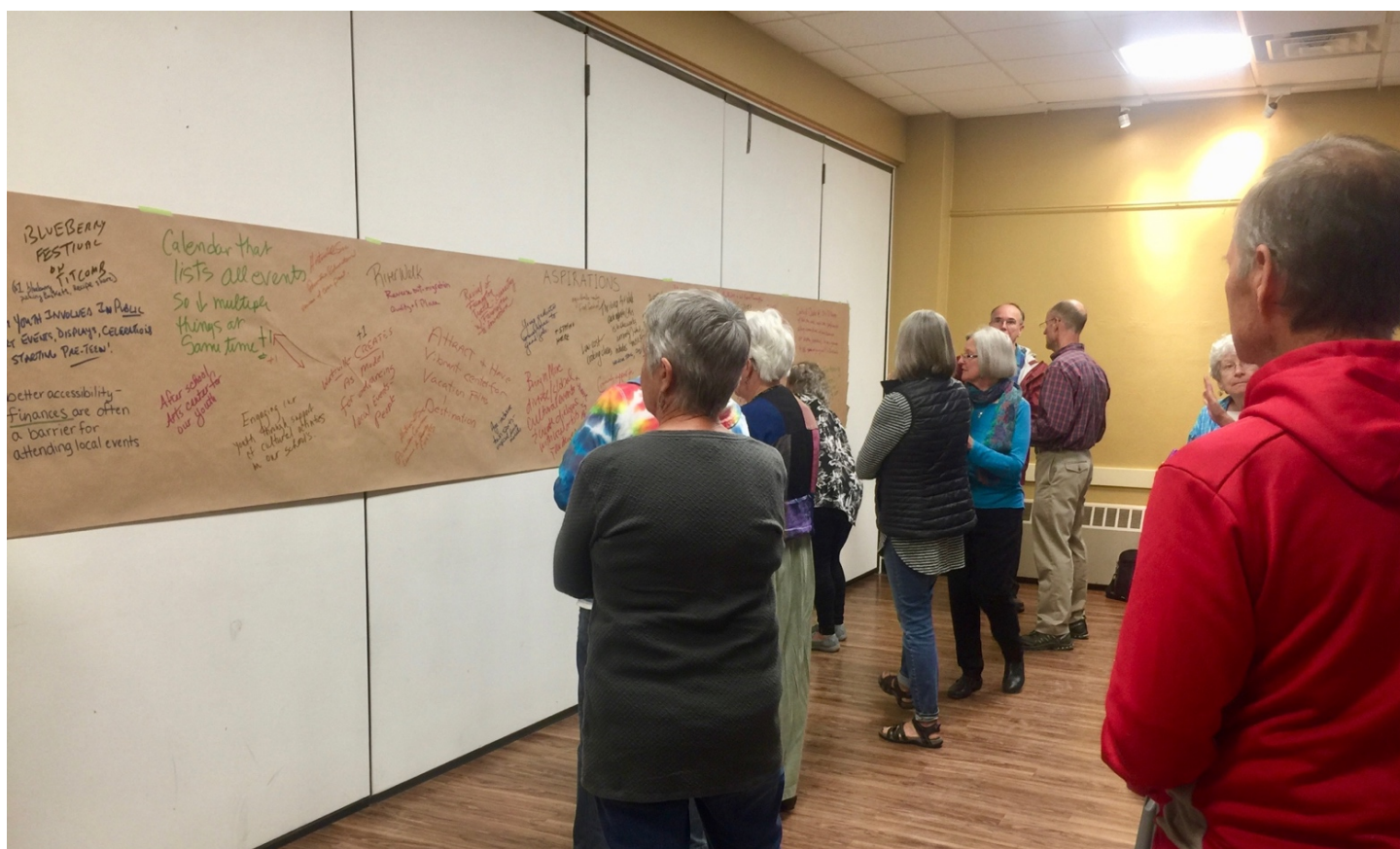
This plan is intended to serve as a resource for those pursuing cultural development in the Franklin County region. Each goal emerged from data that supports the recommendations for action. This information is useful to reference when preparing applications for funding and creating capital campaigns. In the interest of keeping this document succinct and accessible, all supporting materials, including qualitative and quantitative data sets, are available at:

<http://reinholtconsulting.com/projects/franklin/>

The following section is the heart of the Franklin County Arts, Cultural, and Heritage Plan and the culmination of fourteen months of planning processes. The goals, objectives, and strategies laid out in the action plan are embedded in values, priorities, and aspirations identified through a process of inclusive public engagement. Efforts were made to ensure the final outcome was based on a broad cross-section of the community.

The action plan is organized into four goals that reflect challenges and opportunities that emerged from community based qualitative and quantitative data collection. Each goal represents a section of the action plan and is broken down by objectives, strategies, and actions. Goals are of equal importance.

