Imagine York County

Cultural Alliance of York County
Community Cultural Plan 2009-2014

A blueprint to keep creativity central in our community development and economic prosperity
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A Cultural Plan for York County provides an opportunity to stop, take stock of all our creative capital—our arts, culture, and heritage assets—assess what we have, what residents want, and, most importantly, envision what we want to be. Then, collectively, through the planning process, develop a game plan to make the vision a reality. Our Cultural Plan, and all that went into the document you are about to read, reflects the spirit of what makes our County great and demonstrates what is possible when we put our minds to it.

Now comes the challenging part when we must join hands and hearts, to commit the time, energy, and resources to turn these dreams into realities. In the end, the Cultural Plan will only be as good as our ability to implement it.

—Sally Dixon, Steering Committee Chairperson
President Memorial Health Systems

This Cultural Plan has been an extensive collaboration, starting with generous support from three funders to add to the Cultural Alliance’s funding for this plan: the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, York County Community Foundation, and York County Department of Community and Economic Development. Their belief in and support of this project enabled us to contract with a nationally respected consultant team. Each and every one of the 75 community leaders we approached to serve on the Steering Committee accepted. Once the 10-month plan schedule was set, our biggest challenge was keeping pace. Enthusiasm exceeded expectations: 60 forums and interviews kept our consultant team in overdrive with numerous spill-over interviews completed by phone. By the conclusion of our Plan, some 3,200 county residents from all walks of life participated in invigorating, lively dialogue to imagine the future of cultural development in York County: 2,460 individuals participated in the public opinion survey, including 1,246 known arts patrons, 290 artists, 120 campaign volunteers, and 804 citizens at large (including 42 who responded in Spanish). Our consultant met face-to-face with 851 residents in locations all across the county from Hanover and Hellam to Shrewsbury and York. Another 62 participated in our March 2009 vetting sessions at the Expo Center where plan strategies were sharpened and prioritized.

Perhaps one of the most stunning results of this process is what we learned about the depth and breadth of the creative sector we have. Some 290 artists of every discipline came forward to share opinions and aspirations, and to articulate concrete needs. The assessment revealed 35 organizations with missions to provide arts, culture, or heritage offerings, plus another 30 that offer arts programs, even though art is not their primary function. What’s even more exciting? When bookstores, music venues, galleries, artists’ work spaces, the music and theatre offerings at York County’s 17 school districts, college campuses and arts-related industries are added to the mix, York County’s creative sector and its broader role in community cultural development takes on exciting dimensions.

An unintended consequence of the entire planning process has been the energy and excitement generated about working together—really working together—to galvanize the creative sector and position it as a catalyst for York County’s prosperity. Given that, and looking closely at the history of arts councils in communities across America, it is clearer than ever before that now is the time for the Cultural Alliance to reposition itself, focusing on the entire creative sector and community cultural development in its broadest sense.
Among York County’s most precious assets are its culture and heritage. Our culture reflects our creativity, and our heritage holds the stories of the greatness in generations before us. I share in the support of and commitment to this plan because it represents our collective will to keep cultural assets central and vital. We will join the ranks of communities across the country who have recognized the positive effect this will have on innovation, high tech growth and the potential for longer-run economic prosperity.

—Morton F. Zifferer, Jr. Chairman, President and CEO, New Standard Corporation and founding member of the Cultural Alliance Board

We can’t find the words to adequately thank the members of our Steering Committee, who enthusiastically and generously gave of their time, advice, and wisdom, hosted forums, distributed online surveys to their employees, constituents, and customers, and served as project ambassadors at every step; this plan is richer for their involvement.

We express our sincerest appreciation to all the artists, creative sector workers, and volunteers who generously contributed their time and thoughtful insights to the plan. We owe a debt of gratitude to the residents of York County, especially the more than 3,200 residents who voiced their opinions and shared their dreams for what could be at forums and through surveys. Particular recognition is extended to the York Newspaper Company for its ongoing coverage of the entire process.

Now comes the challenging part when we must join hands and hearts, and commit time, energy, and resources to turn these dreams into realities. In the end, the Cultural Plan will be only as good as our ability to implement it. We extend special thanks to all those who stand ready to roll up their sleeves and are committed to getting things done. It is with great pride and enthusiasm that we launch our plan to pursue a vision for cultural development that will impact York County’s quality of life and economic prosperity for generations to come.

Sally J. Dixon
Steering Committee Chairperson

David G. Meckley
Cultural Alliance Board Chairman

Joanne Riley
Cultural Alliance President

Sally J. Dixon
David G. Meckley
Joanne Riley

—Sally J. Dixon
—David G. Meckley
—Joanne Riley

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND APPRECIATION

Cultural Plan Funders
Pennsylvania Council on the Arts
York County Community Foundation
York County Department of Community and Economic Development
Cultural Alliance of York County

Cultural Alliance Board Members
David Meckley, Chair
Fred Callahan, Chair-Elect
Jeff Byers, Treasurer
Joseph Clark, II, Secretary
Scott Bowman
Sally Dixon
David Freeman
Deb Goodling-Kime
George Hodges
Richard Hogentogler
Tighe King
Larry J. Miller
A. Richard Pugh
William Simpson
George Stark
Polly Stetler
Todd Toerper
Wayne Umland
Philip Yates
Jane Zarfoss
Morton Zifferer, Jr.

Directors Emeriti
Jody Appell
Arthur J. Glafelter
Robert Pullo
Tom Wolf

Cultural Plan Steering Committee Members
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Todd Toerper, Cumulus Media
Wayne Umland, Glafelter Insurance Group
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Ernie Waters, Met-Ed
Carol Williams, Artist
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Brenda Wintz, Artist
Charlie Wise, President of the Board, Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center
Frances Wolf, Artist
Bob Woods, United Way of York County
Randy Yoder, York County Honors Choir
Jane Zarfoss, Community Leader
Lourdes Zayas, Community Leader
Morton Zifferer, Jr., New Standard Corporation

† = Cultural Alliance Board
‡ = Cultural Alliance Planning Team
York County’s Creative Sector

Our cultural assessment resulted in York County’s first-ever inventory of cultural assets. Results far exceeded expectations: York County is home to 35 nonprofit organizations whose missions are specific to creative endeavors, plus 30 more entities providing art programs, even though art is not their primary function.

