

# Soul of the City Transition Team Report

## SUMMARY

Annapolis has an incredible wealth of resources in the form of talented and passionate artists, business owners, and arts advocates. With new leadership, the arts community is poised to spring into action to help realize Mayor Buckley's vision of Annapolis as a destination city for the arts. With vibrant festivals, a top-notch music scene, a large community of visual artists, writers, and performers, and an assortment of theaters, dance companies, museums, and galleries, the raw materials are here with which to build a more contemporary and inclusive arts identity, to restore Annapolis to the cultural gem it was when it was referred to as "The Athens of America."

Our city has already shown that we can create fantastic artistic products. In order to take our growth to the next level, we must start looking at the processes through which public art is commissioned and approved. This report offers a wide range of suggestions to help build a solid foundation for a healthy artistic community, from easy, no-cost "do it now" actions, to suggestions for seriously investing in the long-term cultural future of Annapolis.

In our meetings, individual interviews, and a "Souls of the City" gathering we hosted at Maryland Hall, we identified four categories of actions to help Annapolis fulfill its potential to be the thriving cultural hub it has the potential to be. To list them briefly:

- **Fund**--To realize the new administration's vision of Annapolis as a destination city for the arts, the city must commit to funding the arts and ensuring that artists are compensated for their work, with a focus on funding local artists
- **Support**--To build a well-rounded community of artists and other residents, affordable live/work spaces must be planned into development in all parts of the city. The process for obtaining approval for art installations, events, and festivals is onerous and must be re-evaluated and revamped to encourage more creative activity within the city.
- **Educate**--residents, local government, artists, and visitors need more examples of how art can add to the financial, cultural, emotional, and intellectual health of our city in order to open minds and hearts to the immense range and value of public art.
- **Build**--There are various forms of artistic and cultural disconnectedness within the city of Annapolis: neighborhoods are separated by socioeconomic status, arts and cultural organizations are disconnected from each other, and different artistic

disciplines don't often cross-pollinate. Action must be taken to "connect the dots" between neighborhoods, wards, arts establishments, cultural facilities, historic and cultural sites, and public art locations.

Mayor Buckley has long touted arts and cultural events as venues for bringing people together and building community. Beginning to take some simple steps toward a richer artistic future can unify the city in new and meaningful ways, leaving a cultural legacy the Mayor and his constituents can be proud of.

## **PROCESS**

**Team:** Julia Gibb, Chair; Pam Stevens, Co-chair; Alison Harbaugh, Process Planner; Loni Moyer, Environmental Advisor; Ellen Moyer, Cynthia Krewson, Wil Scott, Selin Balci, Joann Vaughan, Candy Bigelow

In addition to our regular core group meetings in January and February, and several individual interviews, Soul of the City (SotC) hosted a meeting at Maryland Hall on March 4, 2018 in order to expand the team's outreach. This "Souls of the City" gathering invited a diverse group of people to have an open discussion about our arts community, to identify the needs of artists, arts organizations and arts related businesses in the city. The growing group plans to meet twice a year to check in, collaborate, and continue to move forward together. Below is a slightly modified version of the goals and agenda for the gathering.

### **Our goals for the Souls of the City gathering:**

- Get to know each other. Let's face it... we are all very busy and many times do not get to see what the other groups or artists are doing in the city. This is a chance to connect and create relationships that can encourage collaboration and innovation.
- Identify needs and concerns for the arts in the city: events, funding, marketing, education, venues.
- Educate. What is going on in the city as far as funding, how artists are supported, & what the Art in Public Places Commission can do for you.
- To get excited and inspired about the potential to raise up the arts in Annapolis. We are incredibly lucky to have a Mayor who supports the arts and this is our chance to tell him what we have been wanting to see and do!

