

NASHVILLE

THE NEED FOR CULTURAL PLANNING



PREPARED BY
METRO ARTS:
NASHVILLE OFFICE OF ARTS + CULTURE



Where we are right now

THE STATE OF THE ARTS

At the heart of Nashville's identity is creativity, community and the arts.

Our city is rich with many arts and cultural assets including museums, theatres, and numerous other amenities that draw millions of people to visit and thousands of people to move here every year.

This cultural advantage is linked to Nashville's economic growth, jobs, improved educational outcomes and quality of life. **The nonprofit arts and culture sector support a \$429 million economic impact in our county alone.**

70%

of Americans believe the Arts improve the image and identity of their community

*Americans for the Arts, Americans Speak Out
About the Arts, 2018*

The arts and culture sector is essential for the social well-being of Nashville's neighborhoods. Recent research shows that low- and moderate-income residents who live in **neighborhoods with cultural resources are healthier, better educated and safer** than residents in similar communities with fewer cultural resources (Stern & Seifert, 2017).

Sustaining and expanding cultural opportunities enhances the quality of life for all Nashvillians; moreover, robust cultural infrastructure and support encourage increased economic activity and tourism. But increased civic support is vital to this sector's sustainability.

Cause for Concern, Need for Action

Through a Cultural Planning process and funding assessment, Metro Arts and the city of Nashville can counter threats to Nashville's appeal as a great place to visit, to live, and to create.

- **Rapid population growth** has strained our cultural institutions financially: resulting in the need for capital improvements and increased maintenance costs. Many nonprofits do not have the cash reserves to make these improvements.

"Budget deficits have been the result of rent increases as the Nashville real estate market has boomed. We have moved 3 times in the last 5 years. Prior to 2013 we only moved 3 times in 18 years."

Actors Bridge Ensemble, 2019

- **Arts nonprofits' deficits** are increasing, and operating in deficit is becoming more common among our arts and cultural organizations.

"Midway through FY19, the city halved its support of the facility overhead during our lease renewal, which increased the demand on cash. NCT will have debt on our balance sheet as a result."

Nashville Children's Theatre, 2019

"STC had a rough financial year in the 2017 season. We didn't bring in as much money as we'd hoped and had to transfer our credit card debt into a loan."

Street Theatre Company, 2019

- **Arts positions are being cut.**

"We have eliminated the positions of associate artistic director and technical director."

Actors Bridge Ensemble, 2019

- **The only constant source of public sector funding from Metro Arts continues to erode due to flat funding and inflation.**

Public grant funding for the arts in Nashville is currently at about \$2.5 million.

This amount has been flat for almost 20 years, except for two increases.

The impact of those increases has been reduced by recent savings targets and inflation.

\$2.5 million in 2000-era dollars would be \$3.7 million in 2020.

- **Other factors** contributing to arts and culture sector health in need of study:
 - Artist retention and financial viability
 - Space for arts and culture use
 - Neighborhood-specific cultural equity and investment

Investment in the Arts is an

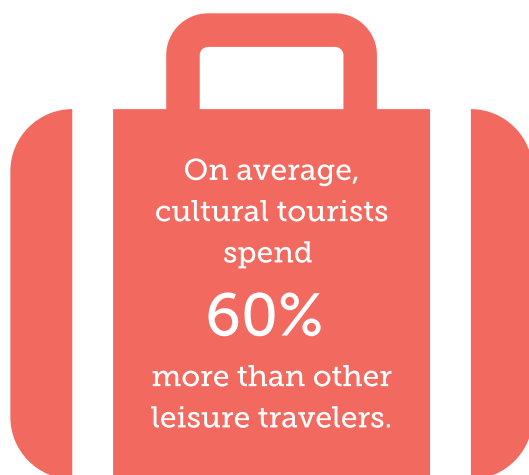
INVESTMENT IN ALL OF NASHVILLE

In Davidson County, nonprofit arts and culture organizations and their audiences generate*:

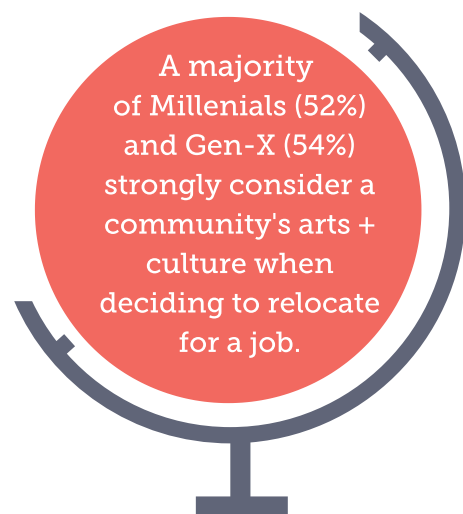
- \$429 million in economic impact annually
- 15,000 jobs
- \$309.4 million in household income to local residents, and
- \$51.1 million in local and state government revenue

In FY18:

- 100% of Metro Council Districts had Metro Arts grant-funded projects and/or public art engagement
- Nearly every Metro public school received artistic programming through Metro Arts funding
- 4,710 artists were paid
- 537 project sites were funded by Metro Arts Grants



*Americans for the Arts, Cultural Tourism:
Attracting Visitors and Their Spending, 2014*



*Americans for the Arts, Americans Speak Out
About the Arts, 2018*

Education:

- Students involved in the arts are four times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement
- Students with high arts participation and low socioeconomic status have a 4 percent dropout rate—five times lower than their low socioeconomic status peers
- 72 percent of business leaders say that creativity is the number one skill they are seeking when hiring**
- Two-thirds of public school teachers believe that the arts are getting crowded out of the school day
- Metro Arts' grant partners provide arts instruction and exposure inside and outside of the classroom, beyond what MNPS teachers' schedules and budgets can accommodate

Public Safety:

- Nationwide, juvenile crime peaks between 2:00 and 6:00 p.m., the hours directly after school†
- High-quality afterschool and summer programs, like those conducted by Metro Arts' grant partners, turn this risky window into a time of opportunity for students
- Studies find that adding arts to juvenile diversion programs dramatically improves youth outcomes in the area of high school, graduation rate, civic and community engagement, and social-emotional skills.***
- Metro Arts' Restorative Arts programs reached 424 court-involved youth in FY2018.

Neighborhoods:

- 70% of Americans believe the arts improve the image and identity of their community**
- 72% of Americans believe "the arts unify our communities regardless of age, race, and ethnicity"***
- Vibrant arts and culture leads to pride of place: studies show that when residents take pride in their communities, they participate more fully in civic life.
- The Nashville Chamber found that "just as downtown cultural revival and growth have been critical to the overall image and reality of the locale for business recruitment, residential development and community-wide support, heightened attention to the cultural life of neighborhoods across the city can stimulate much-needed economic development and area residents and businesses coalescing toward these goals." (CultureHere, 2015)
- The Chamber's 2015 study Culture Here concluded, "Nashville has a strong cultural foundation, but has a strategic opportunity to reexamine planning, funding and public policies that broaden access to "creative life" in our city.

*Arts and Education, AmericansfortheArts.org

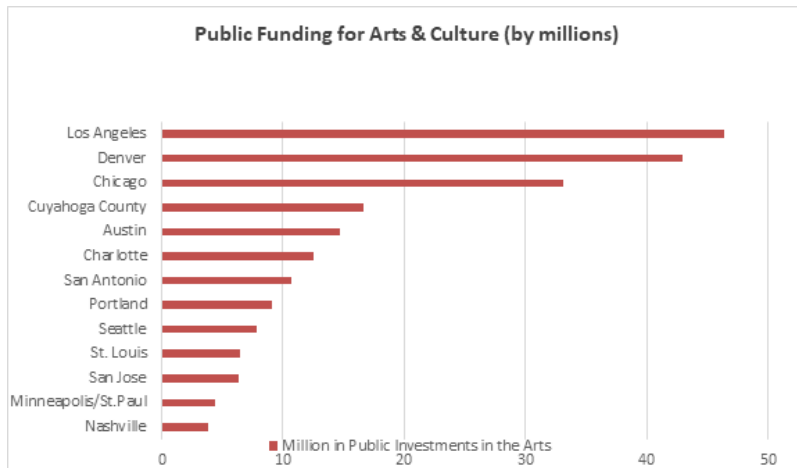
***Why Public Art Matters*, Americans for the Arts, 2018