Each of the four goals are accompanied by 1) Findings that support the goal and 2) Examples and/or resources intended to inform and inspire implementation. At the end of the action plan is an implementation table that includes goals, objectives, and strategies, as well as additional details including suggested key players and timelines. This implementation grid is intended to serve as a tool for those organizations and individuals who are actively involved in carrying out the Franklin County Region Arts, Cultural, and Heritage Plan.



GOALS

The following table provides an overview of the goals and objectives established through the cultural planning process:

Promote & Connect	Expand Access	Attract & Retain	Placemaking
GOAL A PROMOTE AND CONNECT REGIONAL ARTS, CULTURAL, AND HERITAGE ASSETS	GOAL B EXPAND ACCESS TO ARTS, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE ACTIVITIES	GOAL C FOSTER THE REGION'S CREATIVE ECONOMY TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN TALENT	GOAL D UTILIZE CREATIVE INITIATIVES TO EMPHASIZE THE REGION'S CHARACTER OF CREATIVITY AND RESOURCEFULNESS
<p>Objective A.1: Create a coalition of regional arts, cultural, and heritage assets</p> <p>Objective A.2: Publicize arts, cultural, and heritage assets using collective marketing strategies</p> <p><i>The Franklin County region is home to a number of cultural organizations and creative assets. Establishment of a coalition for communication across enterprises will help to form a unified voice for the creative community while forming the foundational structure necessary for furthering regional goals.</i></p>	<p>Objective B.1. Ensure arts, cultural, and heritage activities are accessible and significant</p> <p>Objective B.2. Engage youth with community arts, cultural, and heritage activities</p> <p><i>To engage Franklin County region's varying demographics, organizations must strive to provide diverse offerings that appeal to a broad spectrum of residents while responding to identified barriers effecting participation in arts, cultural, and heritage offerings.</i></p>	<p>Objective C.1. Develop resources and opportunities for creative enterprises</p> <p>Objective C.2. Promote collaboration between the cultural sector, municipal sector, business sector, and academic sector</p> <p><i>Cultivating a robust creative economy is a proven strategy for economic revitalization and local resilience. Thriving creative economies rely on the success of creative enterprises.</i></p>	<p>Objective D.1. Generate creative public projects</p> <p>Objective D.2. Enrich the vibrancy of downtowns</p> <p><i>Franklin County region's rural landscape presents unique challenges including population loss and general strain on financial, civic, and human capital. Placemaking projects help to build community pride, galvanize residents to collectively shape the future of their communities, and bring people together creating social connections.</i></p>

Promote & Connect

GOAL A. PROMOTE AND CONNECT REGIONAL ARTS, CULTURAL, AND HERITAGE ASSETS

The Franklin County region is home to a number of cultural organizations and creative assets. Establishing a coalition for communication across enterprises will help to form a unified voice for the creative community while forming the foundational structure necessary for furthering regional goals.

The need for comprehensive and strategic promotion of cultural offerings was a consistent theme in public information gathering sessions. Communication across cultural organizations can help to maximize efficiency in scheduling and promotion while providing means for establishing partnerships aimed at furthering community goals.

Strategies laid out under Goal A will help to form collaborative practices and networks of communication that will facilitate implementation of the remaining action plan.

Key Findings

Lack of information about events was the most commonly identified barrier to participation with **46%** of respondents indicating that a **lack of information** prevented them from participating in offerings as frequently as they would like

94% of respondents agree that arts, culture, and heritage should **promote opportunities to residents and visitors**

80% of respondents say **growing tourism by promoting the region's assets** is **very important** to the future

64% of artists and performers say that **networks of communication** are **not very available** in the community

Oklahoma ARTS Council identifies the following benefits of effective community partnerships:

1. Community cohesiveness and resiliency.
2. Improved planning and programming administration.
3. Strengthened community support.
4. Increased capacity.
5. Improved efficiency.
6. Professional development across employees and/or board members.
7. Cultivation of cooperation and community good will

GOAL A. PROMOTE AND CONNECT REGIONAL ARTS, CULTURAL, AND HERITAGE ASSETS

Objective A.1. Create a coalition of regional arts, cultural, and heritage assets

Strategies

Coordinate a coalition of arts, cultural, and heritage group leaders

Identify stakeholders and organizations to engage

Pursue funding for a part-time coordinator

Create a committee of representatives from cultural organizations, to meet regularly

Utilize meetings to build trust, share information on offerings, synch calendars, and explore collaborations

Build engagement by inviting each organization to take turns hosting meetings at their location

Identify opportunities for cross-promotion

Explore opportunities for collaborative initiatives that allow for pooled resources and shared financing

Seek out funding opportunities that incentivize community partnerships



Belfast Creative Coalition (BCC)

Established in 2012 with the goal of cultivating Belfast arts and culture, the BCC utilizes a range of tools to unify and promote creative offerings. In addition to a comprehensive website and calendar of event listings, the BCC provides networking opportunities and strategic marketing of area arts, local food, and natural beauty, thereby raising the visibility and maximizing local and regional assets. By celebrating and promoting creative entrepreneurs, the BCC is a leading example of an organization successfully facilitating “the business of art and culture”.