Arts, Culture, and Heritage Organizations

- Cap Live
- Cherry Lane Box Lunch Series (town event)
- Cultural Alliance of York County
- DreamWrights Family & Youth Theatre
- Eichelberger Performing Arts Center
- Fairie Fair
- Greater York Dance
- Hanover Community Players
- Hanover Community Singers
- Hanover Drum and Bugle Corps
- Hanover Historical Society
- Hanover Lyric Band
- Hanover Poets
- Hanover School of Dance
- Hanover String Quartet
- Historic York
- Lancaster - York Heritage Region
- Pasos Caribeños Folkloric Dance Group
- Performing Arts for Children
- Rail Trail
- Scrapplehead
- Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center
- Susquehanna Folk Music Society
- The Pullo Family Performing Arts Center
- York Art Association
- YorkArts
- York College Galleries and Cultural Services
- York College Music Department
- York County Heritage Trust
- York County Honors Choir
- York Junior Symphony Orchestra
- York Little Theatre
- York Swing Club
- York Symphony Orchestra
- York Town Craft Guild
- York Youth Symphony Orchestra
- Access York – YWCA
- Boy Scouts - York Adam
- Children's Aid Society - Lehman Center
- Community Progress Council - Head Start
- Crispus Attucks Association
- Expo Center
- Farm and Natural Lands Trust
- ForSight Vision
- Girl Scouts
- Halloween Parade (Hanover Jaycees)
- Leadership York
- Lutheran Social Services (retirement communities)
- Lutheran Social Services
- Martin Library
- New Hope Ministries
- Penn-mar Organization, Inc.
- Pressley Ridge
- Readers Cafe Poetry Competition
- Salvation Army
- Susan B. Heath Education Center
- The Arc of York County
- United Cerebral Palsy
- YMCA - Hanover
- YMCA of York and York County
- York Day Nursery
- York Jewish Community Center
- York City Special Events
- York County Literacy Council
- York Revolution (stadium events)
- YWCA of York and York County

The arts make "cents." According to Americans for the Arts, non-profit arts and cultural organizations are a $34 million dollar industry in York County. Investing in our cultural development yields much more than economic rewards. It fosters a renewed sense of community, engages our youth, and attracts the creative class. The City is pleased to partner with the Cultural Alliance of York County as, together with a host of other partners, we develop a communitywide cultural plan. We see this as an essential ingredient in the City’s continued revitalization.

—The Honorable John S. Brenner. Mayor, City of York
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction
Among our community’s most powerful assets, arts, culture, heritage, and creativity distinguish York County in a positive way. The arts are a vehicle for expression and communication of ideas. They contribute to economic vitality, community development and sustainability, provide lifelong educational opportunities for people of all ages and positively impact our quality of life. Our arts, culture, and heritage celebrate who we are as a community in all our lively diversity and our shared points of commonality. York County, led by the Cultural Alliance of York County, embarked on its first cultural assessment and plan with financial support from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, York County Community Foundation, and York County Department of Community and Economic Development. From June 2008 to April 2009, more than 3,200 residents contributed their opinions and ideas for a vision for York County’s cultural development. Even more significant are the 290 artists living in the County who came forward, and the 65 nonprofit organizations identified in the inventory. Our assessment and planning provided us with a clearer and more comprehensive view of the County’s creative sector so valued by York County residents, from the veteran patrons of the Strand and the enthusiastic fans of Cap Live, to the followers of Pasos Caribeños Folkloric Dance Group. York County’s creative sector is emerging like spring in full bloom.

—Darrell Auterson, President, York County Economic Development Corporation
An extraordinary unintended outcome of the process has been the realization that York County’s creativity could be a powerful catalyst to drive its prosperity. Our community has never been at a loss for ideas and plans. This process has helped community leaders realize the huge potential of leveraged gains when creativity is infused into community development plans. As one steering committee member put it, “If we share success, the gains are multiplied…community relationships become dynamic instead of fixed.”¹ Using creativity as a core element in community development has far reaching benefits: from increasing beauty in the design of streetscapes and boosting neighborhood revitalization, to infusing vitality in Downtown redevelopment.² This process has also amplified the need for better coordination, collaboration, and support within the creative sector and between the creative sector and the rest of York County. To this end, this plan recommends seven goals and the actions required to achieve them.

Plan Goals

I. Raise York County’s awareness of its creative sector, with all of its potential and value.
II. Increase participation in arts, culture, heritage, and creative activity.
III. Strengthen, unify, and support the creative sector as a catalyst for York County’s prosperity.
IV. Promote and support arts education and lifelong learning.
V. Reposition the Cultural Alliance to serve and support the entire creative sector.
VI. Strategically advance community cultural development.
VII. Generate and leverage financial support for community cultural development.

¹ William H. Swartz III, Steering Committee member
² Beautiful York Action Plan 2006-2007; Recapture the Riverfront, Codorus Creek, February 2006; Metro York, A Revolution in Progress, April 2008; Strategic Plan: 2008-2010 City of York Department of Economic Development and Redevelopment Authority; York Arts District Conceptual Plan; York County’s 2008 Turning Points; and, York’s Downtown Action Plan

The tenth anniversary of the Cultural Alliance provides an opportune time for it to stop, take stock of all our community’s cultural assets and determine new ways to use creativity to make York County even greater. It takes courage and collective action to stretch. This plan creates waypoints for a level of cultural development we’ve only begun to imagine. It is up to all of us to unite together to ensure the success we envision will be achieved.

—Robert Pullo
Imagine the Cultural Landscape in York County in the Year 2020

Welcome to York County. Change in our County over the past decade can be characterized as nothing less than phenomenal. It emerged with the simple realization that creativity has transformative powers. Creativity reflects the heart and soul in each one of us - regardless of age, ethnicity, or station in life. And so, in 2010, by broad base community consensus, creativity again became a focal point as it once was in York County when we were a leading manufacturing and industrial center in America. In 2009, in response to the need for a significant shift, the Alliance for Investment in Creative York adopted a wider focus to unify and support the entire creative sector and coordinate community cultural development. Real change began to emerge. Creativity again became a recognized core strength of the County. It served as the connector of ideas. It provided depth and breadth to the quality of life, and by 2012, as the nation’s economy rebounded after a difficult period, York County was poised for a renaissance in which creative vitality translated into economic dynamism. Creativity in our community’s cultural development continues to influence countless aspects of York County for the better.

- The first example of this on a grand scale is the City of York’s revitalization. In 2009, leading city development projects already underway were brought together with others similarly vested in the good of the community to create a “formula for community revitalization,” of which creativity was the most important element. Coordinated by the Alliance (now called Alliance for Investment in Creative York), what started as a small scale Art Institute student housing project sparked a critical mass of activity larger than any one entity could have achieved on its own. Empty storefronts were replaced with restaurants, cafés, and a variety of shops offering everything from antiques, art, and books to boutique clothing, and more. Artists’ studios, downtown campus annexes of area colleges, a technology institute, the arts incubator at the Eagles Building, and residential development that began with Codo were the precursors of exciting revitalization. Over the next few years, the combination of the Central Market, Northwest Triangle, Codorus riverfront development, and the Strand-Capitol, the region’s premier performing arts center, achieved a long-sought balance of residential, business, and things-to-do and is still growing strong. Economic activity and the tax revenue it has generated have restored City government services to optimal levels. We’re living the vision of neighborhood beautification put forward by Beautiful York 15 years ago. The rising tide in the City and County has raised many boats, and the quality of life in the City continues to improve for all residents.

