

# Community Cultural Arts Plan

City of Ocala, Florida



This plan was prepared by Francis Cauffman Architects |Webb Management Services and the **City of Ocala** in partnership with the **Marion Cultural Alliance** and with funding assistance from the **National Endowment for the Arts**.



**"We must embrace the power of the arts to provide a solid foundation for learning and an opportunity for common ground as we study our past and create our future. The arts are a vital element in the educational, economic, social and cultural development of our community."**

- Dr. Jillian Ramsammy

Vice President, Institutional Effectiveness and College Relations  
College of Central Florida

# CONTENTS

**ABOVE:**

“Tying Our Community Together,” Ocala’s newest public art project, was unveiled on June 22, 2018 at Webb Field during a Levitt AMP Ocala Music Series concert. This colorful “knit bomb” installation was started by local artists along a fence at the field. Jennifer Murty, Marion Culture Alliance’s board secretary, said inspiration for the project came during a trip to New York City.

MCA Director Jaye Baillie said outreach projects such as “Tying Our Community Together” are often a child’s first interaction with art.

“By engaging them with an art activity, we are forming lasting impressions on young minds about the importance of art,” Baillie noted.

**Ocala Star Banner, 2 July 2018**

**APPENDICES NOT INCLUDED:**

- A. Study Participants
- B. Market Data
- C. Arts + Economic Prosperity 5
- D. Comparable Community Benchmarking
- E. City of Marietta Code of Ordinances: Excise Tax on Rental Motor Vehicles
- F. Creative Vitalities Suite Report
- G. Creative Industries Inventory
- H. Cultural Asset Inventories + maps

**PHASE 2-3, APPENDICES NOT INCLUDED:**

- A. Pro-forma Operating Budget
- B. Public Art Policy Examples
- C. Capital Improvement Projects List
- D. Critical Path Plan

## Phase 1 Inventory and Assessment PAGES

1. Planning and Evaluation	4
2. The Situation in Ocala	6
3. Forces and Trends in the Arts	8
4. The Ocala Arts Market	18
5. The City’s Role in Arts + Culture	26
6. Ocala’s Cultural Community	38
7. Ocala’s Cultural Assets	41
8. Physical Planning Considerations	51
9. Observations on the State of the Arts in Ocala	57

## Phases 2-3 Visioning and Implementation

1. Introduction	60
2. Developing a Vision for Arts + Culture in Ocala	62
3. Cultural Infrastructure + Plan Implementation	66
4. Cultural Development Strategies	75
5. Financial Impact/Pro Forma	94

**Adopted by City Council on May 21, 2019**

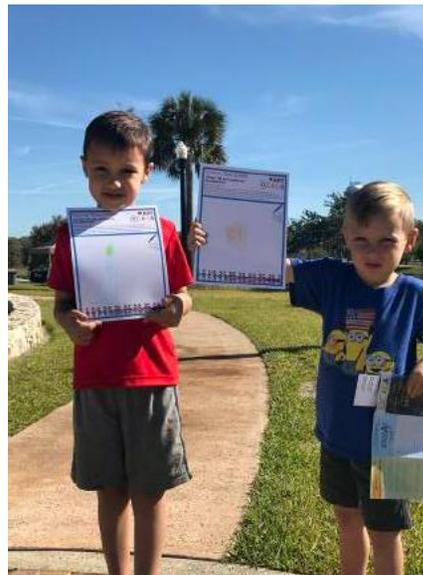
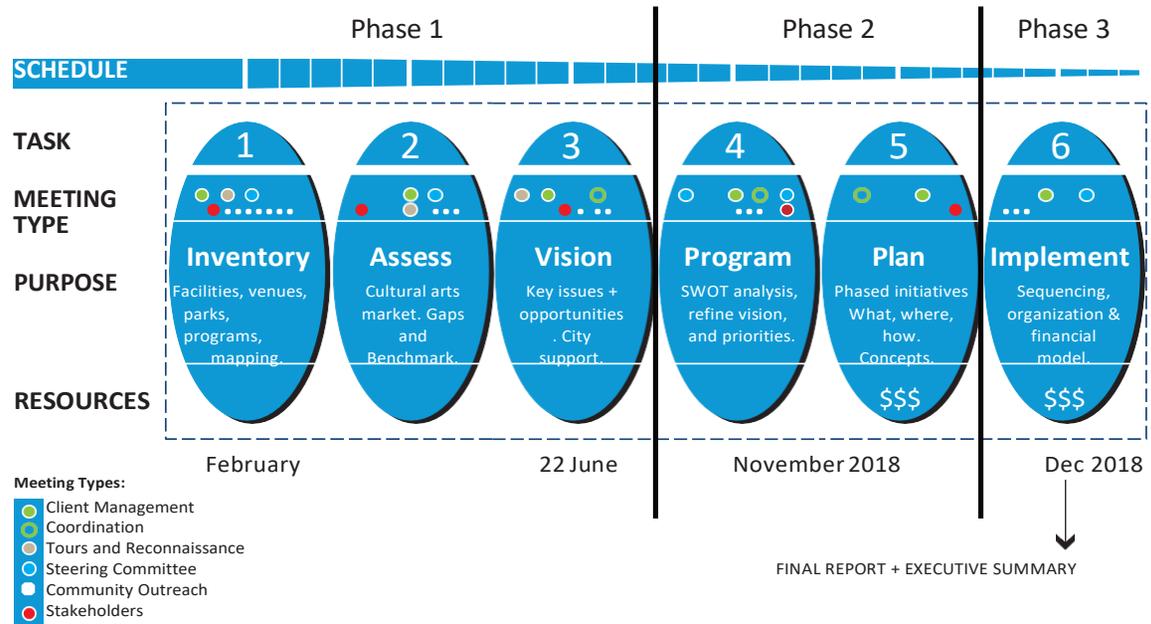
# 1 Phase I Planning and Evaluation

The City of Ocala retained Martinez + Johnson Architecture with Webb Management Services and Francis Cauffman Architects (FCA) to complete a Community Cultural Arts Master Plan. Planning efforts were administered through the City's Recreation and Parks Department in partnership with the Marion Cultural Alliance (MCA) and the Ocala Municipal Arts Commission (OMAC).

Throughout the study, the consulting team engaged with the client, stakeholders, and the community-at-large. A 'situation analysis' and assessment of Ocala's cultural arts landscape was supported by the City's leadership, administered by the Cultural Arts and Sciences Division, overseen by an appointed Steering Committee, partnership with the Marion Cultural Alliance.

## Comparable Market Analysis

Also as part of the Phase I evaluation, the consulting team completed benchmarking of comparable communities regarding programming, resources, and organizational infrastructure. Direct solicitation was made for detailed information from municipalities that are comparable to Ocala in size, educational attainment, household income, and other characteristics. Cities contacted include Kissimmee, FL; Marietta, GA; Lancaster, PA; Pittsfield, MA; Loveland, CO.



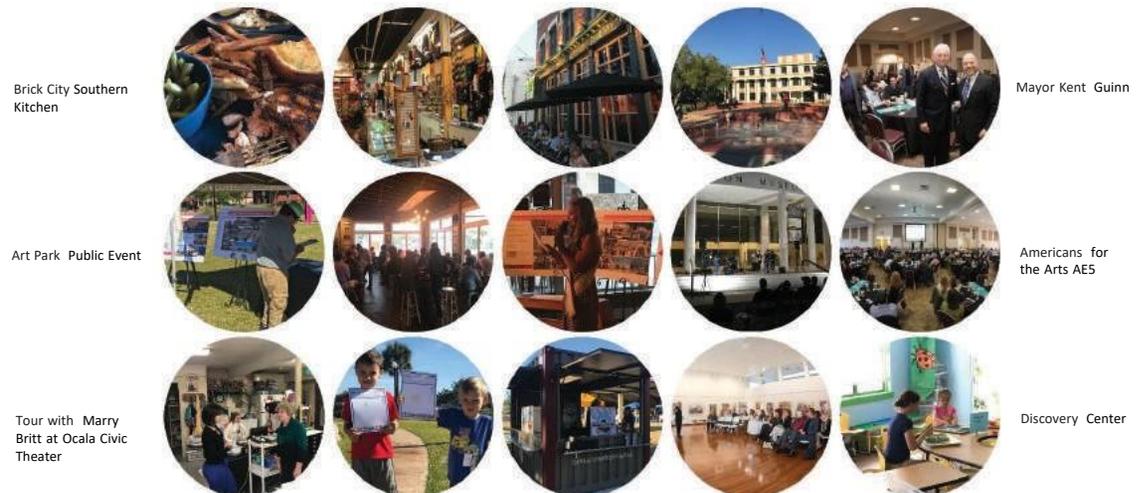
AEP5 Report / Introduction	250
One-on-one Stakeholder Interviews	50
Formal Surveys	203
Client Manager Meetings and Updates	15
MCA City Partner Check-ins	3
Facility Inventories	61
Tours of Facilities	15
Steering Committee Meetings Interaction	4
and Input at Public Events	200
Local Media Coverage	6
College of Central Florida	12
On Top of the World	5
Levitt AMP	24
City Depts. & Div. Expenditure Probing	6
 Total Touchpoints	 +/-875



# ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

***"Our ability to visibly and consistently confirm that our city places high value on cultural arts is one of the strongest signals we can send and informs the community that Ocala strives to provide an enhanced human experience beyond just a place to live."***

- John Zabler, City Manager



## 2 The Situation in Ocala

The City of Ocala is an amenities-rich community with a strong history in agriculture and horse farming. In recent years, arts and culture have taken a more prominent place in the City's identity, bolstered by assets like Horse Fever (Ocala's fleet of painted horse statues), the Appleton Museum of Art, Ocala Civic Theatre, Fine Arts for Ocala, Tusawilla Park's Reilly Arts Center, Discovery Center and Art Park, First Friday Art Walks, and more. To plan for their continued growth, we must understand the City's broader goals and objectives.

### 2.1 Ocala's Goals + Priorities

The City of Ocala, Ocala Municipal Arts Commission (OMAC), and the Marion Cultural Alliance (MCA) have identified strengthening arts and cultural initiatives, assessing the feasibility of establishing cultural districts, marketing, and the development of funding policies as key objectives for the Community Cultural Arts Master Plan. But, what broader City goals and objectives might shape and guide the plan's development?

Over the last 15 years, the City of Ocala has undergone a number of planning processes, some of which have been neighborhood specific while others have

established objectives for the city as a whole. The 2004 Downtown Master Plan, for example, envisioned Downtown Ocala as a "mixed-use cultural and activity center" that creates a sense of place in the community. That vision included arts, cultural, and entertainment venues; retail and restaurants; art galleries and family entertainment; and housing, offices, and civic buildings. While there are still opportunities for growth, much of this vision has been achieved, specifically when it comes to arts and cultural activity. Other neighborhood-specific planning efforts have included:

- The Tusawilla Park Cultural Arts Plan (2011-2014) and Tusawilla Master Plan Report (2014), both of which position Tusawilla Park as a connector for the community, providing spaces and programs that encourage social interaction; support recreation, education, cultural arts, and community events; and connect the park to its surrounding areas.
- The Midtown Master Plan (2017), which envisions the creation of an arts district centered on the Magnolia Art Xchange and a Plein Air Art Park. The overarching goal is for arts and culture to be integrated into all Midtown amenities, programming, and public

spaces, operating as a tool to better connect the area to Ocala's downtown.

Broader community planning includes the Comprehensive Plan: Recreation, Open Space, and Cultural Arts Element and the 2017-2018 Strategic Plan. Approved in 2013, the Comprehensive Plan identifies the provision, preservation, revitalization, and enhancement of all park, trail, recreation, open space, and cultural art resources as a primary objective, while the Strategic Plan prioritizes establishing Ocala as an economic hub, fiscal sustainability, operational excellence, and quality of place.

Most relevant, however, is the Ocala Vision 2035 Master Plan (2010), which describes how the community wants the city to look and function in the future. In it, Ocala is described as:

- A community of natural and man-made beauty.
- A community of neighborhoods.
- A vibrant hub of residential, retail, office, governmental, cultural, and entertainment activity.
- The county seat and a vitally active center for regional employment in Marion County.



# 3 Forces + Trends in the Arts

Today's national arts and cultural landscape is quite different from the one of previous generations. New technologies, changing tastes, and a growing desire to actively participate in creation has impacted how, when, and where we experience art, culture, and creativity. In planning for the future of the arts in Ocala, it is important to understand the forces and trends at play in the field and how they might impact audiences and cultural development. Following is a review of some of the broader forces and trends currently impacting arts, culture, and creativity in the United States.

## 3.1 Trends in Traditional Arts Participation

The National Endowment for the Arts regularly releases the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA). Conducted by the United States Census Bureau, the study assesses arts participation on the part of the country's adult population. Following are some basic facts about arts audiences based on highlights from the 2012 SPPA (the next iteration of the study is expected to be released in the coming year), which can be downloaded here:

<http://arts.gov/publications/additional-materials-related-to-2012-sppa>

- **About one-third of adults attend live performance or visit museums or galleries each year.** Over the last 20 years, participation within traditional arts disciplines—ballet, opera, symphonic music, and theatre—has remained relatively flat. More specifically, a decline in levels of participation (percentages of adults attending various types of events) has been mitigated only by increases in the total adult population
- The study shows that **attendance in a broader set of cultural and entertainment opportunities is taking place at less traditional venues**, and there is a significant increase in those consuming the arts through electronic media.
- Most notably, **participation in the traditional performing and visual arts amongst adults under the age of 40 has been on the decline for over 20 years.**
- Participation also varies tremendously by demographic characteristics. **Educational attainment is by far the best predictor of arts attendance.** The propensity to attend arts events among those who have completed college is exponentially greater than for those who have finished only high school. **With each advanced level of education, there is increased probability of arts attendance.** Age also matters, but not nearly as much as education - **older adults tend to have higher rates of participation** than younger adults - but only to a point.