BCC core activities include: maintaining online event listings and directory of cultural assets; hosting a monthly “Calendar Synch” meeting comprised of representatives from major non-profits, event organizers, performers, artists, and business owners; facilitating collaborative marketing opportunities; hosting the annual Cultivate Farm + Art Tour, the Fourth Friday Art Walk Series, and a professional development series.

GOAL A. PROMOTE AND CONNECT REGIONAL ARTS, CULTURAL, AND HERITAGE ASSETS

Objective A.2. Publicize arts, cultural, and heritage assets using collective marketing strategies

Strategies

Collaborate with the hospitality industry to bolster promotion of cultural amenities

Provide hospitality-based businesses with a cultural tourism toolkit

Consider packaging cultural activities with lodging and eateries

Work with regional municipalities to expand their website listings to include cultural information and provide links to cultural websites

Connect and promote regional arts, cultural, and heritage providers

Establish and promote the use of a comprehensive online cultural calendar

Launch a cultural e-newsletter highlighting the calendar that may be shared through chambers and academic institutions

Encourage web-link sharing on cultural organization websites and social media accounts

Investigate establishing cultural kiosks to distribute hard copy promotional materials

Team up with local chambers to create a marketing toolkit for the region aimed at establishing best practices and cultivating a consistent regional identity. Content could include:

Information on various promotional outlets including a list of local newspapers, links to online resources for publishing information and events (include local and statewide sites), venues with community bulletin boards, starter templates for press releases, event postings, and email campaigns (include suggestions for regional messaging, imagery, and/or relevant logos), and simple guides and tips for social media marketing and building a presence online

Establish a web-based cultural asset map

Highlight signature events, arts, cultural, historic, agricultural, and recreational assets

Explore the feasibility of creating a printed version

Cultural Asset Mapping, Maine High Peaks

The Western Maine nonprofit, **High Peaks Creative Council** (HPCC), was formed in 2013 after receiving the Maine Arts Commission Creative Communities = Economic Development grant. Their mission is to connect regional arts and cultural organizations around creative public projects that benefit the community's quality of life and support resiliency in the local economy. They host regular networking meetings with the cultural, business, and municipal sectors. Together, the group created an online cultural asset map, a printed map/guide of the region, and five kiosks. The project led to creation of the popular self-guided cultural destination tour: High Peaks Arts & Heritage Loop.



Expand Access

GOAL B. EXPAND ACCESS TO ARTS, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE ACTIVITIES

To engage Franklin County region's varying demographics, organizations must strive to provide diverse offerings that appeal to a broad spectrum of residents while responding to identified barriers effecting participation in arts, cultural, and heritage offerings.

Findings & Discussion...

There is broad support for ensuring arts, cultural, and heritage opportunities are accessible and available for varying demographics.

95% of respondents agree that arts, culture, and heritage should **be accessible and affordable to all**

93% agree that arts, culture, and heritage should contribute to the **quality of life**

9 out of 10 respondents say that time and resources should be put towards ensuring **youth have access to arts, culture, and heritage activities**

81% say that **engaging youth** in arts and cultural activities is **very important** to the future

Grow your audience by responding to feedback

RESEARCH FROM THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS INDICATES THAT...

Rural arts organizations rely heavily on audience and community feedback in developing programming and are more likely to draw audiences from surrounding communities than those located in urban areas. Responding to community interests can help Franklin County region cultural organizations grow their audiences through expanded reach and relevance.

The American Planning Association suggests linking heritage with outdoor spaces:

The American Planning Association encourages communities to utilize “venues such as parks, open spaces, and public streetscapes as places for arts and cultural expressions which can be an effective way to integrate history and heritage into the everyday lived experience.”

GOAL B. EXPAND ACCESS TO ARTS, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE ACTIVITIES

Objective B.1. Ensure arts, cultural, and heritage activities are accessible and significant

Strategies

Invite programming recommendations and feedback by providing a suggestions box at offerings

Establish mechanisms to facilitate strategic coordination and promotion of events and offerings

Schedule offerings to allow for 'event hopping' by coordinating two or more events to occur in the same afternoon/evening/etc., but not at the same time, to give busy attendees the opportunity to experience multiple offerings in a short period of time

Respond to public interests identified through the public opinion survey

Appeal to the public's interest in outdoor recreation by combining cultural offerings with outdoor activities

Increase the diversity of genres of musical concerts

Assess regional availability of arts, cultural, and heritage offerings; use findings to identify underserved areas