***The YouthARTS Development Project, U.S. Department of Justice/

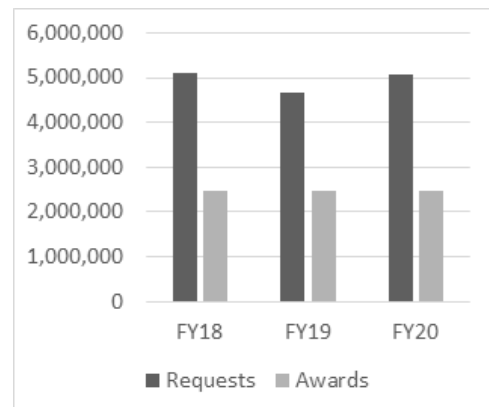
† "A Place to Grow and Learn: A Citywide Approach to Building and Sustaining Out-of-School Time Learning Opportunities," The Wallace Foundation.

Where does Nashville fall in arts investment?

HOW MUSIC CITY STACKS UP

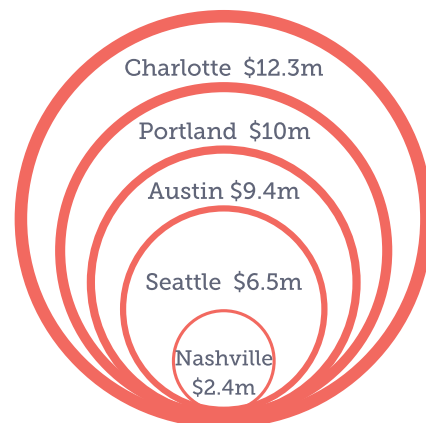


Metro Arts Grants
Funding History: Requests and Allocations



Peer Cities by Population + by Arts Funding

Austin, TX	950,000
Charlotte, NC	859,000
Seattle, WA	725,000
Nashville, TN	691,243
Portland, OR	653,116



Flat funding, restricted by the city's operational budget and the uncertainty of year-by-year allocations from local government, has been holding Nashville back.

While funding has ebbed and flowed, it has not seen reliable growth, or even growth that has kept pace with inflation over the last two decades. Public support for arts and culture competes with myriad other priorities of a large and rapidly growing city.

Flat, unreliable funding is inadequate support for a vibrant city that defines itself as a creative, cultural hub. To ensure the survival of the arts and culture sector, and of Nashville's cultural identity, we must take a new approach.

Other Cities' Solutions



Charlotte
Rental Car Tax



Seattle,
Denver
Event ticket fee (5%)
at
for-profit
entertainment venues



Multiple Cities
Nonprofit
fundraising
capabilities



Portland
Flat fee: \$35 per
resident supports
arts educators
and nonprofits



Austin, Chicago,
Los Angeles, St.
Louis, San Antonio,
San Jose
Portion of
hotel occupancy
tax

What Should Our Approach Be?

A comprehensive Cultural Planning process to define the future of the city's arts and culture is critical to Nashville's identity as a cultural economic engine.

The Cultural Planning process is on the rise in the other leading American cities, such as Austin, Cleveland, Denver, Sacramento, who've doubled down on cultural planning and cultural investments as a way to address economic and livability concerns of residents. In each of these cities, citizens supported dedicated funding for the arts by an overwhelming majority vote.

In order to keep pace with the cultural and creative economy of peer cities and to not lose further ground, Nashville can and should do the same.

What is a Cultural Plan?



"[A cultural plan] might suggest ways for arts and culture to be integrated into other departments' strategies in order to meet needs--be they ones of economic and workforce development, community development and land use, education, housing, etc.