## 3.2 Trends in Participation on the Part of Ethnically-Specific + Immigrant Populations

The City of Ocala has a majority White population, but there is diversity in the market, as we will see in the next chapter. For that reason, it is important to understand arts participation trends on the part of ethnically-specific and immigrant populations. Two sources provide insight on this topic: 1) Art-based Social Inclusion: An Investigation of Existing Assets and Innovative Strategies to Engage Immigrant Communities in Philadelphia (William Penn Foundation, 2010), and 2) Beyond Attendance: A Multimodal Understanding of Arts Participation (Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA), National Endowment for the Arts (NEA,) 2011). Highlights from these works are as follows:

- The Art-based Social Inclusion study found that **the average immigrant tends to participate in more creative activities annually (roughly 3.2) than the average U.S. born resident (roughly 2.8).** Further, analysis of the NEA's SPPA suggests that **Hispanic populations have higher rates of attendance at informal arts events** (craft fairs and festivals, outdoor arts festivals, visits to historic sites and parks) than White (Non-Hispanic) populations.

- In connecting these two points, the research also indicates that **immigrant populations are often highly engaged in art forms connected to their cultural identity.** Participation in these art forms, however, **tends to take place outside of formalized cultural institutions**, in places like churches and community centers. Arts organizations often engage diverse communities in these familiar places, create relationships, and then draw them to more formal facilities.

- Attendance at Latin, Spanish, or salsa music events mark the highest rates of attendance for **self-identified Hispanics (17.4%)**, followed by art museums or galleries, art or craft fairs and festivals, outdoor performing arts festivals, and historic locations (all at approximately 14%).
- Hispanic populations are 30% more likely than White Non-Hispanic) populations to view or listen to arts recordings or live broadcasts. A similar pattern is seen in African American and American Indian populations.

### 3.3 Trends in Participant Behavior

Next, we consider some more recent trends impacting consumption of the arts and how audiences are choosing to participate in them.

**LESS TIME AND LESS PLANNING:** We are all busy and less likely to make a significant investment of our precious time into any activity, especially when we are asked to make that commitment well in advance of the event. This has led to a precipitous decline in subscription ticketing, as individuals are less willing to commit to an event early and more likely to keep their options open until the last moment. This also means that there are more consumers now who are willing to pay more later—the perceived premium of flexibility and the “on-demand” lifestyle.

### Today’s on-demand lifestyle requires the arts to provide spontaneous opportunities.

Connect On-Demand	Just Add Delivery	Optimize Real Estate	Eliminate Real Estate
Brings digital-centric acquisition and logistics to traditional on-demand	Adds or enhances delivery layer; requires traditional partners	Removes public infrastructure and/or optimizes industrial space; some add delivery	Removes storefront or office, shifting point of service to customer location
<p><b>Transportation</b></p>			

## THE DEMAND FOR MORE STIMULATION:

All consumers, and particularly younger ones, are acclimated to multi-sensory engagement—we are watching, hearing, and reading simultaneously. This means that we have higher satisfaction thresholds and expectations for immediate rewards from an experience.

## THE DEMAND FOR CONVENIENCE:

Audiences are also seeking convenience. There is less tolerance for the event with built-in hardships, whether that means an uncomfortable seat, poor concessions service, or bad traffic on the way home. This suggests a low threshold for opting out of an event and pushes facilities and presenters towards a higher level of customer service. It also inspires them to influence other factors that affect the audience experience, from parking to the after-show drink. In October 2017, the National Center for Arts Research published *At What Cost? How Distance Influences Arts Attendance*. The study found that, as commute times increase, arts participation becomes radically local. Arts participation becomes even more local in low socioeconomic communities, where “non-monetary costs such as the hassle of travel compound the financial barriers of attending.”

## THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERPRETATION-RICH EXPERIENCES:

We have determined that the quality of an experience for audiences is dramatically improved by properly preparing them for that experience with information and context; then, more importantly, by providing them with the opportunity to process and share their experience with others. We must now accept that audiences are less willing to accept someone else’s interpretation of an experience, preferring to develop and provide their own interpretation, whether it is through a tweet, a snap, a live stream, or something other.

## THE DIFFUSION OF CULTURAL TASTES:

Because of advances in information and communication technologies, people are now interested in a much broader array of programs. This has created a fragmentation and diversification of tastes that both narrows and broadens at the same time. While at one time a person may have been a fan of music and painting from the Romantic period, today they might like Beyoncé, Bob Dylan, graphic novels, e-sports, pre-Columbian folk art, and Mozart’s choral works.

## THE PARADOX OF CHOICE:

We are now faced with an extraordinary range of choices—whether they relate to food, cars, or culture. With our hyperactive, consumption-based economy, we are constantly bombarded with those choices and exhortations to buy. For many, there are simply too many decisions to make, causing consumers to shut down and make no choice at all. This has left us hungry for filters and enablers, people and services that help us get past the paralysis brought on by excessive choice. Word of mouth is the strongest version of this—a piece of one-on-one advice from a credible source—but, people are looking for other filters and influencers (curators, so to speak), who can help them make decisions about what to see, buy, or do.

## RISK VERSUS REWARD:

Because of the cost (time and money) of attending or participating in an arts or cultural event, and all of the other choices available, audiences are generally less willing to take risks and more willing to pay large sums for a guaranteed “home run” experience. This is consistent with a pervasive trend towards “trading up” and the rise of VIP culture, where there is an attempt to create the illusion of exclusivity, status, and prestige. The challenge is, the

more everything becomes accessible, the more some people want to be separate—which suggests demand for value-added, premium arts experiences.

**THE SOCIAL EXPERIENCE:** Research suggests that audiences are drawn to the arts today by the opportunity for a social experience, as opposed to the more traditional attraction of intellectual stimulation. This is good news in that it provides live arts and cultural events with a clear competitive advantage: the shared social experience is not available to those at home, regardless of the quality of their technology. The challenge is that presenters and facilities must deliver much more than what is on the stage, creating an environment in which the social elements of the experience are fully enjoyed.

**THE ROLE OF MEDIA:** Traditional media plays a reduced role in driving arts participation. Conversely, there is a proliferation of personal communications technologies and online word of mouth tools (Facebook, Instagram, trade newsletters, and so on). These tools are critically important as a means for consumers to spread word of mouth in a viral way. They are even more

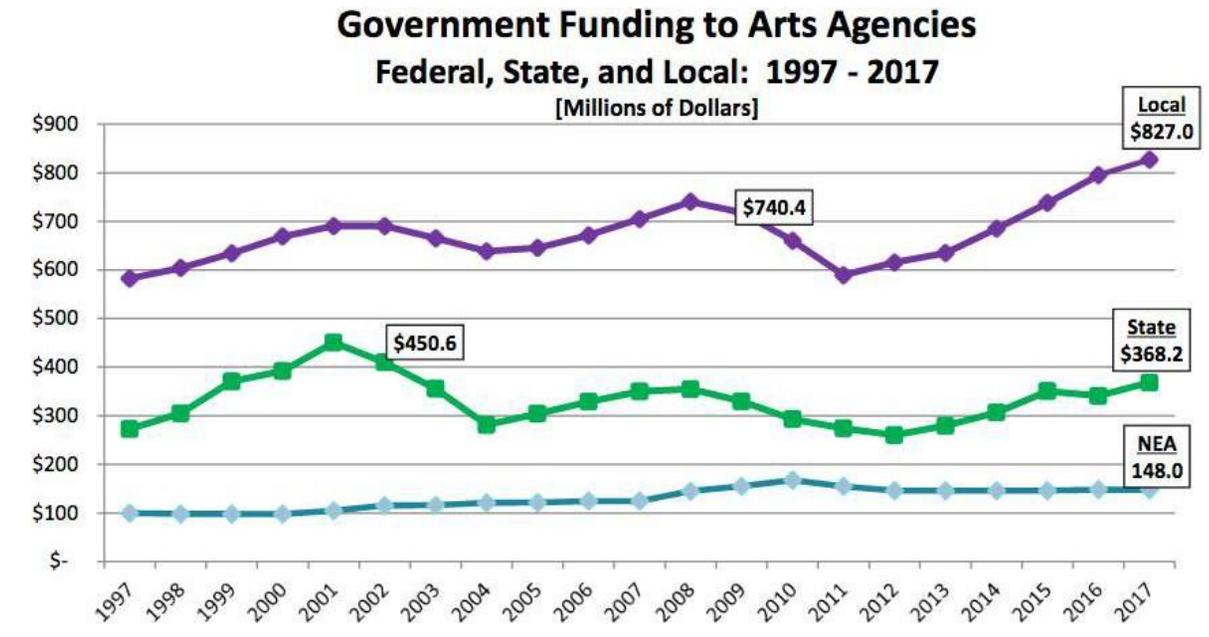


Figure 5: Government funding to arts agencies from 1997 to 2017. From *Grantmakers in the Arts*.

important for cultural suppliers to build a community of friends and supporters in a world where consumer loyalty is largely a thing of the past.

**EVERYONE’S AN ARTIST:**

There has been a rise in self-directed, home-based, living arts participation that includes activities like gardening, writing, crafting, photography, film production, cooking, and decorating through fashion, home décor, and art collection. Similarly, consumers are demanding more intense, “hands-on” arts experiences. This is evidenced by higher rates of

personal and ‘amateur’ participation in community theatre groups, choirs, dance and movement classes, art and music classes, and more.

**3.4 Issues Driving Nonprofit Arts Organizations Funding**

Along with change in the nature of demand for arts, culture, and creative activities, there have been significant changes occurring in their supply, particularly when it comes to the health and sustainability of nonprofit arts organizations. The are explained are explained in more detail as follows.

## BAUMOL AND BOWEN:

William J. Baumol and William G. Bowen published “The Economic Dilemma of the Performing Arts” in 1965. In it, they posited that the lack of productivity gains in the creation of art (it takes the same number of musicians to perform Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 in 2018 as it did when it was first performed in 1824), plus the inevitability of cost increases, would essentially force all organizations to raise more contributed income every year. Though there have been marginal improvements in the administration of buildings and organizations, there is ample evidence of this cost squeeze and increasing pressure on all arts organizations to raise more money to sustain operations. However, even if an organization matches its prior year revenue targets and buys only what it bought the year before, the annual funding requirement will continue to increase, year after year after year.

## SUPPLY ISSUES:

According to figures from the Urban Institute’s National Center for Charitable Statistics, there were 118,000 arts and culture nonprofit organizations registered in the United States in 2016, as compared to 82,000 in 1996. **This 44% increase in arts and culture nonprofits has led to**

**ever increasing competition for public and private financial support.**

## THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT:

Direct support of the arts can be controversial. While 2017 data from Grantmakers in the Arts indicates that total direct expenditures on the arts by local and state governments has been increasing, it is impossible to predict how that might change over the next few years.

## PRIVATE SECTOR FUNDING:

On the private side, there is a fully developed philanthropic sector, led by skilled marketers, technologists, and communicators, that is raising the bar for arts fundraisers and bringing new competition from sectors like healthcare and the environment. In addition, the new generation of funders is much more pro-active and engaged in their causes, expecting to be given the ability to direct the organization and the use of their funds in a much more personal manner.

## 3.5 Trends in the Arts and How They Serve, Engage + Educate Youth

Changes in the Federal education policy has afforded arts education an opportunity

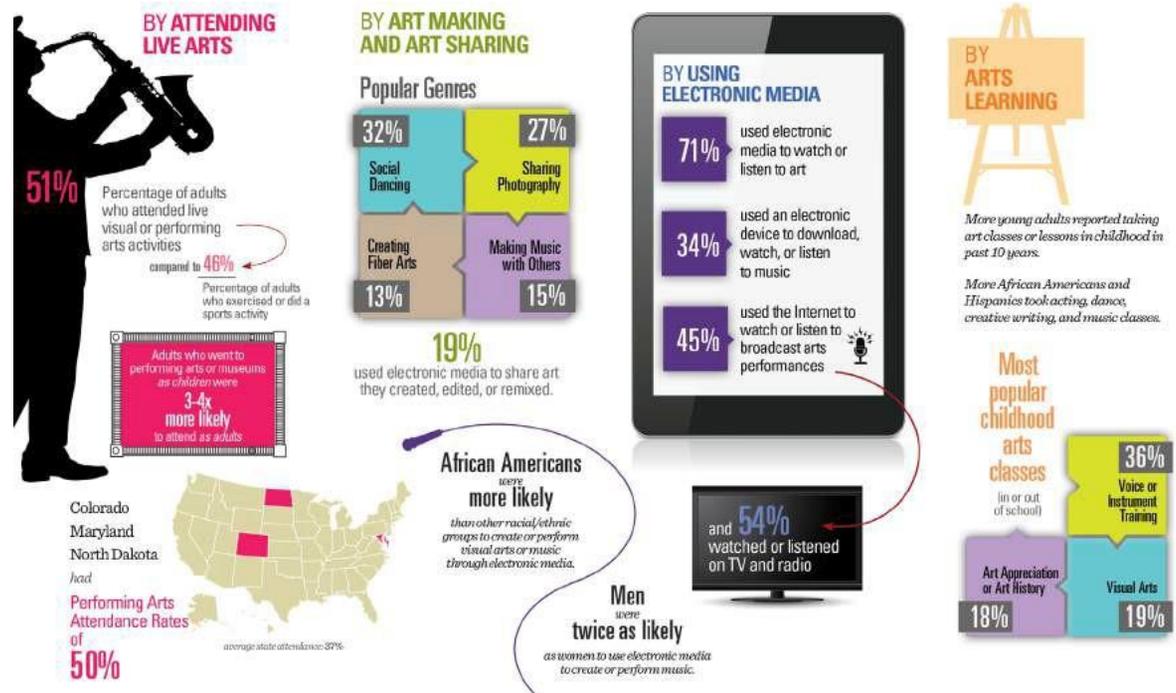
to become a more prominent component of a school’s curriculum. Through the 2016 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, emphasis on a “well-rounded” education has prompted State education departments to rethink how the arts compliment the previous “common core” standards of the No Child Left Behind Act. To that end, **there has been an emerging acknowledgement of the arts as a vital and transformative subject of the 21st Century classroom. This has been successfully articulated in the STEM to STEAM movement, championed by the Rhode Island School of Design.**

**STEAM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, ARTS AND MATH)** is a movement that continues to be integrated into institutions and corporations in the United States. It expands the traditional areas of innovation (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math to include Arts and Design. **This movement is based on the belief that Arts and Design will transform the 21st century economy as science and technology did in the 20th century.** This sentiment is echoed in the ESSA legislation, where a STEAM curriculum is eligible for a number of Federal grant programs that previously were reserved for the sciences, math, and English.