Create an inventory of regional spaces appropriate for cultural uses and explore providing satellite displays and performances

Ensure the community has access to affordable offerings

Provide free and low-cost activities

Provide opportunities for discounted or free tickets to events for youth, families and underserved populations

Enhance existing and explore opportunities for developing farmer's markets in the region

Include creative activities for youth and live music

Develop a fundraising plan to raise funds to host live performers

Consider creating a public art project that market attendees may participate in

WOO Card

WORCESTER,
MASSACHUSETTS

The Worcester Cultural Coalition's WOO Card is designed to open the door to Worcester County's creative community. Cardholders receive discounts and special offers for concerts, theater, museums, music, street festivals and outdoor events throughout the year. Users can earn WOO points, making them eligible to win prizes each month. College WOO Cards are free to students at participating colleges.

Feast & Field Farmers' Market

BARNARD, VERMONT

"Reviving a rural economy with hard work, art and story... We are friends, neighbors, farmers, artists, and educators with a mission to grow food for our community and to connect people to the land and to one another."

The Feast & Field Farmers Market is a weekly market that unites local food, arts, and music.

For more information visit:
www.feastandfield.com



How can organizations celebrate youth art?

Youth Art Month is a program of the Council for Arts Education that works to do just that by providing communities with resources and strategies aimed at recognizing art education and youth art.

NATIONAL YOUTH ART MONTH PROGRAM EXISTS TO:

Recognize art education as a viable factor in the total education curriculum that develops citizens of a global society.

Recognize art is a necessity for the full development of better quality of life for all.

Direct attention to the value of art education for divergent and critical thinking.

Expand art programs in schools and stimulate new art programs.

Encourage commitment to the arts by students, community organizations, and individuals everywhere.

Provide additional opportunities for individuals of all ages to participate in creative art learning.

Increase community, business and governmental support for art education.

Increase community understanding and interest in art and art education through involvement in art exhibits, workshops, and other creative ventures.

Reflect and demonstrate the goals of the National Art Education Association that work toward the improvement of art education at all levels.

For more information, visit:
www.councilforarteducation.org

GOAL B. EXPAND ACCESS TO ARTS, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE ACTIVITIES

Objective B.2. Engage youth with community arts, cultural, and heritage activities

Strategies

Encourage schools, parents, and community organizations to celebrate Youth Art Month

Consider expanding opportunities for youth art displays and performances in the community

Cross-promote community-based and school-based arts, cultural, and heritage offerings

Support existing school arts events, by promoting them on community webpages and e-newsletters

Work with schools to make community-based opportunities known to students and parents

Raise the profile of internships and volunteer opportunities available for youth at cultural organizations

Invite arts, cultural, and heritage organizations to consider providing programming in schools

Provide successful examples and models, such as the Outdoor Sporting Heritage Museum and L.C. Bates Museum programs

Encourage artists in residence programming in schools

Provide schools and regional teaching artists with a list of funding resources

Utilize the Maine Arts Commission online roster of teaching artists

Foster a Resilient Creative Economy

GOAL C. FOSTER THE REGION'S CREATIVE ECONOMY TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN TALENT

Like many Maine communities, the Franklin County region has experienced economic decline brought, in part, by loss of a once thriving manufacturing industry. Cultivating a robust creative economy is a proven strategy for economic revitalization and local resilience.

Findings & Discussion

Franklin County region's growing population of artists and performers represent an important industry sector. Ensuring creative professionals have opportunities to sell, display, and promote their work within the county while cultivating an environment that promotes entrepreneurship and innovation will help to build a vibrant and resilient creative economy.

94% of respondents agree that arts, culture, and heritage should make the community **attractive for new residents and businesses**

Attracting talent to our community and its workforce was identified as the **top priority** for the future

78% of artists and performers say they would make use of an **online comprehensive calendar/event listings**

73% of artist and performers say they would make use of a **regional online resources & artist directory**

73% of artists and performers say they would like to access **new places to display, sell, and promote work**

88% of artists and performers say that **affordable studio space** is not very available in the area

76% of artists and performers say **production resources** are not very available

66% of artists and performers say that **information on creative resources** is not very available

Rural Areas Benefit from the Arts

Rural counties that have design-driven businesses recovered more quickly from the recession, showing more growth in weekly earnings over a four-year period (2010 to 2014).

Two out of three rural businesses report that arts and entertainment are important for attracting and retaining workers.

Businesses that value the arts are more likely to report an expanding market for their products and services.