- Development of the Susquehanna Heritage Park has been a successful example of the ‘formula for community revitalization’ on a countywide basis. With assistance from both government and the private sector, the
Susquehanna Heritage Park is flourishing. Its Highpoint Heritage Trail, John and Kathryn Zimmerman Center for Heritage, and the new Susquehanna Gateway River Heritage Center serve as a great source of pride for the County (and state!) as a national model for heritage education, green architecture, and sustainable heritage and outdoor tourism. Contiguous public lands purchased by or donated to Heritage Park partners host an outdoor art park featuring the region’s best artists, now a prominent feature of the Pennsylvania Artisan Trails. This beautiful site is a popular destination for county residents as well as a growing number of international visitors intrigued with the history of the region. Through the Susquehanna Heritage Park and other river-focused programs and projects, the Lancaster York Heritage Region has helped ensure that the beauty of Susquehanna River Corridor and its historic legacy will be preserved for generations to come.

- Arts participation is up! Deep-rooted collaboration and cross promotion with the hospitality industry, York Fair, the Expo Center, and York Revolution baseball are proven out-of-County audience-building strategies. Partnerships with record numbers of community nonprofits, youth programs, and schools are the primary factor for a dramatic in-County increase in our participant demographic base. This, in turn, has fueled the demand and built the market for greater variety in offerings. Now flourishing are partnerships between York County’s creative sector with those of Baltimore, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Washington, Pittsburgh, Lancaster, and even New York. We’re both importing and exporting creativity!

- York County’s creative sector enjoys unprecedented success. Over the past 10 years, efforts to strengthen and support all arts, culture and heritage, and creative activity mean that York County has a wider variety of offerings. Not only is County participation higher, but there’s a loyal following from outside as well. More participation has steadily boosted the sector’s earned income and, with it, far more citizen support of each organization. Careful, gradually expanded access to the Arts Fund and its technical support has resulted in a healthier, thriving creative sector. The Arts Fund’s portfolio of funding opportunities now includes operating, project, and partnership investment; professional development and travel scholarships; low-interest loans, and venture capital. The Cultural Development Trust’s excellent professional development and service offerings provide organizations with specialized expertise they could never afford on their own.

- Resident response to the increased variety, relevance, and quality of offerings is clear in annual audience metrics. Participation trends have been the best “shot in the arm” for Arts Fund success. Not only have dollars steadily increased since 2012, but the donor base comprises a larger share of the County’s growing business base. Private sector support continues to effectively leverage public sector investment.

The arts are a vital part of the human experience. They draw people to, and spur them on, along the pathway toward lifelong learning. It is important that residents of all ages - especially our young people - have opportunities to participate in and experience the arts. I’m very excited about this cultural plan because of its goal to build awareness and increase opportunities for those who want to participate.

- Ernie Waters, Metropolitan Edison Company

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Our community of artists has grown exponentially. Each year a new class of budding artists enrolls in York’s institutions of higher learning to study theatre, art, and music. Given the County’s proximity to major metropolitan centers, our affordable cost of living, and arts-related job opportunities, many artists stay here. Community revitalization, with all of its opportunities for artists to live and work, is now attracting creative people from all over the world to York County. Artists are social entrepreneurs selling their wares as well as their vision. Creativity and innovation-bursting from live/work spaces, incubators, and co-ops adapted for arts reuse in some of the County’s oldest structures—are tourist draws and magnets for both online and in-person commerce.

The York County Economic Development Corporation attributes its success in building the County’s workforce, in part, to the County’s growing cultural development clusters of nonprofit, commercial, and informal creative assets. Not only are there more jobs in the creative sector than ever before, but innovation and creativity are more prominent in the workforce. The economic impact of the arts has increased four-fold since 2007. York County’s arts-related businesses have increased from 574 in 2008 to just over 750 in 2020. And let’s not forget the value of community vitality and quality of life as attractive assets in business relocation. Among the many reasons families move to York, the level of creative assets now also figures prominently, according to the YCEDC.

Building on the success of a 15-year partnership with the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the Alliance for Investment in Creative York provides residencies to both artists and organizations in a three-county region and in all of York County’s 17 school districts. Being a leading provider of arts education programs, teacher training, artist training, curriculum-based arts integration, internships, and more has continued the Alliance’s value to the entire education community. Also significant has been the role of the Alliance in coordinating and linking countywide arts education initiatives.

Art should not solely be considered as a monetary investment, the investment in art is much deeper. In truth, we should design beauty into every environment.

—Casey Tyrell & Patrick Sells, the Artist Homestead Program

York County Heritage Trust is moving ahead and changing significantly; however, like ships, organizations take time to turn—organizational cultural change does come slowly! Thankfully this cultural plan embraces a new future in which financial investment will be supported with other valuable administrative services and technical expertise to help us.

—Joan J. Mummert, President & CEO, York County Heritage Trust
YORK COUNTY HISTORY

Before we move forward, it is important to reflect on York County’s distinguished history. The County’s significant role in American history, its agricultural richness, and a long, successful legacy of industrial development form the bedrock upon which we have built this Cultural Plan. York County’s settlement dates back three centuries to 1681, when William Penn created a community for persecuted Quaker Brethren.

Over the next 100 years, the lure of America’s new frontier would attract English, Dutch, German, Irish, Scots, and other European immigrants. In 1749—some 260 years ago—York County was established. York’s citizens were at the forefront of every chapter in American History: York’s organized resistance during the American Revolution provided critical support to the Union Army. In 1776, the Declaration of Independence was read on the steps of the Centre Square courthouse. A little known fact is the Articles of Confederation were drafted in York in 1777 by the Continental Congress. Major turning points in the Civil War also occurred in York. During World War II, The 14-point York Plan, a program combining community resources to increase productivity for meeting the demand for war material was widely emulated throughout the nation.

Located in the Susquehanna Valley, 910-square-mile York County is home to 421,000 residents today. This beautiful bucolic region with its affordable cost of living is within just a few hours’ drive from New York City, Washington, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. York County’s Interstate 83 and Route 30, the major east-west highways connecting York with Gettysburg and Lancaster, provide links for heightened regional cultural development.

Among York County’s greatest assets are its roots in American history, the Rail Trail, a world-class parks system, the Susquehanna River, and a host of arts and cultural amenities. The County salutes the Cultural Alliance and will continue to support its efforts to coalesce our cultural & heritage resources around common goals that will benefit the County for generations to come.

—Chuck Noll
Chief Clerk and Administrator,
York County Government

We are so excited with the proposed direction of the Cultural Alliance as a resource for our community’s artists, arts, cultural and heritage organizations. This new approach will improve coordination and strengthen the collective contribution of the creative sector to the community at large in a significant and important way.

—Randy Freedman,
Executive Director,
York Jewish Community Center
York County’s Creative Sector
In 1999, corporate leaders established the Cultural Alliance of York County with the primary purpose of raising funds each year for the County’s more established arts and cultural organizations: the Art Association (the oldest of York County’s cultural organizations, created in 1905), Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center, YorkArts, York County Heritage Trust, York Junior Symphony Orchestra, York Little Theatre, York Symphony Orchestra, and the York Youth Symphony Orchestra. In recent years, the Cultural Alliance expanded its services to assist artists (more than 300 with York County addresses) and some 50 nonprofit organizations of all artistic genres—beyond its funded members—that have taken root in York County, and to provide cultural opportunities to residents. The Cultural Alliance also administers Pennsylvania Council on the Art’s Arts in Education Partnership, the National Endowment for the Arts, and Poetry Foundation’s Poetry Out Loud.