Through a concerted research effort over the past two decades, there is a mounting body of evidence that touts the benefits of arts education. The following are a collection of takeaways from these research efforts.

- **The arts boost literacy and English Language Arts skills.** Drama instruction, for example, increases reading readiness and word fluency in early grades and continues to improve reading comprehension and writing skills throughout middle and high school. When the arts are integrated with literacy instruction, all students benefit, especially English Language Learners and students from low-income backgrounds.
- **The arts advance achievement in math.** Arts-integrated math instruction facilitates a mastery of computation and estimation skills and challenging concepts like fractions.
- **The arts improve school culture.** When schools integrate the arts across curriculums, disciplinary referrals decrease while effectiveness of instruction and teachers' ability to meet the needs of all students increase.
- **The arts build collaboration and communication skills.** Art making allows students to experience what it feels like to be active members of a community and to work as a team to determine and achieve common goals.

# How do Americans participate in THE ARTS?



*A Decade of Arts Engagement, National Endowment for the Arts*

- **The arts strengthen problem solving ability.** Students who study the arts score higher than their peers on tests measuring the ability to analyze information and solve complex problems. They are also more likely to approach problems with patience and persistence.
- **Students involved in the arts have increased capacity for leadership.** Students who participate in the arts develop

leadership skills, including decision-making, strategy building, planning, and the ability to reflect.

- **The arts strengthen the ability to persevere.** Through arts study, students improve in their ability to turn barriers into opportunities, overcome difficulty in completing complex tasks, and sustain attention. In a longitudinal study of 25,000 secondary school students, those with higher involvement in the arts

scored better on measures of persistence than their peers with lower arts involvement.

- **The arts facilitate cross-cultural understanding.** Arts experiences foster pro-social behaviors and social tolerance that help prepare students for life in an increasingly global and culturally diverse world.
- **The arts build communities and support civic engagement.** Students who have had an arts-rich education volunteer more often and exhibit greater civic engagement than other students.

In addition, **there has been recognition of the role of the arts in helping at-risk youth.** In 2012, the NEA commissioned Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth. The study revealed that students who participate in the arts are:

- Four times more likely to participate in math and science fairs than those who do not participate in the arts.
- Three times more likely to have good attendance in school.
- Four times more likely to be recognized for academic excellence.
- Three times more likely to be elected to class office.
- Average nearly 100 points higher on their SAT scores than students who take only one-half year or less of arts programming.

The report also revealed interesting results pertaining to work and professional experience:

- Fifty percent (50%) of students who had high arts involvement obtained gainful employment versus 40% with low arts involvement.
- Forty-four percent (44%) of students who had high arts involvement earned Associate's Degrees versus 27% with low arts involvement.
- Thirty-seven percent (37%) of students who had high arts involvement earned bachelor's degrees versus 17% with low arts involvement.
- Seventy-two percent (72%) of business leaders say creativity is their highest priority when hiring employees.
- Finally, 56% of employers and 79% of superintendents agree that a college degree in the arts is the most significant indicator of creativity in a prospective job candidate.

### 3.6 How the Sector Is Responding to a Changing Environment

So how should communities respond to these changes in the sector?

#### FROM FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS TO COMMUNITY LIVING ROOMS:

The old image of a theater, museum, or gallery as a place where fancy people wearing formal attire can attend a performance or exhibition opening

***"Most of the public schools in Ocala are Title 1 schools, meaning that the majority of students are at or below poverty level. I hear teachers discussing the fact that it is difficult to teach reading or history when the majority of our students have never traveled out of Ocala and are lacking basic background knowledge necessary for comprehension. Cultural arts in our community teaches children about the world without having to leave the community. The arts teach history and cultural diversity, and through that, empathy and understanding of differences. Cultural arts also help children process feelings and emotions, which aids in developing healthy relationships."***

Joanne Crowder  
Fine Arts Program Specialist  
Marion County Public Schools

is gone. The new image is that of a community living room—a place that is always open and always active—with informal programming and an atmosphere that is buzzing and welcoming.

**FROM PALACES TO DISTRICTS:**

There is also a shift away from buildings that might be termed palaces of the arts—huge, fancy buildings in which



*The Grove Neighborhood; St. Louis, MO*

Across the country performing arts organizations are responding to changing patterns of cultural consumption with the experiences that offer less formality, increased flexibility and new ways for participatory activity.

multiple components are housed under one roof (like the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC)—to cultural districts, an area in which multiple smaller facilities are developed within a walkable radius. This is a positive trend for a number of reasons: Cultural districts can be developed over a period of time with a combination of new facilities and the adaptive re-use of existing structures. The cost is generally lower, and these sets of facilities tend to be more inclusive and authentic than large, new buildings. They also tend to be better at motivating commercial development, as they are relatively porous and accommodating of other building projects.

**FACILITATING ACTIVE PARTICIPATION:**

Facilities and organizations must support a culture of more active participation in the arts, including engagement of audiences before, during, and after events. Even more importantly, they must provide more opportunities for everyone in the community to express their own creativity, whether that means joining a choir, learning to paint, or volunteering to build sets for the local community theater.

The new image of the cultural arts needs to be that of a community living room with front and back “yards.” Less emphasis is being placed on singular buildings and more on inclusive walkable districts.



**29%,**

**Average attendance of one arts activity across all race and ethnicities.**

(classical music performances, opera, musical plays, non-musical plays, ballet, and art museums or galleries)

**45%**

**Americans who do creative arts activities.**

SOURCES: WEBB MANAGEMENT SERVICES, 2012 SURVEY OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS, NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS



### **COST STRUCTURE:**

The future of facilities that serve the nonprofit sector depends on their ability to provide ongoing affordable access to nonprofit users, as well as arrangements that motivate efficient use of space and the maximization of revenues for both user and facility. Facility management organizations must be lean and nimble in their staffing and embracing of technologies that drive operating efficiencies and economies.

### **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND ACCESS:**

Over the last four years, the cultural sector has begun to think more critically and intentionally about issues related to diversity, equity, and access. This has resulted in efforts to diversify organizational leadership at both the board and staff levels so that they are reflective of the communities they serve.

It has also resulted in decentralized programming with cultural organizations taking events and programs into neighborhoods not traditionally served by the arts.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

The arts, culture, and creative sector must become deeply engaged and connected to the life of their communities. They cannot be seen as something special or exclusive, but rather something fundamental to the life of the community, offering benefits that are understood and embraced by all, whether that means driving economic development, enhancing quality of life, or changing the identity and image of the community.

### **Key Points**

Attendance in a broader set of cultural and entertainment opportunities is taking place at less traditional venues, and there is a significant increase in those consuming the arts through electronic media.

Audiences are seeking convenience. They are less tolerant of events with built-in hardships.

Education attainment is by far, the best predictor of arts attendance.

There has been a 44% increase in the number of arts and culture non-profits since 1996. This has led to ever increasing competition for public and private financial support.

***“Cultural Arts are part of what make our community uniquely Ocala. In particular, when the arts are combined with some of our other defining aspects (downtown, the Horse Capital, and the Springs), it helps to reflect and to amplify the stories, views, and values of our community.”***

- Kevin Sheilley, President and CEO - Ocala/Marion County Chamber & Economic Partnership



### Notes Regarding the NEA SPPA Data

Data reported and used during Phase 1 of this Community Cultural Arts Plan was based on the NEA's 2012 Study of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA). In December 2018, NEA released its updated 2017 SPPA data. Differences in participation appear to be related to the ebbs and flows of the economy which is not unexpected given the direct correlation between discretionary income and participation in the arts. When compared to the 2010 data, the 2017 data indicates attendance is up overall and in particular as shown below.

- Museums and Galleries up 2.7%
- Parks, buildings, neighborhoods (historic/design) up 4.4%
- Craft and Visual Arts Festivals up 1.4%
- Performing Arts All Types up 0.2% to 3.4%

***“The arts give our community a unique identity and make a statement about the overall culture and heart of our city. Public art and arts facilities provide a sense of greater value to everything around them - neighborhoods and downtowns. They enhance our quality of life, are economic drivers and make a statement about what we want to offer our population, while attracting businesses and individuals to our area.”***

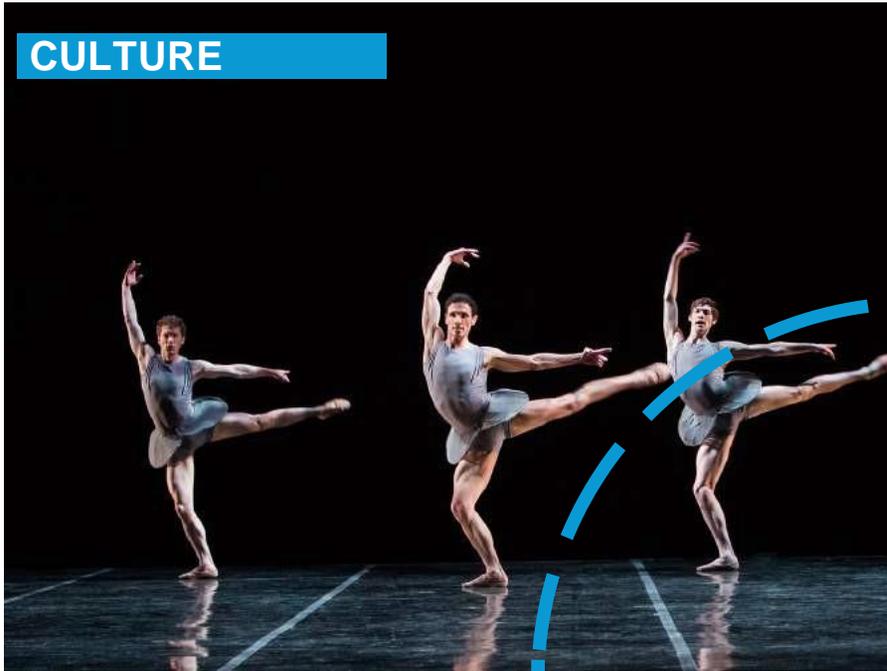
- Laurie Zink, Chair  
Ocala Municipal Arts Commission



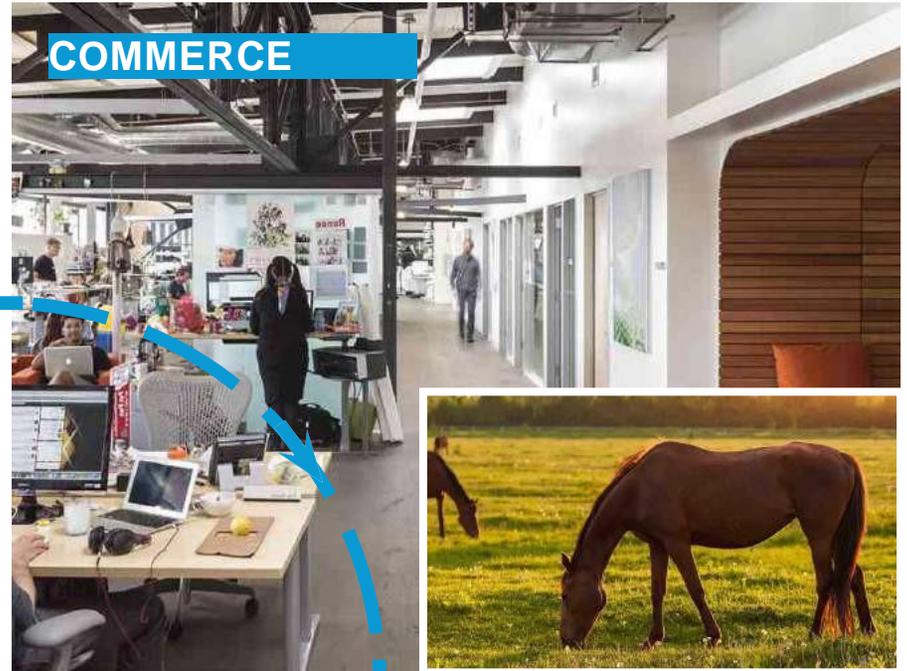
***“Marion Cultural Alliance’s financial support of the Master Cultural and Arts Plan is considered, by the MCA Board of Directors, as an investment. We are confident the Plan will pay great dividends for our arts and cultural sector. This ten year road map includes an inventory of our cultural assets as well as identification of opportunities and strategies to achieve them. Roles and responsibilities have been clearly defined. The Plan also includes a recommendation to explore a dedicated funding source(s). Implementation of this Plan will forward our collective goal of making Ocala one of the best cities for the Arts.”***