**Celebrate what
you want more
of!**

GOAL C. FOSTER THE REGION'S CREATIVE ECONOMY TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN TALENT

Objective C.1. Develop resources and opportunities for creative enterprises

Strategies

Consider establishing Pecha Kucha gatherings to promote local talents and networking

*Utilize the International Pecha Kucha website for guidance:
<http://www.pechakucha.org>*

Work with regional chambers and economic development groups to create a narrative on arts and culture for use in business attraction promotional materials

Consider targeting businesses compatible with agriculture, such as microbreweries

Create an annual award recognizing a business or artist adding to the vibrancy of the region

Consider creating an online greater Franklin County artist directory and resources

Look at successful models, such as the Creative Portland website

Create an inventory of vacant commercial spaces appropriate for creative enterprises; make listings available online

Facilitate professional development offerings for creative professionals

Provide creative professionals and organizations with workshops on grant writing, utilizing social media tools, and basic business development

Establish networking gatherings for artists and performers

Investigate developing a regional open studio tour

Look at successful models, such as Somerset County Rural Open Studios event Somerset County

Explore the feasibility of developing a makerspace

PechaKucha

PechaKucha's 20x20 presentation format shows the participants 20 chosen images, each for 20 seconds. In other words, they've got 400 seconds to tell their story, with visuals guiding the way.

PechaKucha means "chit chat" in Japanese. This creative outlet began as nighttime get-togethers in Tokyo in 2003 by two renowned architects. Since then, three million people have attended PechaKucha events worldwide.

ArtPrize

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

ArtPrize is an open, independently organized international art competition which takes place every other fall in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Prizes are awarded by smartphone-enabled public vote.

Any artist working in any medium from anywhere in the world can participate. Art is exhibited throughout downtown Grand Rapids—museums, bars, public parks, restaurants, theaters, hotels, bridges, laundromats, auto body shops, vacant storefronts and office spaces.

ArtPrize is free and open to the public and now attracts over 500,000 visitors, making it the most attended public art event in the world in 2014 and 2015, according to the The Art Newspaper's annual "Big Ticket List."

GOAL C. FOSTER THE REGION'S CREATIVE ECONOMY TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN TALENT

Objective C.2. Promote collaboration between the cultural sector, municipal sector, business sector, and academic sector

Strategies

Seek endorsement of the Franklin County Arts, Cultural, and Heritage Plan from municipalities and institutions within the region

Create momentum and enthusiasm across sectors by distributing an annual Franklin County Arts, Cultural, and Heritage Plan Progress Update

Highlight accomplishments, benefits, and partners

Continue to coordinate and involve regional arts, cultural, and heritage providers in pursuit of community development goals

Ensure the cultural sector plays a role in community planning initiatives

Facilitate progress through communications, information sharing, networking, and relationship building

Cultivate support for economic and community development activities

Consider participating in the Americans for the Arts Economic Prosperity Studies and share results widely

Launch a "why art and culture matter to me" initiative by collecting audience testimonials and using in messaging and promotion

Develop effective means of communicating the economic impact of the creative sector

Empower municipalities and community leaders by sharing information on communities implementing and benefiting from creative placemaking (focus on communities with characteristics similar to those of the Franklin County region to ensure information is relatable on a local level)

Project ABC: Art, Beauty, Culture

SUMMIT COUNTY, UTAH

In completion of a cultural planning process, the plan was made available online through an 'Implementation Dashboard.' The dashboard includes lists of project partners and supporters, resource directory, contact form, etc. It tracks implementation progress. 28 community leaders signed a commitment statement, which can be found on the website, and a Facebook page was established to collect success stories.

Additionally, project leaders hosted an Art Summit to discuss the initiative's impact as well as future projects.

Enhance Sense of Place

GOAL D. UTILIZE CREATIVE INITIATIVES TO EMPHASIZE THE REGIONS CHARACTER OF CREATIVITY AND RESOURCEFULNESS

Franklin County region's rural landscape presents unique challenges including population loss and general strain on financial, civic, and human capital. Placemaking projects help to build community pride, galvanize residents to collectively shape the future of their communities, and bring diverse people together creating social connections.

Findings & Discussion

Placemaking can help the Franklin County region enhance its living cultural legacy.

93% of respondents agree that arts, culture, and heritage should **make the community attractive** for new residents and businesses. The same amount agree that they should **contribute to the quality of life**

89% of respondents agree that public art should **enrich the vibrancy of downtowns**

88% agree that public art should **increase regional appeal and build a reputation for creativity**

87% of respondents feel that **building a positive image of our community** is very important to the future

86% of respondents agree that they are **interested** in experiencing arts, cultural, and heritage offerings in **downtown venues**, and **81%** are interested in offerings in **parks, trails, and waterways**

85% agree that arts, culture, and heritage should transform **public spaces into meaningful gathering spots**

WHAT IS 'PLACEMAKING'?

"In creative placemaking, partners from public, private, nonprofit and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, tribe, city or region around arts and cultural activities. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire and be inspired."

