

ARTS  
AND  
CULTURE



ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION

January 28, 2015

Since the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) absorbed the work of the Metro Atlanta Arts and Culture Coalition (MAACC) in 2012, ARC has been developing a broad vision to build on MAACC's legacy and support arts, culture and the creative industries in metro Atlanta.

ARC has convened political, community and cultural leaders to discuss the immediate needs of the cultural community. Out of this work was identified a set of priorities to support the cultural sector.

Over the past year, ARC has begun working in many areas where arts and culture intersect traditional planning and programming areas. These include transportation, workforce and economic development, environment, land use and lifelong communities. We have found extensive opportunities to inform current planning efforts and strengthen arts and culture throughout the 10-county Atlanta region.

Thinking about the role ARC can take to nurture this work, we will focus on initiatives over the next two years centered around:

- Building Participation
- Fostering Innovation
- Creating a Sustainable Workforce
- Supporting and Developing Leadership
- Visualizing Data
- Placemaking

Part of ARC's role includes breaking the arts conversation out of its silo. By including the arts at the front end of regional planning and economic development conversations, we can have more meaningful integration into ARC's committees and structures.

As you will see from this brochure, we are moving ahead on multiple fronts. This is just a sampling of the significant work ARC has either completed or anticipates for the future.

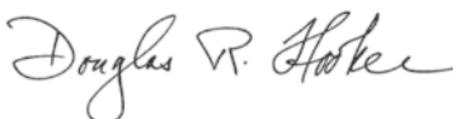
Local governments across the region have made significant investments in arts and culture in our local communities. ARC welcomes the opportunity to support this work while also creating new opportunities at the regional level.

We remain committed to a strong and vibrant arts and culture sector for metro Atlanta.

Sincerely,



Chairman Buzz Ahrens  
Cherokee County  
Arts & Culture Advisory Committee



Douglas R. Hooker, P.E.  
Executive Director  
Atlanta Regional Commission

Successful placemaking attracts people to a place by providing them a sense of community and belonging. Inevitably, when people are in a place, they engage in its economy.

~ ARC Creative Placemaking Report

## PLACEMAKING

Creative placemaking leverages the arts to enliven private and public spaces and to reimagine existing structures and streetscapes. Doing this enhances the local economy and public safety by fostering engagement with a specific place. ARC has a long history of supporting placemaking work through programs such as the Livable Centers Initiative and Community Choices. In 2014 ARC commissioned a report on Creative Placemaking, highlighting case studies and strategies to further advance these initiatives.

### Highlighted Initiative:

#### **Cultural Forums: Creative Placemaking**

ARC hosted the first in a series of Cultural Community Forums in 2014. The forum highlighted creative placemaking, with 200 registrants from across the region attending a morning session at the Fox Theatre. The featured speakers were Jason Schupbach, Design Director for the National Endowment for the Arts, and Jamie Bennett, Executive Director of ArtPlace America, the two largest creative placemaking funders in the country.

### Ongoing Initiatives:

#### **LINK Public Art Program**

Following the 2014 LINK trip and exposure to the Philadelphia Mural Arts Project, funds were raised to establish a regional public art project in Metro Atlanta.

#### **Community Choices Projects**

The ARC took on two Community Choices projects related to placemaking in 2014-15. One is based around public art with Cobb County and the Cumberland CID, and the other with the City of Atlanta regarding the historic Washington Park Community.

#### **LCI Projects**

The ARC has committed funding through the Livable Centers Initiative to explore creative placemaking at the Midtown MARTA stations (2013) and the Downtown MARTA Stations (2014).

If your actions inspire others to dream more,  
learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.

~ John Quincy Adams

## SUPPORTING & DEVELOPING LEADERS

ARC is a convener of leaders from around metro Atlanta, pulling together representatives from government, nonprofit and business sectors. In adding arts, culture and the creative industries to its planning portfolio, ARC created new opportunities for arts leadership and education.

### Highlighted Initiative:

#### **Arts Leaders of Metro Atlanta**

Arts Leaders of Metro Atlanta (ALMA) was created by the Metro Atlanta Arts and Culture Coalition in 2004 to encourage civic, cultural and corporate leaders to take an active role in addressing issues facing the arts & culture community. ARC's management of the program integrates exciting content at the intersection of arts and other ARC planning areas. The five-day, five-month program has 50 participants in 2015.

### Ongoing Initiatives:

#### **Emerging Arts Leaders of Metro Atlanta**

As part of a national network of similar programs, the Emerging Arts Leaders of Metro Atlanta program cultivates the next generation through professional development opportunities, mentoring relationships and peer networking events.