Plan Background
This Cultural Plan, 10 months in the making—from June 2008 through April 2009—builds on a 2008 market study,1 which set the stage for what could be, by quantifying significant potential regional demand for arts activity. A nationally known arts consulting firm, Diane L. Mataraza, Inc.,4 was retained to facilitate a community planning process in which more than 3,200 residents participated.

Sally Dixon, a Cultural Alliance board member and CEO of Memorial Health Systems, was appointed steering committee chairperson, and by September 2008, a committee-75 strong and representative of every segment of the community—was in place.

The planning process was launched in search of answers to the following questions:

1. What should be the role of cultural development in York County? What are elements of a shared vision? What are unique City/County-specific assets?
2. What kinds of arts, culture, and heritage offerings do York County residents want now and for future generations?
3. What kind of image does York County have, and how can its creative capital strengthen it?
4. Who are York County’s arts, culture, and heritage providers? What are their needs (administrative, funding programmatic) and how can their needs be addressed?
5. How can the creative sector contribute to York County’s prosperity?
6. If we believe the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, how does honoring individual hopes and desires of York County communities enrich a countywide plan?

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2. Diane L. Mataraza Inc. is a firm based in Viera, Florida. See Appendix H.
How We Planned: An Overview of Our Methodology

On June 24, 2008, the Cultural Plan framework was presented to the boards of the Cultural Alliance’s member agencies at the Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center. Given the enthusiasm of that first gathering, an Alliance Planning Team was appointed to closely guide the process and work hand-in-hand with the Consultant Team. By September, 75 community leaders representing all sectors and geographic areas of the County were appointed to the Steering Committee, and on September 10, this plan’s methodology was unanimously approved.

1. Context Setting
   - Analysis of existing York County plans
   - National and regional cultural development trends
   - Review of strategic plans, Web sites, allocation materials, and literature of the Cultural Alliance’s member agencies and of other community providers. From the start, the intent was to ensure this Cultural Plan would complement the plans of York County’s cultural providers.

2. Consultant Visits
   The lead consultant made seven trips to York, for a total of 17 days, during June, September, and November 2008, and January, February, March, April, and May 2009.

3. Community Forums
   From June 2008 to February 2009, 60 forums brought together 851 community members representing a cross-section of York County to share opinions about the County’s strengths, needs, opportunities, and challenges, and to share their vision for the County’s ideal cultural development. Forums were convened in classrooms, business offices, stores, at service club gatherings, in schools, on college campuses, in conference rooms of many community organizations, coffee shops, at City Hall, the County Office Building, at art venues - even at an historic property on the banks of the Susquehanna River.

4. Surveying
   From October through December 2008, York County artists were invited to respond to questions in an online survey regarding needs, priorities, and opinions about existing services and desired future services. Survey promotion included

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5 The Art Association, Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center, YorkArts, York County Heritage Trust, York Junior Symphony Orchestra, York Little Theatre, York Symphony Orchestra, York Youth Symphony Orchestra, and Greater York Dance.
6 Alliance Planning Team members were: Jessica Brubaker, Fred Callahan, Sally Dixon, Janie Dollish, Lori Frush Schmeltz, Jan Herrold, Dave Meckley, Brian Rogers, Ernie Waters, and Mort Zifferer, Jr.
7 Appendix E lists all resources informing this plan.
8 The Art Association, Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center, YorkArts, and York County Heritage Trust, York Junior Symphony Orchestra, York Little Theatre, York Symphony Orchestra, York Youth Symphony Orchestra, and Greater York Dance, plus Cap Live, DreamWrights Youth & Family Theatre, the Eichelberger Performing Arts Center, Lancaster-York Heritage Region, The Pullo Family Performing Arts Center (Penn State/York), York College Galleries and Cultural Services, and York Jewish Community Center.

In 2007, 110 million leisure travelers spent $2.7 billion in Pennsylvania. 1.5 million of those travelers visited Gettysburg, just 30 miles from here. This plan sets the stage for stronger cooperation on cultural tourism strategies - for starters - securing Way-finding signage. All of us at the CVB are excited to be part of the planning process and in building a stronger cultural and heritage identity for York County.
—David VanArsdale, President
Convention and Visitors Bureau
email blasts to the Cultural Alliance’s artists’ lists, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts’ list of York-based artists, and through the media; 290 artists responded.

From October 2008 through January 2009, 35 arts, education, culture, and heritage nonprofit arts organizations—as well as 30 organizations whose missions are not “arts,” but who provide arts services—were mailed organization surveys to collect data about, and assess needs of, all cultural providers. Twenty-four responded for a return rate of 80 percent. Results are included in Section IV (Complete Assessment Report) of this plan.

A massive effort also was launched to collect public opinion. A 15-question survey was available online and in hard copy in English and Spanish. Steering Committee members provided the link to their employees, members, and constituents, and articles in the York Daily Record promoted the link. In all, 2,170 residents completed the survey; among them, 1,246 known arts patrons, 120 campaign volunteers, and 804 citizens at large (including 42 who responded in Spanish). Complete public opinion data are also in Section V of this plan.

5. Market Analysis
To assess current and future audiences for programming in York County, consultants used findings from 2007-2008 research. A market research project involved MOSAIC lifestyle analysis of more than 26,000 households affiliated with the Cultural Alliance’s member agencies, the Pullo Center at Penn State, and the York College

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Survey instruments are in Section IV, Complete Assessment Report.

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The opportunity to work with other arts organizations in developing the York County Cultural Plan has been beneficial. The power of partnering lies not only in a Plan which benefits the entire regional arts community, but also in the sense of cooperation and common purpose which was fostered among the participating organizations.

The York Symphony Orchestra has benefited enormously from the Cultural Alliance’s 10-year financial investment, and deeply appreciates this blueprint’s commitment to provide ongoing support. That commitment, coupled with the promise of assistance in helping the entire cultural sector, increases our reach and relevance, and is most welcomed.

—Dr. John McConville, Board President
—Dr. Robert Hart Baker, Conductor & Artistic Director
—Deb Chronister, Chief Operating Officer
Cultural Series. To augment market research findings, the consultants implemented a second series of online surveys to 2007-2008 participants to further gauge awareness, perceptions, and priorities for programming, marketing, and accessibility. This same survey was promoted through viral networking, promotion through the Cultural Alliance Web site, and in the York Daily Register. A paper version of the survey was made available in both Spanish and English. Topical surveys also were administered to arts and cultural providers, community organizations, and artists. As part of the patron survey, each organization providing email addresses to the consultants received a brief report of findings about their own patron base, along with feedback on program value and meaning to each organization.

6. The Community Critique: Vetting Sessions
Sixty-two community members participated in vetting sessions to review assessment findings and plan recommendations. The Expo Center hosted ten sessions from March 18 – 19, 2009, to review assessment findings with respect to five theme areas.\(^{10}\) Vetting session results provided clarity and priority to proposed plan strategies. These sessions also resulted in synergies built with potential collaborators and funding sources.