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

GOAL D. UTILIZE CREATIVE INITIATIVES TO EMPHASIZE THE REGIONS CHARACTER OF CREATIVITY AND RESOURCEFULNESS

Objective D.1. Generate creative public projects

How Arts & Culture Enhance Sense of Place:

KEY POINTS FROM THE AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION:

- Understanding Community Context
- Celebrating Community Character
- Local Implementation Framework
- Arts and Cultural Programming

Annual FoundSpace Installation

JACKSON HOLE

FoundSpace is at the crossroads of art and conservation. It links local artists, temporary installations, and conserved public land. In its fifth year, the six local artists participating. Artists will organize community Gathers with various community groups to find objects and inspiration for the installations at an outdoor park which will reflect on the playful spirit of the space.

Strategies

Support UMF art professors and students by highlighting temporary public art installations

Host a creative placemaking workshop for community leaders

Focus on practical ways communities can get started that require few resources

Share stories of success from other rural communities, highlight project outcomes and impact

Consider collaborating to develop an interactive history tour app that enables users to participate in self-guided tours

Design creative public projects that utilize the arts to enhance rural features

Look at successful models, such as the Farm Art DTour project, barn quilt tours, and heritage based public art

Work in partnership with the recreational sector to develop creative installations at outdoor venues

Share stories of the region's history through public art projects

Animate parks, trails, and outdoor public spaces with creative projects

Increase interpretative signage at landmarks and historic sites

Unite landmarks and sites through consistent imagery and messaging

Enhance town gateways and wayfinding signs with public art

GOAL D. UTILIZE CREATIVE INITIATIVES TO EMPHASIZE THE REGIONS CHARACTER OF CREATIVITY AND RESOURCEFULNESS

Objective D.2. Enrich the vibrancy of downtowns

Strategies

Provide regional towns with models and samples of municipal strategies that promote creative investments

Examples: funding for culture as part of infrastructure projects, real estate development incentives towards cultural contributions, percent for the arts programs, and incentives for commercial buildings to include public art

Support local Artwalk initiatives

Utilize empty spaces and storefronts for temporary artist displays and pop-up shops

Organize a youth art venue to increase family participation

Offer technical assistance and planning support to municipalities interested in engaging in placemaking activities

Work with towns and businesses to identify public spaces for permanent and temporary displays

Employ best practices of creative placemaking

Consider establishing municipal public art committees

Encourage communities to explore options for establishing “museum in the streets”

Follow guidance provided through the Museum in the Streets website <http://www.themuseuminthestreets.com/>



Photo Credit: The Museum in the Streets

The Museum in the Streets

“The Museum in the Streets creates heritage discovery trails for the benefit of a community's inhabitants and tourists.

Working closely with town historical societies, we design free walking tours that foster a sense of historical identity, educate, encourage preservation of local historic sites and promote knowledge of stories, events and traditions. Our historical panels, rich with local archival imagery, are installed in cities and towns around the United States and Europe.

The panels that make up the tour invite people to discover a town's unique story at their own pace, over the course of an afternoon or several return visits.”

Success Across Maine Communities

More Maine towns have adopted the Museum in the Streets model as a means of promoting local heritage than any other state in the country. Relying heavily on cross-sector collaboration, the program provides a step-by-step process for implementation that has proven successful across communities, regardless of size or geographic location.

Visit **[themuseuminthestreets.com](http://www.themuseuminthestreets.com)** for more information

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation Grid Key:

ST = Short Term (1 – 2 years)

LT = Long Term (3 – 5 years)

GFDC = Greater Franklin Development Council

MOT = Maine Office of Tourism

RM = Regional Municipalities

PRD = Parks and Recreation Departments

RCC = Regional Chambers of Commerce

RCO = Regional Cultural Organizations

RHG = Regional Heritage Groups

RS = Regional Schools



Photo Credit: Revitalizing Waterbury, <https://www.revitalizingwaterbury.org/our-history-and-accomplishments>

WATERBURY RAIL ART PROJECT: THE WATERBURY SPECIAL

"Revitalizing Waterbury, the Waterbury Rotary Club and the Sons of the American Legion, in conjunction with the town of Waterbury and the Vermont Arts Council, commissioned a work of art for the railroad bridge at the entrance of Waterbury Village. Installed in September 2018, "The Waterbury Special" is a low relief aluminum sculpture created by Randolph artist Phillip Godenschwager. Mr. Godenschwager rendered nine historic buildings in the town of Waterbury as train cars.

This permanent public art piece is installed on the 100+ foot long railroad bridge at the roundabout in Waterbury. It is the first piece of art ever to be installed on a New England Central Railroad working railroad bridge.

This project is an incredible example of multiple organizations working with the community towards a common goal: enhance the lives of our community through art and collaboration. The members of Revitalizing Waterbury, the Rotary Club of Waterbury, the American Legion Post 59, the Vermont Arts Council, the New England Central Railroad, the Town of Waterbury and its community now have a physical reminder of not only the architectural history of Waterbury but the immense effort and fortitude of those willing to spend time and effort for the enrichment of their communities."

