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MACON

cultural plan 2020

“Across the country, for decades, communities have seen decreases in public funding for arts and culture, despite the many benefits that they bring. A community-wide planning process maps out the path forward and lays the groundwork for success by incorporating different perspectives into a shared vision.”

- Priya Sircar, director of arts at Knight Foundation.

Arts and culture are important to a community. They bring people together and help us understand one another by promoting dialogue and collaboration. Not only that, the arts also are a significant economic driver, having an \$88 million impact in Macon-Bibb County.

Recognizing the potential of arts and culture to drive community connection and economic growth, the 2020 Macon Cultural Plan aims to increase arts access and engagement right here in our community.

The plan was funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and led by a community partnership including Bibb County School District, the Community Foundation of Central Georgia, the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce, Macon Arts Alliance, Macon-Bibb County, Mercer University, the Museum of Arts and Sciences and Visit Macon.

In addition, more than 50 community stakeholders participated in the Steering Committee, and 1,200 residents participated directly in forming the plan's focus on economic prosperity, equity and inclusion.

The 2020 Macon Cultural Plan provides a five-year blueprint to guide public and private investments and broad initiatives needed to strengthen quality of life, stimulate creative industries and expand cultural tourism.

Image: Big Hair Productions



Macon is a city like no other. We have everything from centuries-old indigenous art and historic architecture to an incredible musical legacy that spans soul and southern rock. Our biggest asset, however, is not our past, but our present and our future – and the arts are needed now more than ever.



“We now have an actionable vision that leverages our assets and aspirations for the benefit of all. The plan represents the most dynamic cultural planning process in the history of our city – and offers the arts as a powerful collective tool to capture spirit, solve problems and amplify our investments.”

– Susan Welsh, Executive Director of the Museum of Arts and Sciences

Macon Arts Alliance is charged with leading the implementation of the 2020 Macon Cultural Plan. For the next five years, their focus will be on implementing the priorities, strategies and actions outlined in the document.

“We cannot do this alone,” said Julie Wilkerson, Executive Director of Macon Arts Alliance. “I encourage everyone to download the plan and find where your goals and actions intersect with those in the plan.”

As our whole community begins to implement the 2020 Macon Cultural Plan, Macon Arts is eager to see the fruits of your labor. They want to know where you are experiencing, creating and consuming arts and culture in your community. Use the online map available on their website and then take a look at other cultural assets across the city.

By leveraging arts and culture across five priorities, Macon can begin to create equity and economic prosperity for all of its residents. These priorities are:

Tourism, Education, Creative Industries, Neighborhood Development and Audience Cultivation.



The plan can be accessed at <https://www.maconartsalliance.org/culturalplan>.



Tourism

Brand Macon as a vibrant, innovative and creative destination.

While Macon is well known in music circles for its musical history, more can be done to promote and build support for Macon's current musical scene. That can be leveraged to attract more visitors to Macon.



Education

Ensure everyone has access to quality formal and informal arts education.

Nurturing the next generation of diverse talent, creative leaders and audiences starts with education. It is equally important to create arts opportunities for lifelong learners, to develop a pipeline of makers, consumers and patrons of the arts.



Creative Industries

Encourage innovation, creative enterprise and entrepreneurship for artists at all career levels.

As the festival capital of Georgia and with burgeoning creative industries, Macon needs to ensure it is an easy place for creatives to start businesses, get support and seek professional development to build a sustainable practice.



Neighborhood Development

Ensure social equity by helping Macon's many neighborhoods develop their distinctive identities.

Macon's neighborhoods are distinct, diverse destinations. To encourage Macon residents to explore beyond their routines, it is essential to remove barriers between neighborhoods. Implementing these goals will require collaboration between government representatives and active residents.



Audience Cultivation

Increase enjoyment, understanding and public value of culture in order to cultivate greater appreciation and support.

Audiences are the lifeblood of arts and culture, and it is crucial to cultivate new and ongoing audiences. Macon recognizes the need to be proactive – by taking cultural programming to audiences. Marketing and promotion are essential to message the value of culture.



Thank you, partners.

BIBB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF CENTRAL GEORGIA
GREATER MACON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
KNIGHT FOUNDATION
MACON ARTS ALLIANCE
MACON-BIBB COUNTY
MERCER UNIVERSITY
MUSEUM OF ARTS & SCIENCES
VISIT MACON