7. Leadership Reviews
Crucial to this methodology were the presentations, reviews, and discussion with key leaders over the course of the 10-month plan. The consultant met four times with the Steering Committee, three times with the Cultural Alliance Planning Team, twice with the Cultural Alliance Board, and twice with both artists and representatives from arts, culture, and heritage organizations.

\(^{10}\) See Cultural Plan Vetting announcement in Section IV, Complete Assessment Report.

As one of the oldest arts organizations in York County, York Little Theatre applauds the cultural plan’s intent to build stronger working relationships within the cultural community, and also to see that the cultural community plays a role in agendas important to the residents of our County. Each arts organization can continue to take small steps toward community cultural development, or we can join forces to make a collective impact much larger than any one organization could accomplish on its own.

—Bob Haag, President, Board of Directors
—Julie Aiken, Managing Director
York Little Theatre
Guiding Principles and Core Values of Community Cultural Development

York County’s community cultural development is grounded in the following shared beliefs:

1. The arts are important to economic development and community prosperity.
2. The arts are for everyone.
3. The arts are a necessary part of our civic life.
4. The cultural life of the community must be nurtured.
5. The arts are integral to the education of every child.
6. Adequate financial investment and leveraged resources are essential to arts accessibility and participation.

York County’s significant role in American history, its agricultural richness, and a long, successful legacy of industrial development form the bedrock upon which we have built this Cultural Plan.

*Norman Wood Bridge* (Source: Wagman Construction, Inc.)
Conclusion

York County stands at an opportune moment in time to make its creativity and rich historic legacy central factors in community development and to view them as essential valuable assets in the County’s economic prosperity. This planning process uncovered a core realization about the power and value of creativity and generated an unexpected level of community enthusiasm, passion, and optimism.

The County is extraordinarily well-positioned to successfully implement this plan for a number of reasons:

- The depth and breadth of consensus and enthusiasm;
- The will and desire to find and commit resources;
- A genuine spirit of cooperation and a willingness to work across traditional boundaries-something this community has in the past been known NOT to do. What developed over the course of the 10-month process was a remarkable convergence of thinking and preliminary commitment of energy and assets. While we hoped for such a result, we could not imagine the level and extent to which it was actually realized;
- The significant potential of the creative sector as a whole-when it is amassed, unified, and organized according to the recommendations of this plan.

It is important to point out that the Cultural Alliance will play an ever stronger role as catalyst and facilitator of the County’s cultural development. The organization’s leadership demonstrated remarkable foresight and whole-hearted commitment of resources to undertake the plan’s development and-going forward-to lead its deployment.

- It has already won national attention and recognition for its Arts Fund, ranked highest in the U.S. for consistently reaching its fundraising goals;
- York County’s selection as the location for the 2009 Governor’s Awards for the Arts indicates the State’s recognition of the Cultural Alliance’s stature, track record of accomplishments, and promise of great things to come;
- Its board strength, capable staff, courage and intelligence in taking on challenges, and the likelihood for success are commendable (as compared to many other communities in which the consultant team has worked).

The recommendations in this plan have the potential to accomplish what York County envisions, including favorable impact on the community’s quality of life, image, and brand-thanks to its arts, culture, heritage, and creative activity, along with the above positive indicators-and thereby will bring about far-reaching benefits for generations to come.
II. PLAN DETAIL

Creative sector goals and actions to accomplish them

I. Raise York County’s awareness of its creative sector, with all its potential and value.

Ensuring that the arts become better known, valued, and relevant is the underpinning of successful cultural development. More than half the 2,460 survey respondents are travelling to Harrisburg, Baltimore, and Lancaster for live performing arts events, to visit a museum, or an historic site. In forums and interviews a common response to the question: “What needs to be done to increase participation?” was: more information about all York County offerings. “Residents want one easily accessible source to spell out what’s available.” “Arts and cultural offerings of all kinds would be of interest, but you first need to promote them.” Another frequently heard recommendation was for more advance notice about events.

Teachers asked for a Web site where they could find information about artists trained to work in classrooms, as well as performances and programs available for schools. Community-based organizations expressed how helpful a well-advertised central source for all arts-related information would be.

York County lies in proximity to many other markets, but organizations can’t afford to advertise in each location; therefore, a central advertising and PR strategy to promote York’s arts offerings is urgently needed. In addition, the challenge of keeping pace with demands for information through the electronic media far outpaces the capacity of organizations’ PR staffs ability to fulfill. For example, the Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center requires a full-time intern to keep its program information current on 29 electronic calendars.

Among the many needs articulated by artists, the highest-ranked is a centralized database to promote all creative individuals. Because the Cultural Alliance’s role in building awareness is essential, this Plan provides a number of recommendations to increase such awareness, especially in its first year.

Actions

I.A See that information about arts, culture, and heritage, offerings regularly reaches all York County residents.

I.A.1 Strategically use local media to the sector’s advantage. Convene a gathering with the media and creative sector at least three times a year to, e.g., 1) promote the new season; 2) promote summer camps and other family activities; 3) promote seasonal work with community-based organizations.

I.A.2 Make arts, culture, and heritage information more visible on the Internet. Develop a central database (online directory) of all York County artists, scholars, historians, and culture and heritage resources and opportunities. For organizations, include program descriptions, admissions information, references, age appeal, indication of family-friendly events. Link to other well-trafficked Web sites (schools, community organizations, realtors, tourism, etc.). For artists and creative individuals, include genre, work samples, descriptions, credentials, price ranges, references, etc.

I.A.3 Continue collaborative marketing initiatives. Conduct research to find new ways to connect the community and its creativity and heritage.
I.A.4 Capitalize on economies of scale with promotion. Form partnerships with the County’s biggest promoters to dovetail promotion whenever possible.

I.A.5 Develop a Web-based countywide inventory of venues, exhibitions, studios, performance spaces, and indoor and outdoor spaces for arts use, rehearsals, performances, classes, etc. with contact information, descriptions, fee schedules; post on the Web.

I.B Continually sharpen the creative sector’s community-building methodology to increase awareness, ownership, and pride.

I.B.1 With the sector, develop best outreach practices rooted in shared goals to make the arts more relevant, accessible, and affordable. Develop basic, effective tools and strategies to improve customer service; build more connectivity to creative and visitor experiences.

I.B.2 Provide professional development workshops to help organizations sharpen marketing/pr skills. Focus on Generation Xers and Yers, Arts Fund contributor employees, underserved populations, and market segments from 2008 Research Report. Publish a 24-month schedule enabling participants to budget and plan.

I.B.3 Coordinate standardized audience surveying to measure the sector’s collective progress toward goals.

I.B.4 Facilitate partnership building. Where appropriate, facilitate communication and list exchange between the creative sector and community-based organizations. Promote cultural opportunities in all publications/Web sites. Seek community organization advice to build better, affordable connections between arts and their constituencies; bring the arts to where their constituents are.

I.C Build regional and national awareness of York’s creative and heritage resources.