**- Jaye Baillie, APR  
Executive Director, Marion Cultural Alliance**

**CULTURE**



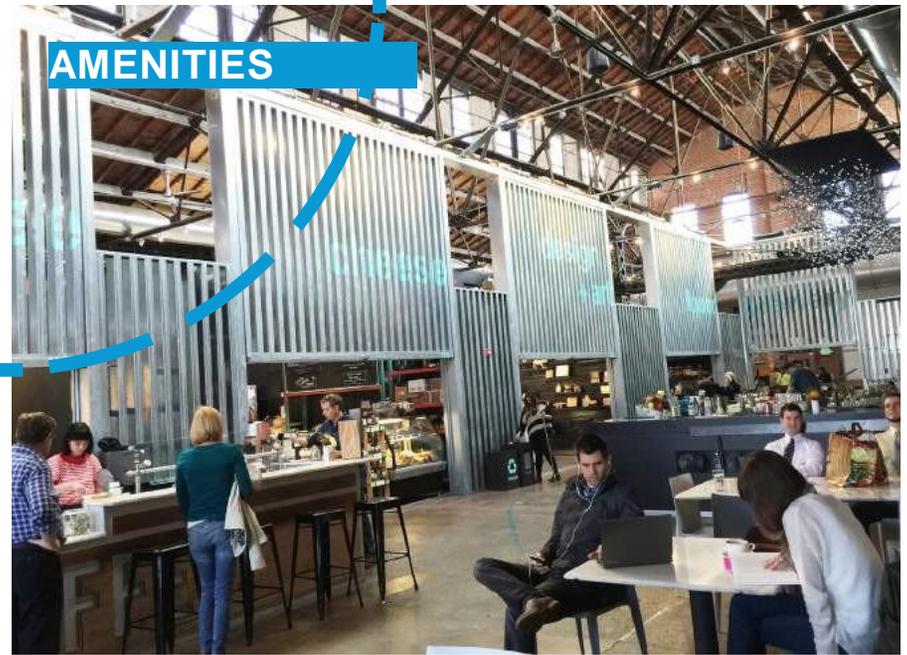
**COMMERCE**



**RECREATION**



**AMENITIES**

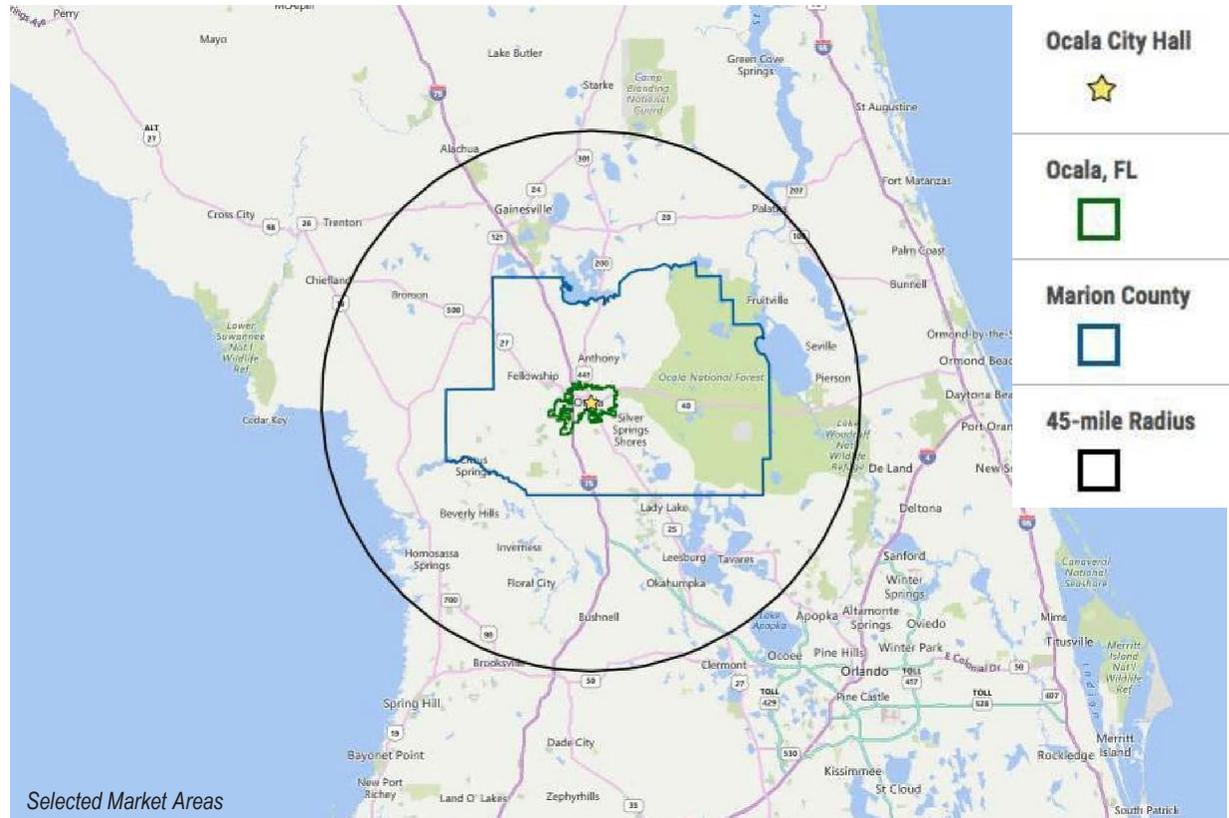


# 4 The Ocala Arts Market

Understanding the market for the arts is crucial to the success of any cultural planning effort. During the Phase I evaluation, ticket buyer and attendee data from local arts organizations was used to define a market for the arts in Ocala. That market was then analyzed in order to understand more about propensity to participate in and support the arts and culture in the community. Finally, we reviewed data on the non-resident market as well as information that was collected through a community-wide surveying effort.

## 4.1 Defining the Market

To define the market for the arts, we collected visitor and ticket buyer data from the Appleton Museum of Art, Reilly Arts Center, and Ocala Symphony Orchestra. We then analyzed that data in order to establish three market segments by which to assess propensity to engage in and support the arts in Ocala. **These data suggest that primary, secondary, and tertiary market areas for arts and culture in Ocala should be defined as the City of Ocala, Marion County, and the 45-mile radius surrounding Ocala City Hall, as shown in the figure above.** These market segments, along



with national data for comparison, are explored in greater detail in the following section.

## 4.2 Local + Regional Population Characteristics

Demographic data for the City of Ocala, Marion County, and the 45-mile radius suggest the following about the market:

**THE POPULATION IS GROWING:** The population is growing in all three geographic areas. The 45-mile radius, where the population grew by 9.0% between 2010 and 2017, has grown the fastest. By 2022, the population is projected to reach 1.26 million, an increase of 3.4%.

In Ocala and Marion County, the population is growing at a slower pace.

In 2010, the population in the City of Ocala was 56,315. It grew by 5.3% between 2010 and 2017; and, by 2022, it is projected to reach 61,020, an increase of 2.9%. A similar pattern is expected in the county, where the population grew from 331,298 in 2010 to an estimated 351,257 in 2017, a change of 6.0%. By 2022, it is projected to reach 361,773, an additional increase of 3.0%.

### **THERE ARE LOW LEVELS OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT:**

Educational attainment is relatively low across market segments. In Ocala, 15% of the population has a Bachelor's degree as compared to 19% of the national population. Eight percent (8%) of the local population has a graduate or professional degree. Nationally, this number is 11%. With the exception of graduate/professional degrees in the 45-mile radius, these metrics are lower in the broader Central Florida region.

### **THE POPULATION IS PREDOMINATELY LOW-INCOME:**

In Ocala, 27% of the population has a household income that is less than \$24,999, and 25% of the population has a household income between \$25,000 and \$49,999. Regionally, these numbers are quite similar. When it comes to

households with incomes between \$100,000 and \$149,999 or \$150,000 or more, all three market segments lag behind the nation, where 17% and 16% of the population falls into these categories, respectively.

These data suggest that there is limited disposable income in the market. This is further evidenced by median household income (MHI, which also falls behind national numbers. In Ocala, MHI was estimated at \$47,489 in 2017. By 2022, it is projected that it will reach \$61,678. Nationally, MHI was estimated at \$58,272 in 2017 and is projected to reach \$86,475 by 2022. While MHI is slightly higher in Marion County and the 45-mile radius, it is not by much—by 2022, it is projected that MHI will reach \$66,025 in the county and \$68,655 in the 45-mile radius.

There is a Large Senior Population: In Marion County, 29% of the population is age 65 or older, as is 28% of the 45-mile radius population and 21% of the Ocala population. These numbers well outpace those in the nation, where just 16% of the population is aged 65 or older. In all market segments, the population is expected to continue to age over time.

Although the population is aging, Ocala

does skew slightly younger than the county and 45-mile radius populations. For example, 10% of the population is between the ages of 18 and 24 and 13% is between the ages of 25 and 34—relatively on par with national numbers.

### **THERE IS SOME RACIAL + LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY:**

In all market segments, there is a majority White population. However, there is some diversity. In Ocala, 23% of the population identifies as Black/African American and 6% identifies as 'Other'. Ethnically, 13% of the population identifies as Hispanic. Regionally, the population is somewhat less diverse, although the Black/African American populations in both Marion County and the 45-mile radius are around 13-14%. Additionally, 12% of the Marion County population and 9% of the 45-mile radius population identify as Hispanic.

When it comes to the language spoken at home, nearly 90% of the populations in all three market segments speak English. An additional 6-9% of these market segments speak Spanish at home.

### 4.3 The Arts + Economic Prosperity Five (5)

During the Summer of 2017, Americans for the Arts (AFTA) released Arts + Economic Prosperity 5 (AEP5), a detailed economic impact assessment of the nonprofit arts and culture industry in 341 communities and regions across the United States. During fiscal year 2015, there were \$55.97 million in total arts and culture industry expenditures. Of that, \$14.29 million came from arts and cultural organization spending and \$14.67 million came from arts and cultural audience expenditures (see figures to the right). **This spending helped support an estimated 1,422 jobs, resulted in \$29.43 million in house-hold income to residents, and generated \$6.05 million for local and state governments.**

The study also found that **resident attendees make up the majority of those attending arts and culture events in Ocala:** 858,598 residents attended arts and cultural events in FY 2015 compared to 283,154 nonresidents. Nonresident attendees, however, spend a considerable amount more than their resident counterparts. In FY 2015, for example, nonresident attendees spent \$64.48 in event-related spending (excluding the cost of admission), while

resident attendees spent \$27.27.

### 4.4 The Non-resident Market

According to data from the Ocala/Marion County Visitor and Convention Bureau's Economic Impact of Tourism Study (April 2016-March 2017), 1.88 million people visited Marion County in 2016-2017, an increase of 6.3% from 2014-2015's 1.77 million.

Visitors spent the most in 2017 on restaurants (\$171.13 million) and entertainment (\$128.23 million), although **it is estimated that 41.8% of all visitor spending (\$275.28 million) can be attributed to visitors who engaged in ecotourism/recreation.** Not surprisingly, the winter months of January, February, and March, are the height of the tourism season, which is when the greatest amount of spending occurs.

Other findings, collected via in-person and online surveying as part of the Economic Impact of Tourism Study, are listed below.

- The average visitor party size for 2016-2017 was 2.9 people. On average, 33.2% of visitors traveled with kids.
- The median visitor age was 47 years old. Median household income was between \$60,000 and \$77,000.

- The majority of those surveyed indicated that they visited Marion County from within Florida.
- On average, visitors stayed a total of 3.9 nights.
- Of those surveyed, 65% ate at a restaurant. Depending on the time of year, anywhere from one-quarter to half of all visitors attended a horse show/sale/event or a sporting event. Five percent of surveyed visitors visited an art gallery, museum, or other form of culture.
- **Visitors consistently indicated that visits to art galleries, museums, and cultural events were something they did infrequently and that their experience in Marion County either met or was below their expectations. A visit to Downtown Ocala, however, was cited as something done infrequently but that exceeded expectations.**

**Of all visitors surveyed, more than half were repeat visitors.** Additional data from the Ocala/Marion County Chamber + Economic Partnership's 2015 Economic Impact Analysis of the Equine Industry in Marion County suggest the following about Marion County visitors:

- In 2014, there were 20,000 equine-related visitors to Marion County. Buyers alone represented 42 states and 18 countries.
- Two-thirds of out-of-town visitors indicated that their experiences during the Ocala Breeders' Sales and Horses in the Sun gave

## Impact of the Nonprofit Arts and Culture Industry in the City of Ocala

	City of Ocala	Median of Similar Study Regions <i>Pop. = 50,000 to 99,999</i>	National Median
Total Industry Expenditures	<b>\$55,967,491</b>	\$19,538,777	\$35,750,645
Full-Time Equivalent Jobs	<b>1,422</b>	512	1,131
Resident Household Income	<b>\$29,432,000</b>	\$11,623,000	\$23,154,000
Local Government Revenue	<b>\$2,369,000</b>	\$905,500	\$1,407,000
State Government Revenue	<b>\$3,684,000</b>	\$1,049,000	\$1,961,000

Above: Total Economic Impact of the Nonprofit Arts and Culture Industry in the City of Ocala (Combined Spending by Nonprofit Arts and Cultural Organizations and Their Audiences) **Arts and Economic Prosperity® 5**



Above: Randy I. Cohen, Vice President of Research and Policy with Mayor Kent Guinn

	City of Ocala	Median of Similar Study Regions <i>Pop. = 50,000 to 99,999</i>	National Median
Total Organizational Expenditures	<b>\$14,295,754</b>	\$9,049,417	\$15,727,535
Full-Time Equivalent Jobs	<b>531</b>	240	608
Resident Household Income	<b>\$10,486,000</b>	\$6,193,000	\$11,441,500
Local Government Revenue	<b>\$736,000</b>	\$326,000	\$592,000
State Government Revenue	<b>\$1,039,000</b>	\$381,000	\$840,500

Above: Total Economic Impact of Spending by Nonprofit Arts and Cultural ORGANIZATIONS in the City of Ocala **Arts and Economic Prosperity® 5**



Above: Jaye Sterchi Baillie, Executive Director of the Marion Cultural Alliance (MCA) host Rand Cohen

**The nonprofit arts and culture sector is a \$56 million industry in the City of Ocala—one that supports 1,422 full-time equivalent jobs and generates \$6.1 million in local and state government revenue.**

them a “more favorable” impression of the region. More than 80% of all visitors indicated that they would return to Marion County for equine events in the following year.

- Out-of-town visitors to the Ocala Breeders’ Sales and Horses in the Sun are of high socioeconomic status with considerable discretionary income. As such, the Economic Impact Analysis recommends using “social media and innovation to motivate equine visitors to visit more often, for longer periods...”

Anecdotally, interviewees for this planning process suggested that Ocala’s ‘horse community’ is distinct from the arts and cultural community. Those working in both sectors believe there are myriad reasons for this—first and foremost, that horse buyers traveling to Ocala and Marion County are principally business travelers, as opposed to leisure travelers. There are also geographical barriers, as Ocala’s equine facilities are located on the west side of I-75 while the Downtown and its various cultural assets are located 15 minutes to the east. As the Economic Impact Analysis intimates, however, there may be opportunities to motivate equine visitors to visit Marion County and Ocala more often and for longer periods of times.

**Multiple resources suggest that cultural tourists spend more time and money when visiting a community than non-cultural tourists.** Given that educational attainment and household income are the best indicators of propensity to support the arts, and that equine visitors tend to be affluent, this suggests a unique opportunity to attract equine-related visitors to Ocala, or to get them to stay longer, through arts and cultural programming.