-Revitalizing Waterbury

Goal A. Promote and connect regional arts, cultural, and heritage assets

OBJECTIVE A.1. CREATE A COALITION NETWORK OF REGIONAL ARTS, CULTURAL, AND HERITAGE ASSETS

	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	KEY PLAYERS
SHORT TERM	Coordinate a coalition of arts, cultural, and heritage group leaders	Identify stakeholders and organizations to engage Pursue funding for a part-time coordinator	GFDC, RCO
	Create a committee of representatives from each cultural organization, to meet regularly	Utilize meetings to build trust, share information on offerings, synch calendars, and explore collaborations Build engagement by inviting each organization to take turns hosting meetings at their location Identify opportunities for cross-promotion	GFDC, RCO
LONG TERM	Explore opportunities for collaborative initiatives that allow for pooled resources and shared financing	Seek out funding opportunities that incentivize community partnerships	RCO

OBJECTIVE A.2. PUBLICIZE ARTS, CULTURAL, AND HERITAGE ASSETS USING COLLECTIVE MARKETING STRATEGIES

	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	KEY PLAYERS
SHORT TERM	Collaborate with the hospitality industry to bolster promotion of cultural amenities	Provide hospitality-based businesses with a cultural tourism toolkit Consider packaging cultural activities with lodging and eateries	RCC, GFDC
	Work with regional municipalities to expand their website listings to include cultural information and provide links to cultural websites		GFDC, RM, RCO
LONG TERM	Connect and promote regional arts, cultural, and heritage providers	Establish and promote the use of a comprehensive online cultural calendar Launch a cultural e-newsletter highlighting the calendar that may be shared through chambers and academic institutions Encourage web-link sharing on cultural organization websites and social media accounts Investigate establishing cultural kiosks to distribute hard copy promotional materials	GFDC, RCO
	Team up with local chambers to create a marketing toolkit for the region aimed at establishing best practices and cultivating a consistent regional identity. Content could include:	Information on various promotional outlets including a list of local newspapers, links to online resources for publishing information and events (include local and statewide sites), venues with community bulletin boards, starter templates for press releases, event postings, and email campaigns (include suggestions for regional messaging, imagery, and/or relevant logos), and simple guides and tips for social media marketing and building a presence online	GFDC, RCC, MOT
	Establish a web-based cultural asset map	Highlight signature events, arts, cultural, historic, agricultural, and recreational assets Explore the feasibility of creating a printed version	GFDC, RCO

Goal B. Expand access to arts, culture, and heritage activities

OBJECTIVE B.1. ENSURE ARTS, CULTURAL, AND HERITAGE ACTIVITIES ARE ACCESSIBLE AND SIGNIFICANT

	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	KEY PLAYERS
SHORT TERM	Invite programming recommendations and feedback by providing a suggestions box at offerings		RCO
	Establish mechanisms to facilitate strategic coordination and promotion of events and offerings	Schedule offerings to allow for ‘event hopping’ by coordinating two or more events to occur in the same afternoon/evening/etc., but not at the same time, to give busy attendees the opportunity to experience multiple offerings in a short period of time	RCO
	Respond to public interests identified through the public opinion survey	Appeal to the public’s interest in outdoor recreation by combining cultural offerings with outdoor activities Increase the diversity of genres of musical concerts	RCO
LONG TERM	Assess regional availability of arts, cultural, and heritage offerings; use findings to identify underserved areas	Create an inventory of regional spaces appropriate for cultural uses and explore providing satellite displays and performances	GFDC, RCO
	Ensure the community has access to affordable offerings	Provide free and low-cost activities Provide opportunities for discounted or free tickets to events for youth, families, and underserved populations	RCO
	Enhance existing and explore opportunities for developing farmer’s markets in the region	Include creative activities for youth and live music Develop a fundraising plan to raise funds to host live performers Consider creating a public art project that market attendees may participate in	GFDC

OBJECTIVE B.2. ENGAGE YOUTH WITH COMMUNITY ARTS, CULTURAL, AND HERITAGE ACTIVITIES

	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	KEY PLAYERS
SHORT TERM	Encourage schools, parents, and community organizations to celebrate Youth Art Month	Consider expanding opportunities for youth art displays and performances in the community	RCO, RS
	Cross-promote community-based and school-based arts, cultural, and heritage offerings	Support existing school arts events, by promoting them on community webpages and e-newsletters Work with schools to make community-based opportunities known to students and parents Raise the profile of internships and volunteer opportunities available for youth	GFDC, RCO, RS, RCC
LONG TERM	Invite arts, cultural, and heritage organizations to consider providing programming in schools	Provide successful examples and models, such as the Outdoor Sporting Heritage Museum and L.C. Bates Museum programs	RCO, RS
	Encourage artists in residence programming in schools	Provide schools and regional teaching artists with a list of funding resources Utilize the Maine Arts Commission online roster of teaching artists	GFDC, RS