I.C.1 Develop way-finding signage. Develop an attractive, vibrant, coherent set of signs, trails, and way-finding information.

I.C.2 Make creative sector programming more visible using regional and statewide media.

I.C.3 Compete for and win national awards for community design, creativity, and revitalization. Better promote awards already received.

I.D Celebrate the County’s cultural development successes!

I.D.1 Sponsor annual arts, culture, and heritage awards to honor York County individuals, organizations, businesses, and other entities who contribute to this Plan’s implementation.

II. Increase participation in arts, culture, heritage, and creative activity.

If York County is going to achieve the cultural development of the creative sector it envisions, local participation must improve, and the diversity and quality of its offerings must become better known on the regional, statewide, and national radar.

Just how successful York County’s arts, culture, and heritage organizations are in attracting audiences was the focus of a comprehensive market study completed in Spring 2008. It told us 16.4 percent of the County’s 163,660 households receive information directly from 11 organizations. What’s most promising is the potential for increased participation. Of 2,460 respondents to the Cultural Plan public opinion survey, 90.4 percent believe arts, culture, and heritage opportunities make a positive contribution to the quality of life, and 67 percent told us they would attend more arts and cultural offerings in York County if the content of the offerings were more enjoyable, interesting, and relevant to them. The County’s creative sector must make its offerings more attractive, and would be well-served to collaborate more on promotion, PR, and marketing; moreover, the sector must provide compelling reasons why residents should attend events closer to home. One community leader expressed a common opinion: “Supply is not responsive to demand. York’s

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11 Section V.
The art scene is not broad enough or good enough...we must have a better reputation for the offerings we provide. We have beloved institutions but not beloved programs.”

A top priority of the Cultural Alliance should be improved marketing and promotion of the creative sector as a whole. With one hand the Alliance should work to strengthen York County’s creative activity, and with the other it should aggressively pursue regional alliances that more broadly elevate the image and stature of these activities.

“There is nothing here that attracts us. We regularly travel to Baltimore.” “Events and performances offered are ok, but I find they’re too sophisticated or esoteric, too staid, so-so quality, or of little interest.” “With offerings of neighboring cities so easy for us to get to, York needs to make programming more creative and fun.” “Give us reasons to go to things here and we gladly will.” “With due respect to the organizations here, they need far more professional marketing if they’re going to attract visitors to York as a historical destination of choice.” “The real asset of York is its past. You’d never know it, looking at the low number of tourists who come here.”

Actions

II.A Strengthen creative sector marketing, advertising, and cross-selling capacity.

II.A.1 Create a culture and heritage calendar linked to York County’s most highly visited Web sites. Determine ways to then market the calendar. Include a MapQuest link.

II.A.2 Better coordinate event information. Designate a consistent place in all media, including new media-e.g., cable calendars, blogs-where information about cultural events and opportunities can always be found.

II.B Convert Arts Fund Givers to Arts Goers.

II.B.1 Develop an annual strategy to increase Arts Fund employee families’ participation. For example, backstage tours, access to rehearsals, meet the artists, talk-back with cast members, opportunities for donors to sit on stage with musicians, special seating at events, etc.

II.B.2 Develop strategies and opportunities for artists to work with York County businesses, human service organizations and others to increase innovation and productivity, improve and beautify work environments, improve teamwork, etc.

II.C Facilitate creative sector communication with entities linked to unreach ed markets.

II.C.1 Increase communication and collaboration between the creative sector and the community’s most effective organizations to provide creative opportunities and experiences for their constituents.

II.C.2 Explore a “Ticket match” program with area businesses and corporations.

II.D Increase the creative opportunities and participation in the arts of York County’s youth.

II.D.1 Develop strategies to reach students outside schools. Communicate and collaborate with libraries, Head Start, day schools, youth internship programs, municipal summer programs, camps, and other youth programs.

II.D.2 Develop and widely promote a student tickets program. Provide youth served by community-based organizations, public and private school students, and home-schooled students with tickets to attend not only York County arts and cultural performances, but also rehearsals, sound checks, etc. Learn from “Take Five” (NYC program), Miami Culture Shock.com.

II.E Cultivate a stronger artists market.

II.E.1 Include artists at job fairs.

II.E.2 Promote the utility and value of creative individuals in the community. Provide examples of artists’ roles in business, education, community development, human services, health and wellness, and design.

II.E.3 Highlight successful examples of Objective II.E on the Cultural Alliance’s Web site plus other highly trafficked Web sites of potential users.
III. Strengthen, unify, and support the creative sector as a catalyst for York County’s prosperity.

It is fair to say that if the Cultural Alliance’s stewardship and technical support of the entire creative sector were as successful as the annual campaign to support its funded member organizations, York County’s cultural scene would be stronger and receive much higher marks from residents. Sixty-five organizations provide arts, culture, or heritage offerings, of which 30 are churches, colleges and schools, and human service and youth service organizations. These non-arts organizations reported 157,297 participants in their arts programs last year. In the eyes of consumers, there is no distinction between a performance offered by their church, high school, a for-profit arts venue, or a bona fide nonprofit arts organization. Given that, to the extent resources will allow, this Plan recommends that the Cultural Alliance provide technical services and support to sharpen, polish, and increase the quality of all York County arts, culture, heritage, and creative activity.

Prior to this planning process, there was no effort to organize the community of artists in the County. Based on the Cultural Alliance’s mailing list, there are some 460 creative individuals whose home is York County: 290 of them responded to the assessment survey! Painters, writers, potters, filmmakers, glass artists, actors, musicians, dancers, storytellers, designers, and photographers provide York County with creative ingenuity and energy. Artists who participated in the survey provided important insights as to what the Cultural Alliance could be doing to facilitate their greater involvement in enriching cultural development, starting with raising awareness of their presence, promoting their value to creative industries, and generating opportunities for their participation in education, and youth and community-based programs.

Actions

III.A Unify the creative sector.

III.A.1 Strengthen sector communication among and between artists, creative individuals, arts, culture, and heritage organizations. Distribute monthly e-blasts to promote current successful partnerships and their results, and keep the sector informed about opportunities, resources, events, professional development, and more.

III.A.2 Continue and expand upon the Board-to-Board gatherings. Use gatherings as strategy sessions to improve collaboration, innovation, partnerships, solutions, etc.

III.A.3 Facilitate regular convenings of artists and all arts providers. Bring in regional and national speakers to address challenging issues, such as marketing to Generation Xers and Yers, e-commerce, using new technology, etc., and provide the opportunity for communication and networking. (e.g., Center for Emerging and Visual Artists in Philadelphia, regional media, the Nonprofit Finance Fund, and more.).

III.A.4 Establish a “Leadership York” for artists.

III.B Develop and maintain services to strengthen the sector.

III.B.1 Strengthen administrative policy and practice of creative sector organizations as a part of the Cultural Alliance’s financial service offerings. Develop common guidelines (standards, core values). Focus first on operational excellence, and later on artistic quality. Include customer service, operating standards, financial best practices, and more. Borrow industry standards from Association of Performing Arts Presenters, Nonprofit Finance Fund, American Symphony Orchestra League, and other national arts trade associations.