#### 4.5 Community Surveys

Community engagement has been a key part of the cultural planning process. In addition to interviews, group meetings, and public events, a survey was developed and shared with the community. The survey was conducted in both English and Spanish and was available online or as hard copy at various events. The survey was marketed by a multitude of community partners, including the City of Ocala’s Cultural Arts and Sciences Division, the Marion Cultural Alliance, and local media publications. In total, the effort received just over 200 responses.

The majority of survey respondents were residents of Ocala and identified as white and/or female. They varied in age (most were between the ages of 46 and 65, followed by those aged 31 to 45 and

65+) and few had children living at home. They were not, however, reflective of the community in terms of educational attainment and socioeconomic status: the majority of respondents had Bachelor’s or graduate/professional degrees, and most had a household income between \$50,000 and \$99,999.

Respondent feedback is summarized as follows:

- Most survey respondents (56%) have been connected to Ocala for 15+ years. Twenty-six percent have been connected to the community for six to 15 years.
- When asked about where they participate in Ocala arts and culture, the majority of respondents selected outdoors (streets, parks, etc.) and/or a formal cultural venue (museum, theater, etc.). Respondents could select more than one response to this question.
- When asked about which cultural events, festivals, or celebrations the respondent regularly attends, FAFO, First Friday Art Walk, various festivals, and events at the Reilly Arts Center, Ocala Civic Theater, and/or Appleton Museum were cited with the most frequency.
- The majority of survey respondents felt that cultural events in Ocala reflect their interests.
- ‘Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs)’ are how the majority of survey

**POST CARD Souvenir** **Ocala** place stamp here

This space for writing messages.

What is your favorite activity to do in...

**1** your neighborhood: \_\_\_\_\_  
Where is this spot? \_\_\_\_\_

**2** Ocala: \_\_\_\_\_  
Where is this spot? \_\_\_\_\_

**3** Share some details: \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Zip Code** \_\_\_\_\_

Return today or send to

Christian Dumay  
Community Cultural Arts Plan  
Project Coordinator  
(352) 629-8447  
828 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala, FL 34470  
CDumay@Ocala.org

This side for address only.

**Share more and complete the survey@**  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ocalaculturalplan>



Above: Materials and photographs from public engagement events. Five opportunities were provided for the Ocala Community to provide input in addition to a formal survey.

respondents hear about cultural events in Ocala, followed by 'word of mouth, friends, family.'

- Survey respondents were asked to indicate where they had participated in various activities over the last 12 months. Notably, there are some activities, like visiting a museum or cultural/historic exhibit or center, that respondents do almost equally in Ocala and elsewhere. Other activities, however, are almost overwhelmingly done in Ocala. For example, going to a movie or film, visiting an amphitheater or public square, or going to the library/research center. The only two activities predominately visited elsewhere are botanical or sculpture gardens and/or zoos/aquariums.
- A similar question was asked about where respondents watch live performances. Most see live music and theatre in Ocala, while all other activities (dance, spoken word, comedy) have similar levels of participation between Ocala and elsewhere.
- When asked where respondents had done something creative over the last 12 months, Ocala was the most frequent response.. Respondents were also asked about the neighborhood activities they had participated in over the last 12 months and whether they had participated in Ocala or elsewhere. While respondents indicated that they had participated in block parties/fairs/festivals, workshops or classes on arts/

## Survey Responses to the question: What types of cultural activities are needed in Ocala?

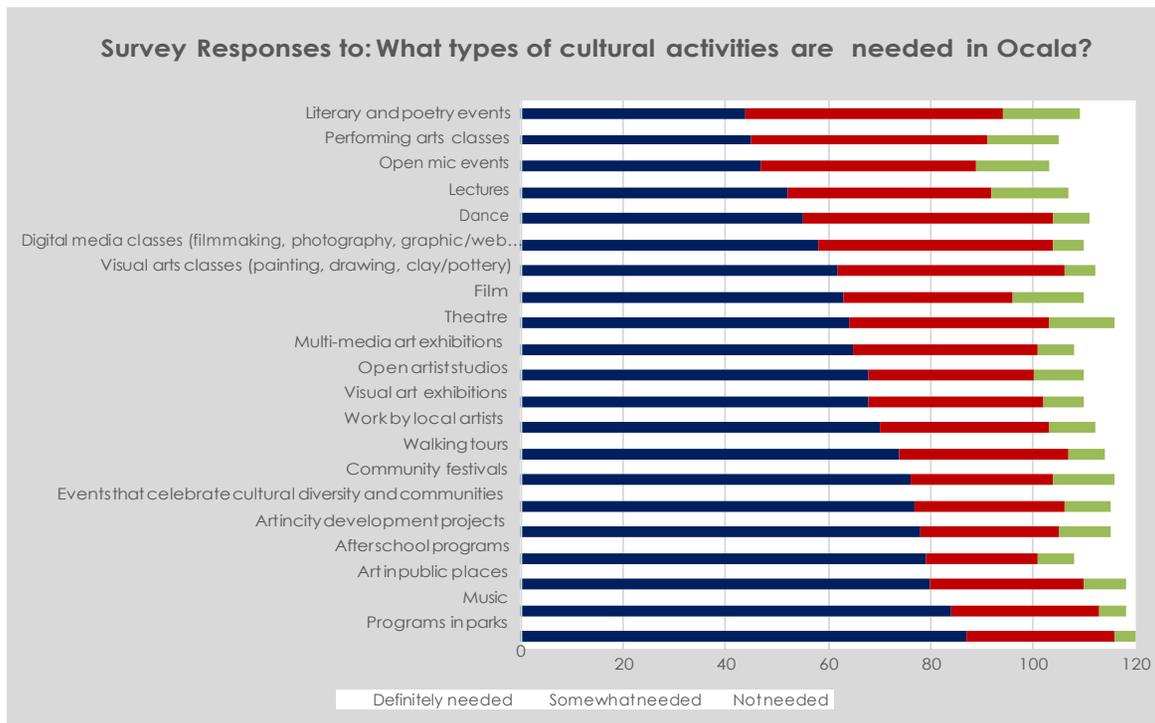


Figure Above: Survey respondents were asked what types of cultural activities they felt are needed in Ocala

culture/creativity, community center events, and classes on the arts in both Ocala and elsewhere, the majority of respondents indicated that they had participated in Ocala.

- **When asked about barriers to participation in the arts, I don't have time and events are too early/late, conflict with other things I need to do were the most common responses.**
- **Respondents indicated programs in parks, music, art in public places, after school programs, events that celebrate cultural**

**diversity and communities, community festivals, and walking tours as some of the most needed cultural activities in Ocala (See chart above).**

- When asked whether or not respondents believed cultural activities were needed for various age groups, 20% of respondents selected 'young adults (age 19 to 34)', 18% selected 'teens (age 13 to 18)', and 15% selected 'adults (age 35 to 49)'.
- The final survey question asked respondents

to prioritize the three community issues that are most important to them. These three were ranked as top priorities.

- 1) Education - quality of schools and school-based education programs.
- 2) Diversity and ethnicity - celebrating diversity and connecting our many cultures.
- 3) Quality of life and community connection - improved quality of life for our residents, including their belief in a positive future and sense of belonging.

#### 4.6 Market Conclusions

This research suggests the following about the market for arts, culture, and creativity in Ocala:

- A review of membership and ticket buyer data from the Appleton Museum, Reilly Arts Center, Ocala Civic Theater and Ocala Symphony Orchestra suggests that **key local arts organizations principally serve the Ocala population but also have broad regional appeal and engagement.**
- Demographic data indicates that the populations in the City of Ocala, Marion County, and the 45-miles surrounding the Ocala City Hall are growing. All three market segments, however, have low levels of educational attainment and household income—the best indicators of propensity to support the traditional performing arts (ballet, symphonic music, theatre, and opera). **This suggests opportunities for hands-on and**

**participatory programs, including festivals and events, that are free or low cost.**

- While they lag behind national numbers, there is a portion of the population that is affluent and well-educated. This, combined with a significant retiree and age 65 or older population, indicates propensity to support the traditional performing arts listed previously. **Ultimately, this research indicates a need for a mix of programs that includes those that are traditional and non-traditional, active and passive, and soon.**
- Results from Arts + Economic Prosperity 5 indicate that the arts are an economic driver in Ocala. **In 2015, it is estimated that arts and culture resulted in \$55.97 million in total expenditures, 1,422 jobs, and \$29.43 million in household income to residents.** While Ocala residents attend the arts with greater frequency than nonresidents, it is nonresident attendees who spend the most in event-related spending: \$64.48.
- Data from the Ocala/Marion County Visitor and Convention Bureau suggests that **tourism in Marion County is growing. Visitors tend to be of higher socioeconomic status, suggesting propensity to support arts and culture, although almost half of all visitor spending is attributed to visitors engaging in ecotourism and recreation.**

- The **Ocala/Marion County Chamber + Economic Partnership's 2015 Economic Impact Analysis of the Equine Industry in Marion County** indicates that visitors to horse related events are affluent and international. It also recommends that effort be put into encouraging equine visitors to stay longer in Marion County and visit more often. Given that educational attainment and household income are the best indicators of propensity to support the arts, and that cultural tourists tend to spend more and stay longer in a community, this suggests **a unique opportunity for the equine and arts and culture industries to partner on programs and events, using them as tourism drivers.**
- A **community survey** indicates that there is strong support for the arts and culture in Ocala. Notably, survey respondents use social media and word of mouth to find out about events, highlighting an important marketing opportunity for arts and culture program providers. **In addition, respondents expressed interest in increased programming in parks, music, art in public spaces, after school programs, events that celebrate cultural diversity and communities, community festivals, and walking tours.**

# 5 The City's Role in Arts + Culture

The City of Ocala is a strong proponent of arts and culture in the community. This chapter will review the ways in which the City currently supports the arts, identifying opportunities for continued growth and long-term sustainability. In particular, it will begin to assess how arts and culture might be positioned within the City's infrastructure. This will be done through a benchmarking exercise that compares the activities of the City of Ocala's Cultural Arts and Sciences Division to the activities of arts divisions and departments in five comparable cities across the country.

## 5.1 Arts, Culture + the City

Multiple City departments have responsibilities to support the arts and culture in Ocala. While the Recreation and Parks Department carries the bulk of the responsibility, Growth Management and the Office of Budget Management provide important contributions, as follows:

### 5.1.a. Growth Management Department

Growth Management is responsible for guiding growth and change in the City of Ocala. Within its purview is oversight of the management agreements for two

of the City's cultural assets: Brick City Center for the Arts and the Marion Theatre, which are owned by the City of Ocala but operated by private entities:

- **Brick City Center for the Arts is operated by the nonprofit Marion Cultural Alliance** and serves as an art gallery, event rental facility, and gathering space for the Ocala community. In addition to operating "The Brick", MCA's mission is to serve as a sustainable funding mechanism for cultural arts in Ocala/Marion County. Financially, the City contributes to operations of "The Brick" by providing maintenance services for the courtyard and most of the capital maintenance of the facility. The estimated annual financial impact is **\$4,000**.
- **Marion Theatre is an historic film house in Ocala's Downtown that has been managed by a private operator since 2012.** Although it is beloved by the community, the Marion has struggled to attract a regular audience with screenings of first-run films. As such, in early 2018, the City released an RFP soliciting proposals for a new operator, a process that has been overseen by Growth Management. Because negotiations with the entity that applied did not solidify, the City has extended its agreement with the current operator for two additional years. Financially, the City contributes to operations of the Marion Theater by providing all capital maintenance of the facility and absorbing any operating losses.

The estimated annual fiscal impact is **\$51,000**.

### 5.1.b. Office of Budget + Management

The Office of Budget and Management (OBM) develops and prepares the City's annual operating budget and Capital Improvement Program budget. In addition, OBM coordinates the City's Community Cash Sponsorship Program, which provides funding for nonprofit, tax-exempt, government or for-profit community support organizations and/or events, including those related to arts and culture. Funding for arts-related programming in FY2018 was as follows:

Marion Cultural Alliance	\$20,000
Ocala Culinary Festival	\$10,000
Ocala Film Foundation	\$10,000
MLK Commemorative Commission: A Day in the Park	\$6,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$46,000</b>

Recently the City made a change to provide funding to the Community Foundation in lieu of managing grants to cultural arts organizations and events. The Community Foundation in turn will assist these organizations with identifying grant and private funding to support their programs.

Proposals for funds related to the arts are not reviewed in consultation with the Recreation and Parks Department. At times, this has resulted in the duplicative distribution of funds or service. For example, in FY2018, OBM funded the Marion Cultural Alliance (MCA) \$20,000. Additionally, the Recreation and Parks Department, Cultural Arts and Sciences Division (CAS) provided MCA with in-kind access to the Discovery Center as a host site for its Applaud the Arts event. Similarly, the Ocala Culinary Festival was awarded \$10,000 from OBM for its annual festival. CAS provided additional funding and support for live entertainment for that same event and the Recreation and Parks Department waived event support services fees using the Community Event Fee Waiver Policy. This level of public support for arts and culture might be necessary, particularly given limitations on disposable income in the market, which can impact an organization's ability to fund raise and earn revenue. Nevertheless, a more streamlined approach to the distribution of public funds and services might warrant consideration, if only to ensure their best use and equitable distribution.

### 5.1.c. Recreation + Parks Department

Ocala's Recreation and Parks Department is the community's provider of leisure programs and services for youth and adults. Most cultural arts services and programs fall under the umbrella of the Cultural Arts and Sciences Division; however, the department manages other related services and facilities outside of the CAS division. All related assets, services and programs are described below.