#### **Cultural Forums**

Cultural forums will convene government, nonprofit and business leadership around pressing issues in metro Atlanta's creative community. The inaugural forum in 2014 featured two of the largest placemaking funders in the US presenting strategies for submitting competitive funding applications.

#### **ARC Leadership Programs**

ARC's existing leadership programs have introduced cultural components, such as visits to Houston's Project Row Houses (2013) and the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program (2014) as a part of the LINK program.



The goal is to turn data into information, and information into insight.

~ Carly Fiorina, former CEO of Hewlett-Packard



## VISUALIZING DATA

ARC is dedicated to being the region's primary source for accurate, objective data and analysis about the Atlanta region. And while that has always been true of demographic and economic information, the cultural community in metro Atlanta has never before had access to the depth and range of relevant data now available to it.

### Highlighted Initiative:

#### **State of the Arts Reports**

This year, ARC will be releasing the first of a series of annual State of the Arts reports. These reports will create benchmarks indicating the relative health of the cultural community. This will be the first regional analysis in the country using new national standards to compare ourselves with the nine other largest metro regions.

### Ongoing Initiatives:

#### **Conversations on Arts and Culture**

Picking up on conversations taking place throughout metro Atlanta, staff at ARC began writing a series of articles to promote discussion around priority topics for the creative industries. Each article invites the broader community into an online conversation on ARC's website.

#### **Neighborhood Nexus**

Neighborhood Nexus is a regional information system, providing data, tools and expertise as a catalyst for opportunity. Arts and culture data has been integrated into Neighborhood Nexus, allowing for new understanding of how arts and culture indicators compare to hundreds of other neighborhood vitality indicators.

#### **Market Segmentation Data**

In 2014, ARC began providing market segmentation information to nonprofit organizations to help them better understand their existing and potential audiences.

#### **Community Arts Assessments**

The ARC has begun building a series of toolkits to help local governments undertake cultural assessments in their own communities with ARC technical support. This work will help local communities leverage their own assets, while defining and supporting the concept of cultural districts across the region.





The purpose of art is washing the dust  
of daily life off our souls.

~ Pablo Picasso



## BUILDING PARTICIPATION

To ensure that arts and culture continue to thrive, audiences must have awareness and access to existing programming. Through unique relationships with community groups, ARC can work to create participation in the wide offering of existing cultural amenities.

Highlighted Initiative:

### **Arts & Aging Programming**

Research suggests that active engagement in the arts can improve health. It also indicates that, as the fastest growing segment of the population, older patrons are critical to the success of cultural institutions. In October, ARC hosted a regional forum to explore the mutual benefits between aging and the arts. The popularity of that event has led ARC to continue developing relationships between its aging services network and arts and cultural programs around the region.

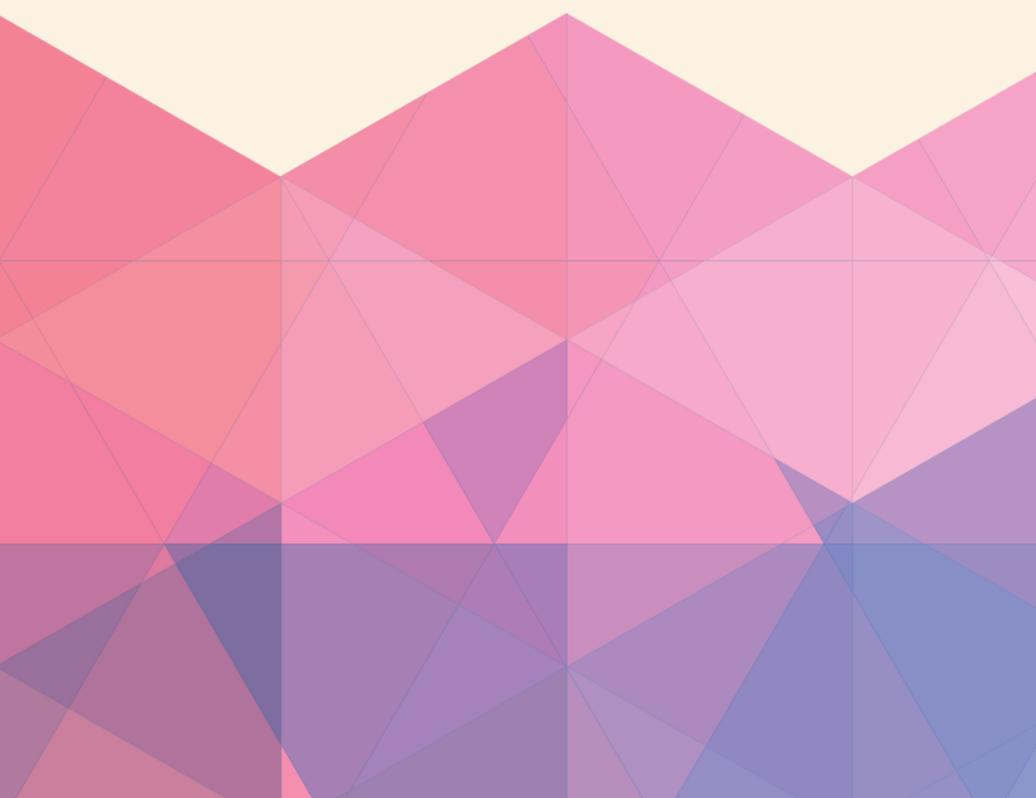
Ongoing Initiatives:

### **Atlanta PlanIT Coverage**

AtlantaPlanIt.com is a website developed by the Metro Atlanta Arts and Culture Coalition to function as a regional clearing house of cultural programming data. It has limited geographic scope. ARC is committed to working with Atlanta PlanIT to include organizations from the entire region.

### **VSA Arts of Georgia**

VSA Arts of Georgia provides free tickets to hundreds of cultural events for individuals on fixed incomes. This service is managed with very limited resources. ARC plans to use its technical expertise to help expand the program's technological capabilities, helping it serve a larger population.



The arts inspire innovation by leading us to open our minds and think in new ways about our lives - including the work we do, the way we work, and the customers we serve.

~ W James McNerney, CEO of Boeing

## CREATING A SUSTAINABLE WORKFORCE

As the administrator for the Atlanta Regional Workforce Board (ARWB), ARC's Workforce Solutions Division provides assistance for dislocated workers, unemployed adults and youth; and for businesses seeking qualified applicants. Participating businesses include the creative industries, making the Workforce Solutions Division a prime example of ARC's work in the creative industries.

### Highlighted Initiative:

#### **Workforce Investment Act Priorities**

The ARWB's On the Job Training programs has a Digital Entertainment and Media Sector. The result of this focus has been that Georgia is now among the top three states in the nation for film and TV production; Georgia's game-developing companies represent more than 1,800 jobs and the equivalent of \$750 million in sales. The ARC/ARWB continues as a key partner in the success of this endeavor

### Ongoing Initiatives:

#### **On the Job Training & Customized Training**

To realize the priorities of the Workforce Investment Act, ARC provides On the Job Training and customized training opportunities for cutting-edge digital entertainment companies including Bento Box Atlanta and Thrust Interactive.

#### **Peach State Career Pathway**

Georgia has established the peach state career pathway for students working toward a career in digital media and entertainment. ARC has worked with Toon Boom Inc., the world's leading animation software company, to pilot middle school software training that may soon be a model for school districts across the state.



Design, just as art, has multiple definitions; there is no single definition. Design can be art. Design can be aesthetics. Design is so simple, that's why it is so complicated.

~ Paul Rand



## FOSTERING INNOVATION

ARC seeks to continue creating an environment of innovation for the creative industries in our region. Primarily through the application of technical expertise and relationship building, ARC is in a position to help the creative industries intersect with existing hubs of innovation.

### Highlighted Initiative:

#### **Arts & Healthcare**

With over 200 healthcare IT companies, top tier research institutions and a professional workforce, metro Atlanta is often referred to as the nation's health IT capital. At ARC's Arts and Aging forum, arts professionals and health care providers discussed new relationships and possibilities, such as using arts as a communication tool with Alzheimer's patients.

### Ongoing Initiatives:

#### **Acceleration Hub / Innovation Hub**

ARC is accelerating the concept of an Innovation Hub for Arts and Culture through convening local and national thought leaders.

#### **Tessitura**

ARC acts as the project manager for the Atlanta Tessitura Consortium, a group of organizations that sublicense the software for a reduced fee. Tessitura is a software application used by performing arts and cultural organizations to manage their activities in ticketing, fundraising, customer relationship management and marketing.

#### **Crowdsourcing**

Crowdsourcing has created a new private funding model for cultural programming. In 2012 the crowdsourcing platform Kickstarter generated more than double the amount for art related projects than the National Endowment for the Arts. In 2014, ARC began exploring how crowdsourcing can be used for creative placemaking projects, and will continue exploring the concept.