## Agenda: Annapolis Artist Network (Soul of the City info Session)

- Intro, what the day looks like, who we are (Soul of the City)
  - Introduction and reason for being here
    - Talk about how we are going to limit each topic to a certain amount of time so we can be respectful of everyone's time today and cover a lot of ideas. Staying positive - forward motion
  - Transition Team Goals: Alison, Pam and Julia (present goals handout)
  - What is AiPPC? - Ellen
  - Annapolis Arts Week - Ben Eisenberg
  - Arts Alliance - Elizabeth Ramirez

**Breakout groups:** not about negativity or dwelling on what hasn't happened, forward thinking.

- Goal: Each group to come up with at least three goals/ideas
- Topics: Create IDEAS on how to implement these things because if we all don't work together to make it happen, how can we expect the city to support us?
  - **Education:** educating the public about art, educating artists about running a business, educating others on how to pay artists--no more working for "exposure." (group leader-ALISON)
  - **Marketing/Promotion:** how should we promote the arts in the city? Is there a way to bring all of our events together into one calendar that is easy to access? Who can run a facebook page? Outside the box ideas on promotion and education? (group leader-PAM)
  - **Venues:** what are some unique areas of the city that we could hold events at to promote the arts (indoor and outdoor) (group leader-ELLEN)
    - Pocket parks, installations, festivals, performances...
    - How to bring more culture to the city
  - **Funding:** are there unique ways that our groups can work together to raise money for AiPPC and other city events? (group leader-CYNTHIA)
  - **City Relations:** permitting, how to work with the city, AiPPC (group leader-JULIA)
- Open discussion about what each group came up with as ideas--one person from the group will come up and present their big ideas, then we discuss.
- We plan to meet 2-3 times a year to discuss issues involving the arts and the City. (Next meeting: June 24th 1-3pm will be held at MD Hall.)

**In Attendance:**

1. Joanna Young, Evergreen, Maryland Avenue and State Circle Association Annapolis
2. Su Anne Martinez, West Annapolis Artworks & Fine Framing
3. Celia Pearson, Photographer
4. Cindy Fletcher Holden, Artist
5. Tony Spencer, Artist, Writer
6. Vivian Spencer, Writer; Professor at AACCC
7. Patrice Drago, Maryland Federation of Art
8. Mary Rosoff, Art Teacher for AACPS
9. Jeni Paris Brady, Naptowne Music
10. Emily Kohlenstein, Exhibition Coordinator at Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts
11. Elizabeth Ramirez, Annapolis Arts Alliance
12. Kathy Swekel, General Director, Annapolis Opera
13. Sara Phillips, Architect, USNA; Historic Preservation Commission
14. Sarah Wade, Colonial Players
15. Julien Jacques, Local Filmmaker, Studio 39 Instructor
16. Laurie Nolan, Art Things
17. Ben Isenberg, Symmetry Agency; Annapolis Arts Week
18. Jimi Davies, UpStArt Magazine
19. Carolyn Kirby, Annapolis Summer Garden Theater
20. Katherine Hilton, Director, Marketing & Development, Live Arts Maryland
21. Cynthia McBride, McBride Gallery
22. Lucinda Merry-Browne, Compass Rose Theater
23. Michael Matthews, Artist
24. Sally Boyette, Annapolis Shakespeare Company
25. Jennifer Balducci, SoFo Annapolis
26. Chanel Compton, ED, Banneker-Douglass Museum
27. Wil Scott, SotC Member; President of Arts Council of Anne Arundel County
28. Loni Moyer, SotC Member; Garden Girls, LLC; Beautification Manager, AAC
29. Ellen Moyer, SotC Member; Chair of AiPPC; Former Mayor
30. Cynthia Krewson, SotC Member; AiPPC
31. Alison Harbaugh, SotC Member; ArtFarm; Inner West Street Association
32. Pam Stevens, SotC Co-chair; Annapolis Arts Alliance
33. Julia Gibb, SotC Chair; Future History Now

**Invited, but not able to attend:**

1. Lucinda Edinberg, Mitchell Gallery, St. John's
2. Katherine Burke, Annapolis Collection Gallery
3. Laura Brino, Jovenes Artistas; Outreach Coordinator, Maryland Hall