Goal C. Foster the region's creative economy to attract and retain talent

OBJECTIVE C.1. DEVELOP RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATIVE ENTERPRISES

	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	KEY PLAYERS
SHORT TERM	Consider establishing Pecha Kucha gatherings to promote local talents and networking	Utilize the International Pecha Kucha website for guidance: http://www.pechakucha.org	RCO
	Work with regional chambers and economic development groups to create a narrative on arts and culture for use in business attraction promotional materials	Consider targeting businesses compatible with agriculture, such as microbreweries	GFDC, RCC
	Create an annual award recognizing a business or artist adding to the vibrancy of the region		GFDC, RCC, RM
LONG TERM	Consider creating an online greater Franklin County artist directory and resources	Look at successful models, such as the Creative Portland website Create an inventory of exhibition spaces and vacant commercial spaces appropriate for creative enterprises; make listings available online	GFDC, RCO
	Facilitate professional development offerings for creative professionals	Provide creative professionals and organizations with workshops on grant writing, utilizing social media tools, and basic business development Establish networking gatherings for artists and performers	GFDC
	Investigate developing a regional open studio tour	Look at successful models, such as Somerset County Rural Open Studios event	RCO
	Explore the feasibility of developing a makerspace		RS, GFDC

OBJECTIVE C.2. PROMOTE COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE CULTURAL SECTOR, MUNICIPAL SECTOR, BUSINESS SECTOR, AND ACADEMIC SECTOR

	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	KEY PLAYERS
SHORT TERM	Seek endorsement of the Franklin County Arts, Cultural, and Heritage Plan from municipalities and institutions within the region		GFDC, RCO, RM, RS
	Create momentum and enthusiasm across sectors by distributing an annual Franklin County Arts, Cultural, and Heritage Plan Progress Update	Highlight accomplishments, benefits, and partners	GFDC
	Continue to coordinate and involve regional arts, cultural, and heritage providers in pursuit of community development goals	Ensure the cultural sector plays a role in community planning initiatives Facilitate progress through communications, information sharing, networking, and relationship building	GFDC, RCO
LONG TERM	Cultivate support for economic and community development activities	Consider participating in the Americans for the Arts Economic Prosperity Studies and share results widely Launch a "why art and culture matter to me" initiative by collecting audience testimonials and using in messaging and promotion Develop effective means of communicating the economic impact of the creative sector	RCO
	Empower municipalities and community leaders by sharing information on communities implementing and benefiting from creative placemaking (focus on communities with characteristics similar to those of the Franklin County region to ensure information is relatable on a local level)		GFDC

Goal D. Utilize creative initiatives to emphasize the regions character of creativity and resourcefulness

OBJECTIVE D.1. GENERATE CREATIVE PUBLIC PROJECTS

	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	KEY PLAYERS
SHORT TERM	Support UMF art professors and students by highlighting temporary public art installations		RS, GFDC, RCO
	Host a creative placemaking workshop for community leaders	Focus on practical ways communities can get started that require few resources Share stories of success from other rural communities, highlight project outcomes and impact	GFDC
LONG TERM	Consider collaborating to develop an interactive history tour app that enables users to participate in self-guided tours		RHG
	Design creative public projects that utilize the arts to enhance rural features	Look at successful models, such as the Farm Art DTour project, barn quilt tours, and heritage based public art Work in partnership with the recreational sector to develop creative installations at outdoor venues Share stories of the region's history through public art projects	GFDC, RCO
	Animate parks, trails, and outdoor public spaces with creative projects	Increase interpretative signage at landmarks and historic sites Unite landmarks and sites through consistent imagery and messaging	PRD, RCO, RM
	Enhance town gateways and wayfinding signs with public art		RM, GFDC

OBJECTIVE D.2. ENRICH THE VIBRANCY OF DOWNTOWNS

	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	KEY PLAYERS
SHORT TERM	Provide regional towns with models and samples of municipal strategies that promote creative investments	Examples: funding for culture as part of infrastructure projects, real estate development incentives towards cultural contributions, percent for the arts programs, and incentives for commercial buildings to include public art	GFDC, RM
	Support local Artwalk initiatives	Utilize empty spaces and storefronts for temporary artist displays and pop up shops Organize a youth art venue to increase family participation	RCO
LONG TERM	Offer technical assistance and planning support to municipalities interested in engaging in placemaking activities	Work with towns and businesses to identify public spaces for permanent and temporary displays Employ best practices of creative placemaking Consider establishing municipal public art committees	GFDC, RM
	Encourage communities to explore options for establishing "museum in the streets"	Follow guidance provided through the Museum in the Streets website (http://www.themuseuminthestreets.com/)	GFDC, RHG, RM