III.B.2 Offer an annual series of capacity building workshops and training (e.g., mentorships, coaching) to help organizations and arts workers sharpen administrative practices, increase earned income, etc.

III.B.3 Create learning opportunities for artists. Offer professional development and training, such as the business of being an artist; certificate
program for community-based instruction; legal and accounting information every artist should have; how to market oneself regionally, nationally, internationally. Artists’ creativity would not be compromised by bureaucracy.

III.B.4 Develop a creative sector group purchasing program for office supplies, equipment, printing, lumber, joint media, etc.

III.B.5 Provide online information for artist and organization best practices (what peers are charging for services, standards, contract samples, etc.)

III.B.6 Develop a menu of shared services for janitorial services, accountants, lawyers, bookkeepers, marketing firms, IT support, Web masters, database managers, HR specialists, etc. to work pro bono or at nonprofit rates. Alliance could facilitate subcontracting as and only if needed.

III.B.7 Provide access to group health insurance. Work with area associations to develop health insurance for artists and arts employees.

III.C Help emerging artists and organizations to succeed.

III.C.1 Create an arts incubator in the cities of York and Hanover (and/or better publicize existing places) where artists and emerging groups can have access to basic equipment to support their endeavors (computers, photocopying, desk space, phones, fax).

III.D Strengthen creative sector volunteerism.

III.D.1 Offer board training, guidelines, best practices, and standards to strengthen creative sector governance.

III.D.2 Create a system to identify, recruit, and train qualified candidates to serve on creative sector boards. Develop artist leadership and governance guidelines, and link to the Cultural Alliance’s financial services.

III.E Determine gaps in arts, culture, heritage, and creative activity and work with the sector to fill them.

III.E.1 Review the inventory of York County offerings and determine gaps. Work with local providers to build partnerships with Philadelphia, Baltimore, Lancaster, Harrisburg, and other Mid-Atlantic presenters to provide greater diversity and accessibility of offerings.

IV. Promote and support arts education and lifelong learning in the arts.

Of 19 questions related to residents’ opinions about the arts, arts education ranked highest. Ninety-one percent of all survey respondents believe that arts in their schools are important—and furthermore, that those arts, culture, and heritage programs help children develop creative skills that enhance their achievements in other academic areas. There are 128 schools in York County’s 17 districts, and the Cultural Alliance’s Arts in Education Partnership, funded by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts in the three-county region, currently has residencies in 12 schools for a 10 percent reach. As is the case in communities across America, arts education in York County schools has been vulnerable, though ironically, arts education is what York County residents are most passionate about!

Though there is community will and passion about arts education, York County’s initiatives and efforts are not well-coordinated. Individuals involved in arts magnet and arts charter schools are either unaware or uninformed about efforts similar to their own. York County’s school districts require coordination and information-sharing about arts education countywide and across all districts.

The topic is enormous and timely. Research shows that involvement in the creative process helps students learn, raises test scores, and otherwise contributes to their success. And by sharing research, case studies, and best practices with all partners, the Cultural Alliance could make an invaluable investment in the future of York County’s children.

Actions

1.A Expand the Cultural Alliance’s reputation as the ‘go-to’ source for arts education information for all ages and for all populations.
IV.A.1 Maintain arts education information on the Cultural Alliance Web site. Provide:

- current research on arts education
- information about arts education funding opportunities
- arts education professional development opportunities
- information about public and private schools’ arts events on the creative sector’s events calendar
- arts education information for special populations
- a roster of artists and creative individuals trained and available to work in school-based settings.
- how-to information to apply for and run artist residencies
- success stories

IV.B. Continue the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts’ Arts in Education Partnership program and expand as resources allow.

IV.B.1 Increase Arts in Education Partnership programming. Increase the number of schools in York County where Pennsylvania Arts in Education Partnership programs are offered.

IV.B.2 Actively recruit and train artists to work in school settings.

IV.C. Continue to play a leadership role in countywide arts education coordination and information sharing between the creative sector and schools.

IV.C.1 Convene leaders of arts-based education initiatives. E.g., at charter schools, magnet schools, William Penn Performing Arts program. Expedite communication, resource sharing, and collaboration among all efforts. Include all art forms (poetry, writing, etc.)

IV.C.2 Raise awareness of County art and music teachers about the County’s cultural resources and programs. Use in-services to provide arts education training. Involve arts education staff of York County’s organizations and arts education speakers from the region.

IV.C.3 Raise awareness of superintendents and principals about the County’s creative sector’s resources and programs. With creative sector leaders, make presentations to County superintendents at least once a year, outlining opportunities aligned with state academic standards. Host superintendents’ meeting at a cultural or historic site.

IV.C.4 Create a multi-county training program for public and private school teachers-a sort of “culture college.” Increase awareness of the creative sector and historic resources in the region and how to better connect with them.

V. Reposition the Cultural Alliance to serve and support the entire creative sector.
The Cultural Alliance needs to become the universally known and trusted “go-to” source for York County’s entire creative sector. Besides direct and leveraged investments, this Plan recommends that the Alliance provide technical support and assistance enabling artists and organizations to be the best they can be. Strengthening and consolidating the sector to improve its reach and relevance is a core theme of this Plan.

The Cultural Alliance was created in 1999 by York County business leaders as a fundraising mechanism to support a select group of arts and cultural organizations. Every year, the campaign has been the central focus of the Alliance, recruiting more than 200 volunteers to generate funds-more than $8.3 million since its inception. Today, that group of funded organizations represents only 1/7 of all arts providers-a growing sector with enormous potential. Similar to the way in which chambers of commerce and economic development corporations have been established to guide and support the development of their constituencies, so the Cultural Alliance should now become a full-service local arts agency that serves artists and organizations of every kind and size. To that end, this Plan recommends a three-point focus for repositioning the Alliance: financial services rooted in the fundraising campaign, but expanded to include far more; technical and professional development services to strengthen the sector, and a community development arm to take a proactive role in ensuring that the arts are a vital part of development initiatives.

Actions
V.A Strengthen Cultural Alliance operations.
V.A.1 Evolve the Cultural Alliance into a full service arts council focused on helping the entire population of arts, culture, and heritage providers (not just the funded members) succeed.

V.A.2 Fortify the Cultural Alliance to successfully guide creative sector development and implement this Plan. Expand staff expertise and skill sets according to the staffing plan in Appendix C.

V.A.3 Lead by example. Document policies, procedures, administrative systems, database, and more. Incorporate plan goals into staff performance evaluations.

V.A.4 Continually assess, monitor, and fine-tune the value of the Cultural Alliance’s programs and services to keep them aligned with cultural plan goals.

V.A.5 Model an esprit de corps that ensures that the Cultural Alliance and all its constituents are working together effectively to achieve cultural development goals.

V.B With its constituents, rebrand the Cultural Alliance and creative sector.
V.B.1 Change the name of the Cultural Alliance to signify this proposed role expansion. Consider “Alliance for Investment in Creative York.”