4. Matt Moore, Head of Art Department, AACC
5. Archie Trader, Acting Recreation Director at City of Annapolis
6. Emily Garvin, VP, Programs, Maryland Hall
7. Jennifer Culpepper, Peppermill Projects
8. Charles Lawrance, FinArt
9. Larry Griffin, Musician, We Care and Friends
10. George Lassie Belt, Artist, Recreation Specialist, Stanton Community Center
11. Roberta Pardo, Urban Walls Brazil
12. Marshall Mentz, General Manager, Annapolis Symphony Orchestra
13. April Nyman, ED, Arts Council of Anne Arundel County
14. Sally Comport, Art at Large
15. Scotti Preston, Vocalist, Full Range Solutions
16. Aaron Axe, Candidate for State Delegate
17. V.P. Loggins, Poet
18. Dajuan Gay, Chair of CityWork Transition Committee; Community Activist
19. William Rowel, Public Engagement/Community Relations Specialist, City of Annapolis
20. Arlene Berlin, Curator for City Galleries, Political, Marketing & Fundraising Consultant
21. Jessica Pachler, Writer, Community Activist
22. Lindsay Bolin, Artist, LBo Craft
23. Rob Savidge, Alderman, City of Annapolis
24. Marc Rodriguez, Alderman, City of Annapolis
25. Joann Vaughan, SotC Member; ED, Maryland Federation of Art
26. Selin Balci, SotC Member; Adjunct Professor at AACC
27. Candy Bigelow, SotC Member; Artist in Residence at Maryland Hall

**Individual interviews:**

- Mayor Gavin Buckley
- April Nyman, ED, Arts Council of Anne Arundel County
- Elly Tierney, Alderwoman, City of Annapolis
- Sergio Polanco, Conexiones Magazine; Hispanic Liaison for the City of Annapolis
- Emily Garvin, VP, Programs, Maryland Hall
- Jeff Holland, Musician, Them Eastport Oyster Boys; West and Rhode Riverkeeper
- Jane Danowitz, Chesapeake Conservancy; Senior Officer for Pew Charitable Trust's Environmental Program

**Results:** Recurring themes were identified. The SotC team was able to work many of the suggestions of the group into the transition plan. All participants and invitees were

briefed via an email including a rundown of the discussion and goals that resulted from the breakout groups. SotC continues to add community stakeholders to our Souls of the City list.

## **GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **FUND**

To realize the new administration's vision of Annapolis as a destination city for the arts, the city must commit to funding the arts and ensuring that artists are compensated for their work. For the past several years, the city's arts commission, Art in Public Places (AiPPC), has been severely underfunded, having received a budget of \$10,000 in 2016, and \$15,000 in 2017. Annapolis is an outlier among other Maryland cities in that there is no clear mandate for arts funding (see AiPPC's "A Survey of Public Art Programs in Maryland,"). In addition, it would benefit the city to consider finding a way to fund projects that might fall outside the scope of AiPPC.

#### **Short-term Goal: Commit to funding AiPPC and/or other city art projects.**

- Enforce funding as discussed in 6.24.020 of city code.
- Instate a Percent for Art program in this year's budget. A fee (we suggest 1%), is placed on large scale development projects in order to fund and install public art.
- Commit 1% of municipal budget toward public art.
- Seek public/private collaborations to help defray expenses and provide more sites for public art projects.
- Collaborate with environmental initiatives on beautification projects.
  - Idea: Hire an artist to collaborate on design of the project, create a permanent art installation or interactive piece within the project. Explore partnership between Anne Arundel Community College, local college student, or landscape design student and landscaping group to create green artwork around Annapolis.

#### **Long-term goal: Broaden the scope of the city's funding opportunities by soliciting funds from other public sector agencies, foundations, and granting bodies, businesses, organizations or individuals.**

- Employ a full or part-time City Arts Coordinator who has grant-writing experience and/or contract with a professional grant-writer.
- Explore internships with local college students to help research and write grants.
- Obtain sponsors from the business community.

## **SUPPORT**

To have a healthy community for artists and other residents, and in keeping with the new administration's vision of "One Annapolis," the city must invest in ways to support diversity and creativity within all wards. Artists need more opportunities to participate in city arts initiatives. Live and work spaces in Annapolis, especially the downtown area and the Arts District, can be prohibitively expensive for many artists, school teachers, local government employees, restaurant workers, local law enforcement, and others.

In addition, the process for obtaining approval for creating artwork within the Historic District is onerous and inappropriate. The process must be clarified and jurisdiction given to the appropriate commission.

### **Short term goal: Encourage artists to live, work, and do business within the city.**

- Prioritize the hiring and fair pay of local artists for festivals and events rather than bringing artists and acts from other cities.
- Employ fair labor principles in all venues where artists perform or create and sell their work. Ensure that Annapolis abides by the standard that artists of all disciplines are not expected to provide their work/services for free or below appropriate wages when employed by the City; nor should students be employed as "cheap labor."
- Include local artists in the conceptualization and design and planning of city projects for parks, public spaces, and events.
- Encourage the approval of permits for more frequent community-focused events at City Dock.