"A cultural plan can be used to revise arts and culture priorities when conditions have shifted in ways that warrant course corrections. **It can also present a new vision for the importance of cultural life in a city and the role culture plays in making a city who and what it is.**"

-Belonging in Oakland

THE PATHWAY



The Good News . . .

Our city already has a municipal agency dedicated to supporting the arts and cultural sector through equitable, transparent grantmaking and direct artist support. Metro Arts' ongoing dedication to community-led planning and commitment to fiscal responsibility is a major asset.

Metro Arts can begin a comprehensive Cultural Planning process that involves stakeholders and community members across the city. This cultural plan should include a strategy for reliable, long-term designated public funding support as well as a comprehensive look at how the cultural sector can grow.

The Steps

- 1** Include input from a spectrum of stakeholders, including government officials, elected representatives, private sector leadership, arts and culture sector leadership, creative professionals, and the community.
- 2** Explore the feasibility of increased funding, including peer review cities with designated revenue streams, studying Nashville's demographic shifts and current financial climate, and forecasting future needs to sustain the arts and culture sector. Explore tax-based and non-tax-based revenue stream options.
- 3** Identify a preferred model for Nashville that includes basic structure, type of funding source and amount of funds over a multi-year projection that provides stability for annual growth.
- 4** Report findings and make recommendations to the Mayor, Metro Arts Board of Commissioners and community.

The Impact

Planning for community-supported, sustained funding would:

- Propel Nashville-Davidson County's arts and culture sector to new levels of service addressing the community's growing and more complex needs, so that all communities (geographic, racial, educational and socioeconomic) are positively impacted
- Increase access and public participation in arts and culture activities in all four corners of Nashville-Davidson County
- Create a shared vision of what arts and culture should be with government officials, elected representatives, private sector leadership, arts and culture sector leadership, creative professionals and the community
- Level the playing field and provide transparency for arts and culture providers receiving public funding
- Articulate anticipated results on increasing quality of life, bolstering tourism and stimulating economic impact
- Support sustainability of creative professionals and established/developing/emerging arts and culture organizations
- Strengthen arts education and career opportunities for children and youth, ensuring they have the creativity and critical thinking skills required for the 21st century economy

The Possibilities

What might come from this plan? Other cities' results from the cultural planning process:

Boston Creates calls for an Arts Resource Desk--centralizing staff support for permitting, zoning and other regulatory requirements for arts and culture uses; communicating professional opportunities, navigating municipal services and departments.

Belonging in Oakland suggests a Policy Director for Arts Spaces to facilitate cross-departmental and city-community relations that are relevant to the creation and retention of robust cultural spaces in Oakland.

Sacramento's *Creative Edge* document includes multiple initiatives:

- Citywide Culture Pass - an admission pass for youth, families, adults and seniors, addressing barriers such as cost, transportation and marketing to ensure meaningful access. (*Public funding is required to address cultural institutions' revenue loss.*)
- Creative Sector Chamber of Commerce - to serve as the voice for this sector to government and the community and to take on services for the sector
- Art Bus - providing transit access for students and teachers to arts education experiences outside the classroom and addressing the cost barriers schools face in taking advantage of cultural opportunities for their students

Miami elected to create a Cultural Tourism position within their Convention and Visitors Bureau, which is credited with changing the city's tourism focus from *Sun + Fun* to *Arts + Culture*!



METRO ARTS

NASHVILLE OFFICE OF ARTS + CULTURE

Metro Arts is the Office of Arts + Culture for Nashville and Davidson County. We believe that the arts drive a more vibrant and equitable community, and we strive to ensure that all Nashvillians have access to a creative life.

Currently, we work toward this mission through community investments, artist and organizational capacity-building, public art and creative placemaking, and direct programs that involve residents and visitors in all forms of art and culture.

We are viewed as a national leader in innovative support of the arts, equity and community development, and we have a 40-year history of providing resources and capacity-building to sustain Nashville as one of the nation's leading cultural hubs. As the designated local art agency for Nashville-Davidson County, we are responsible for the distribution and management of public funds that support arts and culture, under the oversight of our Board of Commissioners.