V.B.2 Build a brand for the creative sector that dovetails with the City’s and County’s brand. Encourage the creative sector to adopt and use it.

V.C Pursue earned income opportunities as part of the business of the Cultural Alliance.
V.C.1 Develop a strategy to grow Capital Solutions.

V.C.2 Pursue contracts for services.

VI. Strategically advance community cultural development.
Early on in our assessment and planning process, it became apparent that there is no dearth of community aspiration and will, focused on downtown revitalization. But a lack of overarching coordination has slowed down progress, and, in some cases, has resulted in efforts working at cross purposes. This Plan recommends a leadership role for the Cultural Alliance in coordinating community redevelopment initiatives where the arts are central. Additionally, the Plan recommends that the Cultural Alliance expand its expertise to work with community partners on developing a methodology that will help York County prioritize projects and keep their implementation moving forward.

York’s creative sector is not regarded as a regional player, nor is it viewed as a strong local player. Yet, the presence of a strong creative sector in communities across the country has played a significant role in advancing and achieving community hopes and dreams—not to mention reaping the economic benefits of thriving arts districts and cultural tourism. Revitalizing the City of York is a high priority in the community. As a County official told us, “The value of a vibrant city center to the overall vitality of the county cannot be overstated.”

Actions
VI.A Coordinate City of York downtown revitalization projects in which creativity and heritage are central.
VI.A.1 Get consensus on creativity and heritage as the centerpiece of the City’s revitalization and intent to build York’s reputation as a cultural hub and destination. Then, with all potential partners, develop criteria and a methodology for assessing, prioritizing, and implementing projects.

VI.A.2 Given the criteria in VI.A.1, select 2010 projects. Convene partners, develop schedules, and get to work.

VI.B Facilitate creative sector involvement in downtown redevelopment.
VI.B.1 Facilitate arts and heritage sector involvement in downtown revitalization. Include artists’ lofts, artists’ live/work spaces; Artist Homestead expansion, cultural incubator, bookstores, galleries, arts-related shops, eateries/clubs with exhibition and performance spaces, area colleges, etc. Develop support services to facilitate and assist artists and organizations
VI.B.2 Adopt, manage, and expand the City’s Artist Homestead program. Link to the development of artists’ live/work spaces.

VI.B.3 Coordinate vacant space use for arts purposes. With city landowners, pursue the use of vacant space/storefronts to exhibit/create art (guerilla galleries). Develop a clear and easy process to assist property owners and artists.

VI.B.4 Create affordable live/work spaces as an anchor in downtown development.

VI.C Use the arts to build community.

VI.C.1 Offer funding incentives. Fund artists and organizations to develop arts-related programs that bring together different populations and increase understanding of cultural and class differences.

VI.C.2 Add funding criteria addressing diversity in governance, staffing, and programming. Diversity includes: age, gender, geography, and ethnicity.

VI.C.3 Use the arts as a vehicle to build tolerance. Offer professional development training, best practices, and funding incentives to strengthen the creative sector’s capacity to increase respect and tolerance among different populations.

VI.C.4 Connect those who need community-based arts programs with those who provide them.
- Convene biannual/annual summit of community organizations, city departments, and arts and cultural organizations.
- Showcase existing excellent community-based programs.
- Discover, implement, and promote cost-effective ways to work together better.
- Consider 1-2 annual priorities in which the arts can help: increasing racial tolerance, teambuilding among youth, literacy, etc.
- Address transportation concerns.

Develop criteria for community-based arts programs to serve as a clear guide for what could be.

VI.D Use the arts to boost tourism and economic development.

VI.D.1 Improve creative sector and tourism collaboration. Convene tourism, leisure, recreational, and arts industry leaders (at minimum quarterly or ongoing) to review programs 36 months out. Determine where collaborative programming, promotion and/or marketing makes sense. Establish timetables and point persons.

VI.D.2 Bring prestigious statewide and regional arts events, programs, and performances to York County.

VI.D.3 Participate in York County’s Economic Development Corporation planning and integrate strategies of this Plan, as appropriate.

VII. Continue to generate and leverage financial support for community cultural development.

Ranked highest among the 60 united arts funds in the country by Americans for the Arts for the Arts for its ability to achieve its goal every year, the Cultural Alliance’s United Arts Fund celebrates its tenth anniversary in 2009. But looking carefully at older arts funds in America, York County could learn from an important trend: there is a strong correlation between the public’s perception about the quality of arts offerings and the ability to hit annual campaign goals. While $8.3 million raised over ten years in support of York County’s nine funded organizations is a source of tremendous satisfaction, the Cultural Alliance’s support of what some perceive as “lackluster offerings” is, potentially, a liability. It is crucial to realize that continuing to reach annual fundraising goals ultimately goes hand-in-hand with high-quality cultural offerings that the community wholeheartedly and unreservedly takes pride and participates in.

In addition to the Alliance’s United Arts Fund, this plan recommends development of a financial services portfolio (in cooperation with York County financial institutions) that includes loans, credit lines,
scholarships, venture capital funds, facility rental support for community-based organizations, project funding and arts education.

**Actions**

**VII.A Continue the United Arts Fund.**

VII.A.1 Continue the annual campaign to support York County. With the sector, determine additional fund development strategies.

**VII.B Cultivate public funding to support cultural development.**

VII.B.1 Advocate for passage of enabling legislation for the City. Then advocate for legislation, such as: percent for art, permit fees, etc., earmarked for culture. Set per capita growth goals.

VII.B.2 Work closely with the City and County to identify and secure federal and state funds for cultural development.

**VII.C Make public art a source of community pride.**

VII.C.1 Develop a multi-dimensional public art program for the City and County. Pursue public/private partnerships with local government.

VII.C.2 Develop public art funding criteria that are more transparent. Use Americans for the Arts criteria as a guide. Use murals, landscape, and lighting art in sections of the City needing attention to better engage residents and encourage the adoption of spaces.

**VII.D Evolve the United Arts Fund allocations to better stabilize the creative sector.**

VII.D.1 Starting with the funded members gradually evolve United Arts Fund allocations to focus on each partner’s goals for excellence (audience building, internal stability, administrative capacity, membership growth, outreach goals, etc.). With partners, maintain data on current positions and where they will need to be in five years-and 10 years-to remain successful and financially viable.

VII.D.2 Change “grants” to “investments.” Evolve the portfolio of funding opportunities to include the following:

- Operating support focused on outcomes important to each funded partner’s success
- Programs and projects
- Scholarships
- Professional development
- Travel and conference pool
- Venture capital
- Audience development/outreach
- Artist commissions
- Facility rental pool (enabling more organizations to afford venue usage fees)

VII.D.3 Make funds accessible sector-wide (organizations and artists). Rethink the notion of “membership” to “partners,” to dispel any sense of entitlement.

**VII.E Develop financial instruments to support the creative sector.**

VII.E.1 Build a portfolio of financial assistance the sector most needs: credit lines, low interest loans, etc.

VII.E.2 Provide financial resource information to the sector on the Cultural Alliance Web site.
IV. APPENDICES