### **Long-term goal: Create a better process for the approval of art projects within the city; Encourage residents, business owners, and visitors to Annapolis to embrace public art; encourage artists to value their own work in order to combat "work for exposure" syndrome.**

- Develop a comprehensive public art policy to clarify and streamline the process for obtaining permits for art installations and cultural events within the Historic District.
- "Connect with an Artist:" Create an online database on the AiPPC website page with local artists (within AA Co.) who meet requirements set forth by the commission so that organizations and individuals can hire artists that are working and contributing to Annapolis.
- "Connect with an Arts Supporting Organization or Business:" Create an online database to identify friends of the arts and how they work within Annapolis (ie:

Maryland Hall, Annapolis Arts Alliance (AAA), ArtFarm, Galleries, Centro de Ayuda, etc.)

- Work with Ben Isenberg (Symmetry Agency) to develop an efficient way for arts organizations to self-submit events into a public calendar.
- Collaborate with AAA and other organizations offering business workshops for artists
- Provide advocacy for artists through a City Arts Coordinator.
- Work with developers and landlords to make affordable spaces for artists to live, work, and sell within the Arts District. City code 20.30.050 requires residential developments to designate 12 percent of units as Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs). However, in 20.30.060, the code allows for the developer to make a contribution of money to the homeownership assistance trust fund, or donate land in lieu of designating MPDUs. Finding a better way to incentivize affordable housing, *especially in the Arts District* and the Historic District would allow artists and other low to mid-income citizens to bring diversity and vibrancy to the city.

## EDUCATE

In order to better integrate the arts into Annapolis, residents, local government, artists, and visitors need more examples of how art can add to the financial, cultural, emotional, and intellectual health of our city. More examples are needed to show the immense range of public art, and what its value is.

**Short term goal: Think big, build on small actions. Educate the public through pieces including performance, temporary installations, pop-up projects and galleries.**

- In our conversations with members of the arts community, gallery owners, arts organizations, arts patrons, several ideas were discussed to bring awareness to and elevate the arts within the city. In doing these we would need full support of the city through permits, waived fees, and grants:
  - Use empty storefronts for temporary video installations, window galleries, or performance space. The city could forgive property taxes for 30-60 days as incentive for property owners creating a temporary gallery or performance space through AiPP.
  - Stage frequent flash mobs around Annapolis film them, post to social networks and share to establish city as an arts destination. Encourage local artists to be the performers.

- Parking Day would provide an opportunity for Annapolitans to experience a taste of more green space, an example of "placemaking," and an opportunity to explore the integration of art with green spaces.
- Encourage City Hall to learn what Annapolis Arts Alliance, created by Mayor Moyer, does to support artists.
- Hire a local artist to create infographic posters to distribute to arts organizations, galleries, coffee shops, and City Hall that show:
  - All the ways the arts are working in Annapolis
  - Art as a paid profession/artists don't work for free
  - Variety of artists are in our city (this will help show people the scope of the arts)
  - What artists can do to better their communities
  - Maker vs Artist vs Performer
- Identify areas that could accommodate pocket parks.

**Long term goal: Increase public access to art, cultural events and cultural facilities through innovative placemaking, streetscapes, events, and collaboration.**

- Create a long-range cultural plan for Annapolis. "One concrete way we infuse the arts and culture into a community is cultural planning, a community-wide process of creating a vision for cultural programming and development. Another way is to ensure the health and vitality of cultural facilities in communities. Often, the two go hand-in-hand." --Americans for the Arts
- Bring cultural and art events into spaces other than City Dock, West Street, Whitmore Park.
- Identify key ethnic and social cultures in Annapolis that should be recognized throughout the year--have a dedicated space for these events and collaborate with organizations to bring an outdoor programs to the public.
- Use arts to raise awareness of public safety, public health and social services
- Engage the city's youth via AiPPC in creating and performing public art.
- Provide city-sponsored opportunities for all Annapolis residents, especially children, to have access to the arts; hold events that reflect diversity.
- Identify via map local museums, galleries, performances, theater and exhibits for families with children to visit.
  - Idea: AiPPC could hold a competition for artists to design a poster-sized art map of the city for display in local businesses and cultural establishments. The map could also be available in folded form for ease

of use. A new map could be commissioned every year, engaging different artists each year, resulting in funky, collectible posters.