#### 5.1.c.(1) Administration Division

In addition to providing administrative services in support of all department operations, including cultural arts programming and services, the Administration Division manages most of the department's leases. This includes one of the City's cultural assets:

- **Reilly Arts Center:** The historic Reilly Arts Center is Ocala's newest destination for the performing arts, having re-opened in 2015. While the building is owned by the City of Ocala, it is operated by the nonprofit Reilly Arts Center and, in addition to presenting local, regional, and national acts, is home to the Ocala Symphony Orchestra. Recreation and Parks oversees the agreement between the Reilly Arts Center and the City of Ocala. Financially, the City contributes to operations

of the Reilly Arts Center by providing all capital maintenance of the facility. The estimated annual financial impact is **\$7,800.**

#### 5.1.c.(2) Parks Division

The Parks Division is responsible for providing maintenance support services for 160+ events held on City property each year. This includes delivery and set-up of equipment, managing power needs and trash pick-up, etc. The division also provides support to other divisions such as the Cultural Arts Division as relates to installation of public art and manages operations, maintenance and programming of one of the City's cultural assets:

- **Fort King National Historic Landmark(FKNHL):** Fort King was originally erected in 1827. After being destroyed by a fire, it was rebuilt in 1837 to serve as a military headquarters during the Second Seminole War and after the conclusion of the wars was turned over to Marion County to be used as the first County courthouse and offices. Today, the 40 acre site includes a recently reconstructed Fort, heritage walking trail, and a museum/visitors center. The site is jointly owned by the City of Ocala and Marion County and operated and maintained by the City of Ocala Recreation and Parks Department. A nonprofit organization, Fort King Heritage Association, Inc., provides

technical and financial assistance to staff in support of the City's ongoing planning, preservation and development activities. The site is operated by a staff of two full-time employees. In addition to general operations and maintenance, that staff manages three large-scale community events each year (Fight for Freedom, Fort King Haunted Trail and GRIT: Fort King Strength Challenge) in addition to a year-round lecture series and ongoing time-period programming. The estimated annual financial impact to operate and support the FKNHL is **\$172,000**.

The Parks Division has a staff of 33 full-time employees. The estimated financial impact of parks support services for events and programs specifically related to the provision of community cultural arts is estimated to be **\$70,000**.

### 5.1.c.(3) Special Events Division

The Special Events Division manages the City's three large-scale special events (Cattle Drive, Earth Fest and Light up Ocala) and handles permitting and coordination of City support services (across multiple departments) for over 160 events held on City property each year. This division also organizes the City's LIVE on the Square program that provides live local entertainment on the square four nights per week.

This division includes a staff of two full-time employees. The estimated annual financial impact of services provided in support of community cultural arts is **\$289,000**.

### 5.1.c.(4) Cultural Arts and Sciences Division

The vast majority of the City provided arts and cultural activities are managed by the Recreation and Parks Department's Cultural Arts and Sciences Division, or CAS. Currently, CAS provides support for arts and culture in the following ways:

#### Cultural Assets:

- **Magnolia Art Xchange:** Magnolia Art Xchange, or MAX, is an arts incubator that will be housed within Ocala's historic Union Station. The facility is planned to open in the summer 2019 and will feature studio and communal spaces for resident and member artists, teachers, professional advisors, and students. Like the Reilly Art Center, the facility is owned by the City of Ocala but will be operated by the nonprofit Magnolia Art Xchange. The Recreation and Parks, CAS Division will oversee the agreement on behalf of the City. Financially, the City expects to contribute to operations of the Magnolia Art Xchange by paying for all utilities and providing all capital maintenance of the facility. The estimated annual financial impact is **\$23,000**.

- **Discovery Center:** The Discovery Center was established in 1997 to provide hands-on and interactive educational programs to the community. Since 2009, it has operated out of Ocala's historic Armory, which is located in Tusawilla Park and owned and operated by the City. The facility hosts four quarterly exhibitions, after school and summer programs, programs for pre-schoolers, Saturday science and both on-site and off-site school educational programs. Over the last year, attendance at the Discovery Center has increased by 86%. It is believed that, with additional staffing resources, there is capacity for even more growth. A sample of attendance over the last eight months is included in the figure to the right. The estimated annual net financial impact to operate the Discovery Center is **\$333,000**.

- **Art in City Spaces/Visual Arts Program:** The CAS division manages the City's Art in City Spaces program including curatorial and maintenance for all public art on City property as well as coordination of many exhibits of private art collections in City spaces and overseeing the First Friday Artwalk events held in Downtown Ocala each month September through May. The estimated annual financial impact for the public art/visual arts responsibilities is **\$165,000**.

### **Cultural Arts Administrative/Technical Support Functions:**

The administration section of CAS oversees policies and technical support functions related to cultural arts which includes the Ocala Municipal Arts Commission (OMAC), an 11-member board comprised of individuals working in the fine and performing arts, nonprofit, arts administration, and arts related businesses. This work group coordinates with OMAC in making recommendations for programs and policies in the arts, and distribution of monies collected through the Florida Arts License Plate Program. On top of that, this group manages contracts for projects and programs and engages in grant writing activities and coordinates technical and logistics assistance for partner events and visual arts projects. The estimated annual fiscal impact for CAS services, administration, and technical support services is **\$454,000**.

**Cultural Arts Programming:** The Cultural Arts and Sciences Division is an active program provider. Each year, the division produces an estimated 25 performing arts events (including the aforementioned art walks) and provides assistance to cultural arts partners on implementation of approximately six (6) events (see sidebar to right). The estimated annual net financial impact for CAS programming is **\$410,000**.

**In addition to events, the Cultural Arts Divisions hosts four art exhibit openings at City Hall and four museum exhibit openings at the Discovery Center each year.**

### **Cultural Arts Events** – These are public events managed by the CAS Division

- First Friday Art Walks (9 each year)  
September through May  
Partner FFAW Steering Committee
- Levitt Concerts at MLK Park (10 each year)  
May through August  
Partner Marion Cultural Alliance
- Tuscawilla Art Park Series Sculpture Events (5 each year)  
January through May
- Harvest Fest Music and Food Truck Festival  
November  
Non-Profit Partner: Project Hope can food collection

### **Partner Events** – These are events coordinated by other organizations, but which the City's Cultural Arts team provides a high level of support.

- Walk of Fame Events (2 each year)  
Partner Ocala Film Foundation
- Ocala Art Festival (2 Day event)  
October each year  
Partner – Fine Arts for Ocala
- Culinary Festival (1 event on City property)  
April each year  
Partner – Culinary Festival and Interfaith
- Brick City Beer and Wine Festival (1 each year)  
May each year  
Partner – Rotaries of Marion County
- Applaud the Arts (1 each year)  
October each year  
Partner – Marion Cultural Alliance

**Other** – The Cultural Arts Team is also heavily involved in the City's Cowboy Festival which is a fundraiser for Discovery Center and Light Up Ocala staffing and VIP Coordination.

### 5.1.d Other performing arts and events venues

The City of Ocala provides several outdoor event venues that serve as a backdrop for Ocala's outdoor cultural activities. These include Citizens' Circle, Downtown Square, Tusawilla Art Park, Webb field at MLK, Jr. Recreation Complex and the Reilly Arts Center Outdoor Stage. All of these venues have stages and necessary sound and power infrastructure to support performing arts for outdoor festivals and events. The average annual cost to maintain these facilities for this purpose is **\$5,000**.

### 5.2 City Spending on the Arts and Related Challenges

In large part, it is this combination of City funded programmatic, physical, logistical and financial support that has allowed arts and culture in Ocala to flourish. In all, it is estimated the average financial impact of the City's contribution to the arts is **\$2,030,000** annually across all departments and programs. **It is important to keep in mind that this number includes \$318,000 in support of outside organizations' program and facilities costs; \$505,000 in direct facility management**

FKNHL and Discovery Center; and \$178,000 for the City's three large community events (i.e. LUO, Cattle Drive and Earthfest). There are decisions the City will likely want to address and/or overcome as the cultural arts program evolves.

- While it's not at all uncommon for communities the size of Ocala to manage their cultural arts and sciences programs as a division of a Recreation and Parks Department, communities that are trying to elevate support for the arts often find it's beneficial to have a department whose focus is primarily cultural arts. This issue is evaluated in more detail in the next section.
- The City's approach to the provision and support of cultural arts programs, events and assets is somewhat fragmented with multiple departments having related responsibilities. The City could potentially realize some efficiencies by combining most (if not all) cultural arts related responsibilities under one umbrella.
- Moving forward, the City will want to keep an eye on staffing levels to ensure that the number of staff is appropriate but just as important, that the skill set of staff matches the responsibilities as the program evolves and the recommendations of this plan are implemented. For example, a shift from more programming to technical support will call for a different skill set. This will be explored more later in this plan.

- There is no dedicated funding stream to support the City's cultural arts initiatives and facilities; nor is there currently designated funding for the recommendations of this plan. The City provides Ocala's community organizations with considerable in-kind and financial support as well as funding City owned and managed cultural assets and City operated cultural arts programs and events. **Given limited funding capacity in the market, fundraising can be difficult for Ocala-based arts groups. As established earlier in this plan, private philanthropic funding for the arts is limited. For this reason, it doesn't really make sense for the City to compete for those same private dollars.**

**A dedicated funding stream could ensure that there is ongoing financial support for public arts and culture regardless of changes in local politics or budget cuts.**

This is discussed in more detail later in the plan.

<b>Benchmarking: Market Characteristics</b>						
	Ocala, FL	Kissimmee, FL	Marietta, GA	Lancaster, PA	Pittsfield, MA	Loveland, CO
Local Market Size	59,308	74,978	61,883	61,548	43,632	73,360
Regional Market Size	354,453	1,701,155	3,206,384	682,657	126,313	648,609
% Population Hispanic	12.5%	61.8%	21.7%	41.8%	5.5%	11.8%
% Population Black/African American	22.6%	13.7%	33.5%	18.1%	4.5%	0.4%
Median Income	\$47,489	\$44,697	\$56,878	\$39,173	\$45,206	\$59,353
Educational Attainment (Bach or Higher, Age 25+)	23%	14%	36%	19%	15%	19%

Table above: The market characteristics of communities comparable to Ocala.

### 5.3 Comparable Community Benchmarking

The CAS program is currently housed within the City of Ocala’s Recreation and Parks Department. Given the breadth of the division’s activities and the City’s emphasis on growing the community arts program, the City has been contemplating spinning CAS into a department separate and apart from Recreation and Parks. While such a move might make sense from an organizational/operational perspective, the City is concerned with the potential financial implications. In an effort to bring some clarity to the issue, the consulting team took a cursory look at what communities comparable to Ocala are doing.

<b>Public Local Art Agencies Parent Agency or Department</b>	
Independent agency, department, division, program, or facility within the local government	25%
Parks & Recreation	21%
City/County Manager's Office	14%
Mayor's Office	9%
Economic Development	8%
Community Development	5%
Planning	3%
Tourism	2%
City/County Clerk (or similar)	1%
Other / not listed above	11%

Source: Americans for the Arts + National Endowment for the Arts Local Arts Agency Census

To begin this exercise, 12 cities that are similar to Ocala in size and/or its demographic characteristics were identified. That list was shared with CAS and, after further discussion, the following cities were selected: Kissimmee, FL; Marietta, GA; Lancaster, PA; Pittsfield, MA; and Loveland, CO. The demographic characteristics of each city are provided in the table shown on the previous page.

A series of interviews were then conducted with the leadership of each community's arts governing body to understand how local arts activities are managed and supported within local government, including detail on staffing levels, funding, and the average number of events that are publicly (city and privately) produced each year. The findings from that research are included in the tables that follow.

### 5.3.a. City Arts Infrastructure

In 2015, Americans for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts conducted a Local Arts Agency (LAA) Census. Its purpose was to illuminate the ever-adapting role local arts agencies play in supporting the arts in communities across the country. As such, the census gathered information from both public

agencies (those that reside within city governments) and private nonprofits.

In total, over 1,100 arts agencies responded to the survey, providing detailed accounts of their budgets, programs, partnerships, and staffing. A few takeaways specific to public arts agencies include:

- Most public arts agencies operate as either their own, independent agency (25%) or within a parks and recreation department (21%, see figure on page 31).
- When asked about operating budgets, survey respondents indicated four primary revenue sources: government (79% of total revenue), earned income (10% of total revenue), private sector contributions (7% of total revenue), and in-kind/miscellaneous sources (5% of total revenue).
- Sixteen percent (16%) of responding local arts agencies indicated that they receive funds from a local option tax. Of those, a hotel/motel tax was the most prevalent source of revenue. Other forms of local option tax (sales, food, property, amusement, or vice) are used less frequently.

Additional research conducted by the consulting team suggests that whether the arts and culture exist within city infrastructure as an independent

department or department division often correlates with city size. In our research, **most cities the size of Ocala have divisions similar to CAS that are housed in a recreation and parks department, economic development office, or something other.** This is true in three of the benchmarked cities, as indicated in Table on page 33.

In this table, two cities have arts and culture divisions that are housed in parks and recreation departments, one has a division housed in an economic development department, and two cities have independent cultural departments.

**All of the arts divisions studied are event producers. Most produce events in-house in addition to partnering with community organizations to provide event support.**

Finally, all of the benchmarked divisions/departments manage facilities. These range from museums and galleries to performance facilities and amphitheatres.

Benchmarking how the arts and culture are housed in cities similar in size and demographic characteristics to Ocala.

Benchmarking: City Arts Infrastructure						
	Ocala, FL	Kissimmee, FL	Marietta, GA	Lancaster, PA	Pittsfield, MA	Loveland, CO
<i>Entity Responsible for the Arts</i>	Recreation + Parks: Cultural Arts + Sciences Division, Special Events	Parks + Recreation: Events + Venues Division	Parks, Recreation + Facilities: Special Events Division	Economic Development + Neighborhood Revitalization Department: City of Lancaster Office of Promotion (LOOP)	Office of Cultural Development	Cultural Services Department
<i>Managed Cultural Assets</i>	CAS Art in City Spaces Discovery Center PARKS Fort King NHL	Berlinsky Community House + Kissimmee Civic Center	Gone With The Wind Museum; Marietta Museum of History	Lancaster Visitors Center	Lichtenstein Center for the Arts; Pittsfield Upstreet Cultural District	Rialto Theatre; Loveland Museum + Gallery; Foote Lagoon Amphitheatre
<i>Primary Programming Partners</i>	Ocala Municipal Arts Commission; Marion Cultural Alliance; Fine Arts for Ocala; First Friday Art Walk Steering Committee	Osceola Arts; Kissimmee Main Street; Experience Kissimmee	Downtown Marietta Authority; Marietta Square Branding Project; Marietta Arts Council	Public Art Program (in Public Works Department); LOOP Advisory Board	Pittsfield Cultural Council; Berkshire Art Association; Downtown Pittsfield Inc.	Visual Arts Commission; Cultural Services Board
<i>Festival + Event Management</i>	CAS DIVISION Produces concerts and Performing Arts Events  SPECIAL EVENTS DIVISION Community Events Permitting  PARKS DIVISION manages day of set-up and tear-down for City events and support services for non-city events.	Events + Venues plan and coordinate year-round events	Special Events Division responsible for scheduling, planning, organizing, and staffing	Produce Events; Support outside organizations through permitting process, soliciting assistance from other City departments	Produce Events; Promote community events and assist with organization	Produce Events; Co-produce events with local organizations; Market local organizations

### 5.3.b. Arts Funding

The table on page 35 compares the operating budgets of each benchmark community's arts and culture division or department. **(Note that for Ocala, this does not include arts spending outside of the CAS division).** It also breaks down how that operating budget translates into spending per capita and identifies arts-specific local/ county and state funding mechanisms. It suggests the following:

- When it comes to operating budgets, the City of Ocala's CAS has the second largest budget, excluding in-kind support, at \$1,362,000. (This number recently increased when CAS took over concert programming in the Central Business District. The average budget for FY2015, FY2016, and FY2017 was \$408,858.) Loveland's Cultural Services Department has the largest budget (\$2.5 million). **It is not uncommon to see a city the size of Ocala spending this amount of resources on Cultural Arts while the program is in a growing phase in the community. This type of investment typically spurs larger private and non-profit investment in future years.**
- The City of Ocala CAS spends the second most on arts and culture per capita—an estimated \$22.96. Loveland, which spends the most per person (\$34.09) and the City of Pittsfield spends the least - just \$2.51 per person

- Utilized in Kissimmee, Marietta, and Loveland, a hotel/motel tax is the most common public funding mechanism. Marietta, however, also makes use of an auto rental tax (the ordinance is included in Appendix E). In 2017, the auto rental tax, combined with the hotel/motel tax, resulted in \$3.3 million in tax revenue, nearly \$1 million of which was put towards arts and cultural programming.

### 5.3.c. Cultural Programming

The table on page 35 compares the number of city and privately produced arts and cultural events in each benchmark community. The included data was collected from interviewees during the benchmarking research process and are based on permitting requests. The numbers provided do not represent the total number of events or festivals in each community as not all events are arts and culture related, large enough to require a permit, or held on a public property.

City, or public, events are those events or festivals that are produced by a city. They might involve a community, county, or regional partner (or partners), but are primarily driven by the city in question. Such events are typically free and open to the general public. For example, monthly art walk or concert series in a park. For purposes of this evaluation, only events whose primary purpose is

promotion of the arts or performing arts in general are included.

Private events and festivals are those that are produced by a community organization, local business, corporation, or the like. The city might be providing limited support (some staffing, marketing, or security, for instance), but the event is planned and produced by the private sector. Such events are generally open to the public, but might charge a fee for attendance or participation. An outdoor theater festival might be one example.

The table suggests the following:

- The City of Ocala produces 25 cultural events each year—comparable to the City of Pittsfield with 27 events. Marietta produces the largest number of events each year at 37. The City of Pittsfield, however, produces the most events per capita: .61 compared to .59 in Marietta and .59 in Ocala.
- In Pittsfield, Kissimmee, Loveland, and Lancaster, the private sector is the primary provider of arts and cultural events, in most cases producing more than twice the number of events or festivals as the city.
- In Ocala, the private sector produces 33 events annually.

## Benchmarking arts and culture division/department operating budgets, funding, and cultural programming mechanisms across communities.

Benchmarking: Arts Funding						
	Ocala, FL	Kissimmee, FL	Marietta, GA	Lancaster, PA	Pittsfield, MA	Loveland, CO
Arts + Culture Division/Department Operating Budget	\$1,362,000 (amount budgeted for FY 2019)	\$1,107,192	\$459,500	\$352,257	\$109,403	\$2,500,500
Arts + Culture Spending Per Capita (based on division/department operating budget)	\$22.96	\$14.77	\$7.43	\$5.72	\$2.51	\$34.09
Local / County Funding Mechanisms	-	6% Hotel/Motel Tax goes to Experience Kissimmee	3% Auto Rental Tax, 8% Hotel/Motel Tax	-	-	1% for the Arts Public Art Fund; Hotel/Motel Tax goes to Visitor Services
State Funding Mechanisms	Florida Arts License Plate Program	Florida Arts License Plate Program	-	-	MassCultural Council Grants	Colorado Creative Industries Grants

Benchmarking: Cultural Programming						
	Ocala, FL	Kissimmee, FL	Marietta, GA	Lancaster, PA	Pittsfield, MA	Loveland, CO
City Produced Arts + Culture Events	25	15	37	17	27	18
City Produced Events Per Capita (Number of Events/Local Population*1,000)	0.59010	0.20006	0.59790	0.27621	0.61881	0.24537
Privately Produced Arts + Culture Events	33	65	25	33	70	42
Privately Produced Events Per Capita (Number of Events/Local Population*1,000)	0.55642	0.86692	0.40399	0.53617	1.60433	0.57252

Above: Benchmarking the number of publicly (City) and privately produced **arts and culture-related** community events and festivals.

### 5.3.d. Benchmarking Conclusions

This research suggests that there is no ‘one way’ for arts and culture in a city to be managed. There are, however, a few important takeaways:

- First, the City of Ocala is doing a considerable and respectable amount of work. Other than Marietta and Pittsfield, the City of Ocala is producing more events than any other benchmark city.
- Second, there is an important distinction to be made between facilities and programs-focused divisions (like Loveland) and those that are focused on events (like Ocala). In Kissimmee, Lancaster, Pittsfield, and Loveland, a large number of event-based programs are provided by the private sector, leaving each community’s arts division with resources and capital to focus on facilities and programs, including public art. In Ocala and Marietta, on the other hand, there appears to often be competing priorities between the City’s role as an events producer, public art/asset manager, programmer, technical advisor/partner to outside organizations and public policy managers.

The City should look for ways to divest some of its programming/events functions to free existing staff up to provide more resources toward public arts, policy making and technical roles. Given the community’s desire for outdoor events and festivals, the City should

ascertain that the private sector is prepared to pick up this function or an important programming gap will exist.

- Given the market characteristics of Ocala, which have impact on the nonprofit arts community’s ability to fund raise and build operating capacity, the City’s current positioning as a community-events producer and facility manager/programmer makes sense, as the City is filling a role in the community that the private sector does not currently have the capacity to fill. **The City along with Marion Cultural Alliance and the Community Foundation should partner in their efforts to build capacity within the non-profit organizations so they can assume some of this programming responsibility in the long term, if not the short term.**

### 5.4 Conclusions on the City’s Role in the Arts

The City of Ocala is a strong, and generous, supporter of the arts and culture in the community. Since FY2015, the City’s level of contribution to the arts has increased—financially, programmatically, and physically. **The City’s lead in elevating the arts in**

the community has helped the community make great strides in its cultural arts positioning. While the benchmarking exercise suggests that the CAS Division’s current positioning within the Recreation and Parks Department is on par with other comparable communities, **the rapid growth in public support for the arts and culture suggests that it may, in fact, be time to establish an independent cultural affairs department.**

This decision, however, should hinge on if, and how, the creation of an independent department will support the overall objectives of the cultural arts community and that there is some focus placed on building operating capacity within Ocala’s nonprofit arts organizations and independent artist community.

**This later point is key: as non profit organizational operating capacity increases it will remove some pressure from the City to operate at a high level as a funder, program provider, and facilities manager/operator.**



# 6 Ocala's Cultural Community

Ocala's cultural community is robust. It is comprised of organizations big and small, independent artists, arts education providers, and regionally known facilities and festivals, all of which provide the city (and sometimes the county) with programs that range from the performing and visual arts to culinary arts and historic preservation. This chapter will assess the needs of these arts and cultural entities, specifically considering demand for funding, facilities, and the like.

## 6.1 The Grassroots + Nonprofit Arts and Cultural Community

In any community, the arts and cultural organizations that operate within it form a kind of ecosystem—they are a **series of distinct entities that rely on the same set of resources (audiences, funders, media channels, facilities, etc.) to survive.** In a healthy arts and culture ecosystem, one might expect that there are a few large, relatively stable organizations; a handful of mid-size, growth-oriented organizations; and more small organizations and entities that are community focused and volunteer led, just getting off the ground, or temporary in nature. This appears to be the case in Ocala, where organizations like the Marion Cultural Alliance, the Appleton

Museum of Art (affiliated with and governed by the College of Central Florida), Ocala Civic Theatre, the Ocala Symphony Orchestra, and Fine Arts for Ocala (FAFO) have been in operation for years and have well-established audiences and programs, making up that first tier of stable arts organizations. Then, there are entities like the Reilly Arts Center, Magnolia Arts Xchange, the Ocala Film Foundation, and the Ocala Culinary Festival, organizations that are new or relatively new to the community but that have emerged at a level and scale beyond your typical grassroots or community-driven organization. Some of these organizations have received support from the City of Ocala in the form of physical space, but nevertheless have the same growing pains as any burgeoning nonprofit institution. Finally, there are groups like The Central Florida Master Choir, Kingdom of the Sun Concert Band, and other community-focused nonprofits, that are powered by volunteers, have a strong local following, and are committed to giving back to the community.

Regardless of their size, budget, level of programming, or positioning within the greater Ocala and Marion County communities, interviews with organizational leadership suggests that

**many of these grassroots and nonprofit entities face the same set of obstacles: they are understaffed, in need of marketing support, and would like to see additional City support for the arts and culture in the form of direct funding.** To this later point, the Marion Cultural Alliance, with the exception of OMAC and its distribution of license plate funds, is the primary arts funder in the community. Annually, the organization gives out \$25,000 in grants for equipment and programming with a maximum of \$5,000 per grant. Ideally, the organization would like to increase its total giving amount to \$100,000 a year, which would require growing its endowment to \$5 million. The City should start a dialogue with MCA and the Community Foundation on what efforts are needed to help MCA achieve this goal.

## 6.2 Independent Artist Community

Ocala's cultural ecosystem also includes independent artists. Historically, the nexus for the city's visual artists has been the Ocala Art Group (OAG), a nonprofit founded in 1950 to provide educational and exhibition opportunities.

Soon, the Magnolia Art Xchange, or MAX will come online. The space will be outfitted to include studio and communal spaces for resident and member artists, teachers, students, and professional advisors, and it will be open to the community. Even with these outlets, information collected during interviews suggests that there are a number of at-home artists in Ocala and throughout the region, suggesting additional opportunities for artist studio space, including those that might be made available to students and recent grads of the College of Central Florida.

**Aside from space, the primary challenge for independent artists in Ocala (and around the country) concerns their inability to earn a living wage.** This is particularly true for musicians, who might be asked to play a free show in exchange for “exposure”. The Reilly Arts Center has begun to address this issue in Ocala through its new Couch Session Series, an intimate series of live events held at various venues throughout the city. At the event, musical acts perform on a couch that has been transformed by a local artist prior to the show. That artist then creates a work on-site while the musicians are playing. In addition to drawing a younger crowd to events, the Reilly Arts Center's goal for the program is to begin to build a culture of fair pay for artists throughout the community.

### 6.3 Local Arts Community Needs

**This research suggests that funding and living wages are the primary needs for Ocala's grassroots and nonprofit organizations and artists.**

**Other needs that emerged throughout the interview process include:**

- **Equity + Inclusion::** Ocala is a diverse community, but that diversity is not always apparent in the city's arts and cultural offerings (although that is beginning to change). Interviewees would like to see more venues and activities that are spread throughout the community. Additionally, programs should be representative of the population, including artists of all races, ethnicities, languages, genders, orientations, and abilities.
- **Increased Public Support for the Arts:** Interviewees would like to see more support for arts and culture at both the city and county level. While the City of Ocala is a generous and avid supporter of the arts, that support does not include a dedicated funding stream for the arts. To solve the issue, community members and City leadership alike have expressed interest in the development of a formalized arts funding mechanism. Further, with the exception of the license plate program which is a pass through of revenues from the State of Florida and events grants through the Tourist Development Council (TDC), interviewees indicate **there is currently**

almost no support from the County, something many would like to see change.

- **Creatively Connect the Appleton + Ocala Civic Theatre to Downtown:** The Appleton Museum and Ocala Civic Theatre are located 4.5 miles from Ocala's historic Downtown, a distance that can be a barrier (both physical and mental) for some potential arts goers. **There is broad interest in finding ways to shorten that physical/mental distance, whether it's through wayfinding, public art, or another creative initiative.**
- **Increased Staff Support:** Organizations like FAFO and the Ocala Film Foundation need additional staff resources, including full-time staff to plan, produce, and manage events. **Smaller nonprofits and grassroots organizations have also expressed need in fundraising and marketing support.**
- **Additional Partnerships + Collaboration:** Information gathered during interviews and community outreach suggests that the arts and cultural community's willingness to collaborate has greatly improved in recent years and that Ocala's **independent artists and arts organizations would like to see that appetite for partnership and collaboration grow.** Interviewees have indicated that their biggest barrier to partnership development is time - everyone is too busy running their own organization to reach out to someone else.

- Arts Education: **There is near universal interest in improved arts offerings in the city's public schools.** While access to the arts has gotten better, public school leadership believes additional opportunities exist in the form of residencies, workshops, and STEAM education.

#### 6.4 Cultural Community Conclusions

This analysis suggests that Ocala has a dynamic arts, culture, and creative community that activates the city with a broad array of programs, events, and activities. Key takeaways from this analysis follow:

- The City of Ocala has the shape of a healthy arts ecosystem, with organizations of varying shapes and sizes operating at all levels. **However, there are gaps, particularly when it comes to things like funding, staffing, and marketing support.**
- The independent artist community is comprised of visual artists and musicians. Ocala Arts Group and MAX (once it is fully operational) are resources for visual artists in terms of providing educational and exhibition opportunities and creating connections within the artist community. Nevertheless, research suggests additional need for artist studio space. Further for visual artists and musicians alike, receiving fair compensation for their work is a primary challenge.