- Engage college students as arts mentors to increase interest in arts.

## **BUILD**

There are various forms of artistic and cultural disconnectedness within the city of Annapolis: neighborhoods are separated by socioeconomic status, arts and cultural organizations are disconnected from each other, and different artistic disciplines don't often cross-pollinate. In addition, the many galleries, art-related businesses, cultural sites and facilities, and art centers don't have a natural flow that links them all together and encourages visitors and residents alike to explore the city on foot or by bicycle.

**Short term Goal: Build Community by actively bringing artists, business owners, and residents together to collaborate, coordinate, and brainstorm.**

- Fill empty and expired seats on AiPPC.
- Increase reach of AiPPC via City marketing and Communications' help with publicity.
- Broaden the pool of AiPPC commissioners by re-examining membership requirements. For example, can members be business owners within the city and/or simply reside at an Annapolis mailing address?
- AiPPC plans to initiate a city-wide survey of potential sites for public art projects, creating opportunities beyond the downtown area and improving access to the arts in all wards.
- Appoint artists to city commissions other than AiPPC.

**Long term Goal: "Connect the dots" between neighborhoods, wards, arts establishments, cultural facilities, historic and cultural sites, and public art locations.**

- Create long-range Cultural Planning for the city.
- Soul of the City will host a series of artist gatherings/workshops twice a year, starting this year, for the duration of this mayoral term.
- Increase reach of AiPPC through commissioner representation at SotC workshops.
- An "Art in Your Ward" initiative in which AiPPC creates a public art project in each ward of the city.
  - A city-wide contest with a theme to design and place temporary sculpture (as was done with the chicken sculptures) in each ward. The selected

artists would receive a modest prize and the cost of materials. Right of first refusal for participating property owners. City permitting regulations may need to be reviewed and even changed slightly to make something like this happen.

- As the city's cycling plan is implemented, find opportunities for art installations on and along the trail.
- Connect significant sites in the city by way of bicycle and walking tours, increasing alternative transportation flow to places like Maryland Hall.
- Encourage libraries to showcase arts events and serve as gathering places for local artists, and as venues for performances and exhibits.
- Develop an "Art Map" by neighborhood - so people know what is available in their area. (See my comment about a city-wide competition above.)
- Reach outside the city limits for collaboration and support. Places within the county (ex: Chesapeake Arts Center, Muddy Creek Arts Guild) support events in the city and vice versa.

## **DO IT NOW!**

- Fill empty and expired seats on AiPPC.
- Adopt a "Yes!" attitude that supports artists and performers--instead of focusing on being a regulator of arts and music ie: ease of permit approvals.
- Name the city-owned galleries at City Hall, Pip Moyer Recreation Center, and the Harbormaster's Office to give them a distinct identity and sense of place.
- Consult with a variety of artists, look to various local organizations to discuss future projects, reach out to arts organizations to provide you with new fresh opinions.
- Create a Facebook page for AiPPC to help notify the public of events such as the Summer Music Series, ribbon cuttings, and calls for RFPs, to serve as an educational tool, and a place to showcase local artists. Several "page admin" can collaborate to maintain the page. Encourage arts organizations, galleries and artists to share the AiPPC page.
- Establish a "First Thursday" type tradition in which Annapolis Galleries coordinate a night of openings or open houses to encourage walking throughout the city and patronage of other shops and restaurants.
- Make unused spaces (outdoor and indoor) available to artists for creative projects.
- Work with Visit Annapolis to market and promote arts events in the city.
- Keep communication open among Mayor, City Council, Staff and arts community through a designated liaison.

- Utilize Arts Alliance (AAA). AAA “provides a forum for members of our arts community to network, collaborate, polish creative skills, and showcase the rich artistic life of Greater Annapolis. The Alliance supports resource identification, information dissemination, arts education and event programs, and provides a collective voice for the Annapolis arts community.”
- Create a list of possible seasonal anchor (arts) events--this includes ones that already exist along with proposed events.
- Continue the dialogue!