The Reilly Arts Center has taken initial steps to change this, but success will depend on a community-wide effort.

- Funding and a living wage are the number one needs in the arts and cultural community. Additional needs include more equitable and inclusive programming, additional public support for the arts, improved visibility of the Appleton Museum/Ocala Civic Theatre complex, increased staff support, additional partnerships and opportunities to collaborate, and improved access to arts education, particularly in the schools.

- Creative Vitality Suite data suggests that culinary-related businesses and occupations are the primary drivers of Ocala's creative economy. Additional data from the Marion Cultural Alliance demonstrates that visual and performing artists and organizations contribute significantly. This data also suggest that education-based organizations, clubs/social groups, and retail/small businesses play a driving role in the economy. There are gaps, however, for entities in technology, business development, craftworks, literary/publishing, marketing, apparel manufacturing, and energy sciences.



# 7 Ocala's Cultural Assets

This chapter will explore Ocala's cultural assets and what their positioning suggests about the potential for an arts and culture district in the community. In total, seven inventories were created to identify and assess 242 individual assets.

## Methodology for Rating Facilities

In order to understand the existing supply of performance facilities, and the competitive situation for performing arts programming and space, we have developed an inventory of local and regional spaces that are used four or more times a year for performances. The inventory details the physical features and types of activity hosted within each space. The overall quality of each facility has been rated using eight variables:

1. Facility Condition
2. Staff + Support
3. Theatrical Functionality
4. Acoustics
5. Customer Amenities
6. User Amenities
7. Atmosphere + Character
8. Suitability for Users

Variables are rated on a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being the best possible score. In our experience, the 'facility condition' and quality of the 'staff and support' greatly impact the overall quality and effectiveness of the facility. Therefore, these variables carry the most weight in our rating system. Some of these facilities were visited by the consulting team while other ratings are based on information from facility managers and users. Because of that, this exercise is somewhat subjective, but provides a good basis to compare and contrast facilities and identify gaps in programs, amenities, and features.

## Rating Metrics

Facility rating guidelines for each of the eight variables are below. Every facility in the inventory receives a final rating based on the summation of the eight variables recorded. The best possible score possible is a 4.

### Facility Condition:

1. Poor: The building is in poor condition, may have structural issues, and requires significant upkeep and repairs. The condition of the building affects its ability to be used.
2. Fair: The building is in fair condition and does

not have structural issues, but could greatly benefit from capital repairs and renovations. The building condition does not affect the user's ability to use it, but it might not fulfill all user needs.

3. Good: The building is in good condition. It may be several years old, but has been well taken care of, although it could benefit from minor capital repairs or cosmetic upgrades.

4. Excellent: The building is in excellent condition (like new or brand new) or has recently undergone significant renovations to make it like new.

## 7.1 Cultural Asset Inventories

To understand how arts and cultural facilities, programs, and public art support cultural participation and community involvement in the arts, inventories were created for:

- Indoor performance facilities
- Outdoor performance facilities
- Visual arts facilities
- Museums and heritage attractions
- Indoor rehearsal and participatory program spaces
- Festivals and events
- Public art

An analysis of each inventory follows. First, however, it is important to describe how ‘local’, or Ocala, arts and cultural assets were identified. Marion County is a rural county, with few incorporated towns and cities. In defining local assets, we have included any facility, program, or event that identifies itself as being in Ocala (by its address, for example) or that serves the Ocala community with its programming.

### 7.1.a. Regional Performance Facilities Inventory

The Regional Performance Facilities Inventory details the programs, features, amenities, and availability of 51 local and regional facilities that are used four or more times a year for live performances. In total, 28 local facilities and 23 regional facilities were inventoried. Regional facilities are defined as those that are located beyond the boundaries of Ocala, but within 45 miles of the Ocala City Hall. The inventory suggests the following:

- In the first portion of the inventory, presenting activity refers to when facilities buy touring shows. Producing refers to when the art is created by the building operator, and rental activity refers to those cases in which the work comes from another group that pays a fee to use a building and assumes the risk in using it. In Ocala, the Reilly Arts Center

is the primary presenter of programming. Regionally, the Curtis M. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts and the University of Florida in Gainesville, along with the Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center in The Villages, are the most active presenters. Headliner/popular music and classical/traditional music are the activity types presented by most presenters. A number of regional venues, however, do also present dance.

- Locally and regionally, producing activity is limited. In Ocala, the Ocala Civic Theatre is the primary producer of the performing arts and arts education activities, followed by the College of Central Florida. Regionally, the University of Florida is the primary producer of the performing arts, although there are a number of small event spaces, like The Woolly and The Atlantic, in operation.
- When it comes to facility features and amenities, most venues are well-equipped. Locally and regionally, however, few venues have sufficient wing space, orchestra pits, or fly space. Similarly, just slightly over half of all inventoried facilities (55%) have flexible seating.

The largest facility in the inventory is the Curtis M. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts in Gainesville. The smallest is Ocala Wine Experience. **Generally, the inventory suggests that most facilities are small in size, with capacities of 350 seats or fewer, and**

**that they have medium quality ratings. Facilities in Ocala (‘local facilities’) tend to cover a wider range of capacities but have quality ratings between 2.0 and 2.5.**

Of the 28 facilities in Ocala, 10 are ‘other’ spaces—facilities like the Historic Taylor House, Ocala Golf Club, and churches that are used for performances. Looking at designated performance facilities, quality ratings tend to correlate with capacity size: smaller facilities have ratings around 2.0 and 2.2, while larger facilities have ratings between 2.7 and 3.1.

Of the performance spaces with capacities of 350 seats or fewer, just one, the Marion Theatre, is in Ocala. **This suggests that there might be an opportunity to develop a small, high-quality creative space in Ocala somewhere down the road. Such a space should be highly flexible in order to accommodate a variety of performance types and genres.**

### 7.1.b. Regional Outdoor Performance Facilities Inventory

The Regional Outdoor Performance Facilities Inventory logs the programming, features, amenities, and availability of 15 permanent, local and regional facilities that are used four or more times a year for live, outdoor performances. In total, four local and 11 regional facilities were inventoried. As with the indoor facilities inventory, presenting activity refers to when facilities buy touring shows, producing refers to when the art is created by the building operator, and rental activity refers to those cases in which the work comes from another group that pays a fee to use the facility and assumes the risk in using it.

**The inventory suggests that music is the most commonly presented activity type by outdoor facilities both locally and regionally.** The Ocala Civic Theatre's outdoor space is the only one used for producing events. Regional venues tend to be larger than those in Ocala, ranging in capacity from 800 to 20,000 (in Ocala, outdoor venues have capacities of 100 to 1,000 – the exception being Citizen's Circle with a capacity of 3,000 and the Reilly outdoor stage or Jenkins Open Air Theatre with a maximum capacity of 6,000 when informal Tusawilla Park space is used).

They also tend to be better equipped and have features and amenities like covered seating, alcohol permits, and food stands/tents/trucks.

### 7.1.c. Local Visual Arts Facilities Inventory

The Local Visual Arts Facilities Inventory features five visual arts spaces: three galleries, one museum (Appleton Museum of Art), and the Magnolia Art Xchange (MAX), which will house artist work space. Each facility's collection is focused on the visual arts (as opposed to the living sciences or history). Brick City Center for the Arts and the Appleton also display some work by or for children/families. All of the inventoried facilities display paintings and four of the five display prints/drawings, sculpture, and/ or the work of local artists.

When it comes to programming, the Appleton Museum is the primary provider of visual arts education, offering programs to kids and adults alike. MAX is the only facility to offer either artist studio space or residencies. None of the inventoried facilities offer design, decorating or conservation/restoration/preservation services and non commission artists for work. Most of the inventoried facilities have gallery space.

With the exception of the Appleton and Brick City Center for the Arts, however, few have features like lecture space, facilities for meetings, or retail space.

Given the presence of the College of Central Florida, and Ocala's desire to be known as an arts destination, this research suggests that there might be an opportunity for either a residency or in-house artist program as part of Brick City Center for the Arts or the Appleton. There may also be an additional opportunity for artist studio space. This will become more apparent once MAX has launched.

### 7.1.d. Local Museums + Heritage Attractions Inventory

The Local Museums + Heritage Attractions Inventory features eight museums and heritage attractions that range from the Don Garlits Museum of Drag Racing to Fort King National Historic Landmark. Nearly all of these facilities

offer programs and activities for schools or youth, and many offer programs for adults and families. Two facilities, Fort King National Historic Landmark and Silver River Museum, host festivals/major events and just one is available for private use rentals. Most facilities have limited features—just one has retail space, one has food service or a café, and none have catering facilities.

### 7.1.e. Local Participatory Program Space Inventory

Thirty-two facilities offer hands-on or participatory programs. Of these, 44% offer programs in dance and 44% offer programs in the visual arts. An additional 34% offer programs in music and 25% offer programs in film/digital media.

**Few facilities offer hands-on programs in literature/history (10%) or food + beverage (6%), indicating an opportunity for such programming.**

Almost all facilities (78%) offer programs for children and 41% offer programs for adults. Facilities tend to have a range of features, although the Marion County Center for the Arts at West Port High School is the best equipped.

### 7.1.f. Local Festivals + Events Inventory

Each year, Ocala is the backdrop to approximately 160 outdoor festivals and events on City property.

## Ocala Festivals + Events, by Month

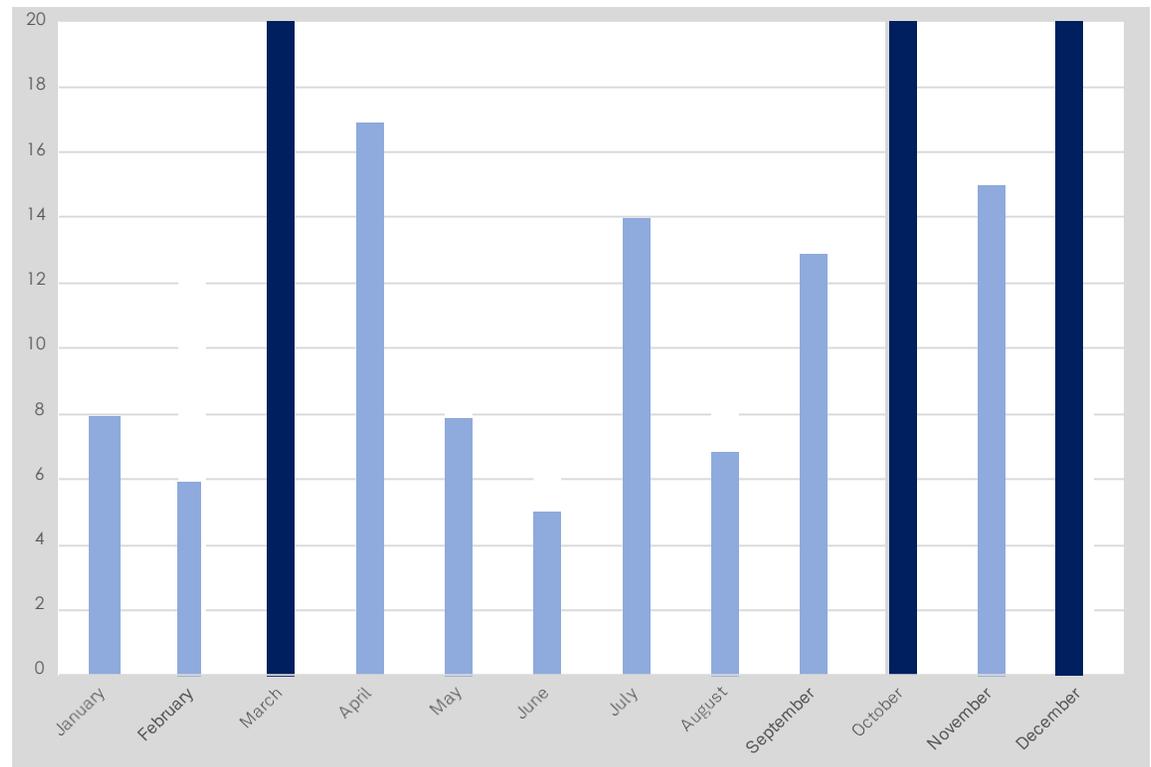


Figure Above: The inventory of festivals and events on City property and organized by the number of festivals/events per month.

Combined, these happenings bring 181 days of activity to the city from January through December. March, October and December are the busiest months for events, followed by April, July and November, as can be seen in the figure above. February and June are the least busy. Organizing the Festivals + Events Inventory by genre suggests that most events are related to arts and culture. In total there are 40 arts and culture events a year, (Harvest Fest, Applaud the Arts, etc.) in addition to

16 community festivals (Strawberry Festival, Cattle Drive, etc.), 50 small events (i.e. After Dark in the Park, Santa on the Square), 12 health and wellness-related events (i.e. Turkey Trot, etc.) and 35 special interest (i.e. Walk for Life, celebrate adoption, etc.) Most events are annual and last only a day. Others might occur multiple times over a period of months. All of these are on City property. There are another 30 events and festivals held at non-City owned locations.

### 7.1.g. Public Art Inventory

Public art in Ocala was catalyzed by Horse Fever in 2001, a major public art initiative that placed painted horse statues throughout the community. Today, the community has 50 public art works. Of those, 23 belong to the Horse Fever fleet, 22 are sculptures, and five are murals. Thirty (30) of these are loaned or owned by the City of Ocala; located on City property; and maintained using public funds. In 2012, the City of Ocala began to transform Tuscawilla Park as a cultural node with the introduction of the Ocala Outdoor Sculpture Competition which brought ten significant art pieces from around the country to display for a year. The competition has now expanded to an international competition displaying ten to fifteen pieces of work for two years at a time. In 2016, the City developed the adjacent Tuscawilla Art Park which is a piece of art in and of itself. The Discovery Center already had its home in Tuscawilla and the Reilly Arts Center opened shortly thereafter. Magnolia Art Exchange (MAX) is scheduled to open in the adjacent historic Union Station in Summer 2019.

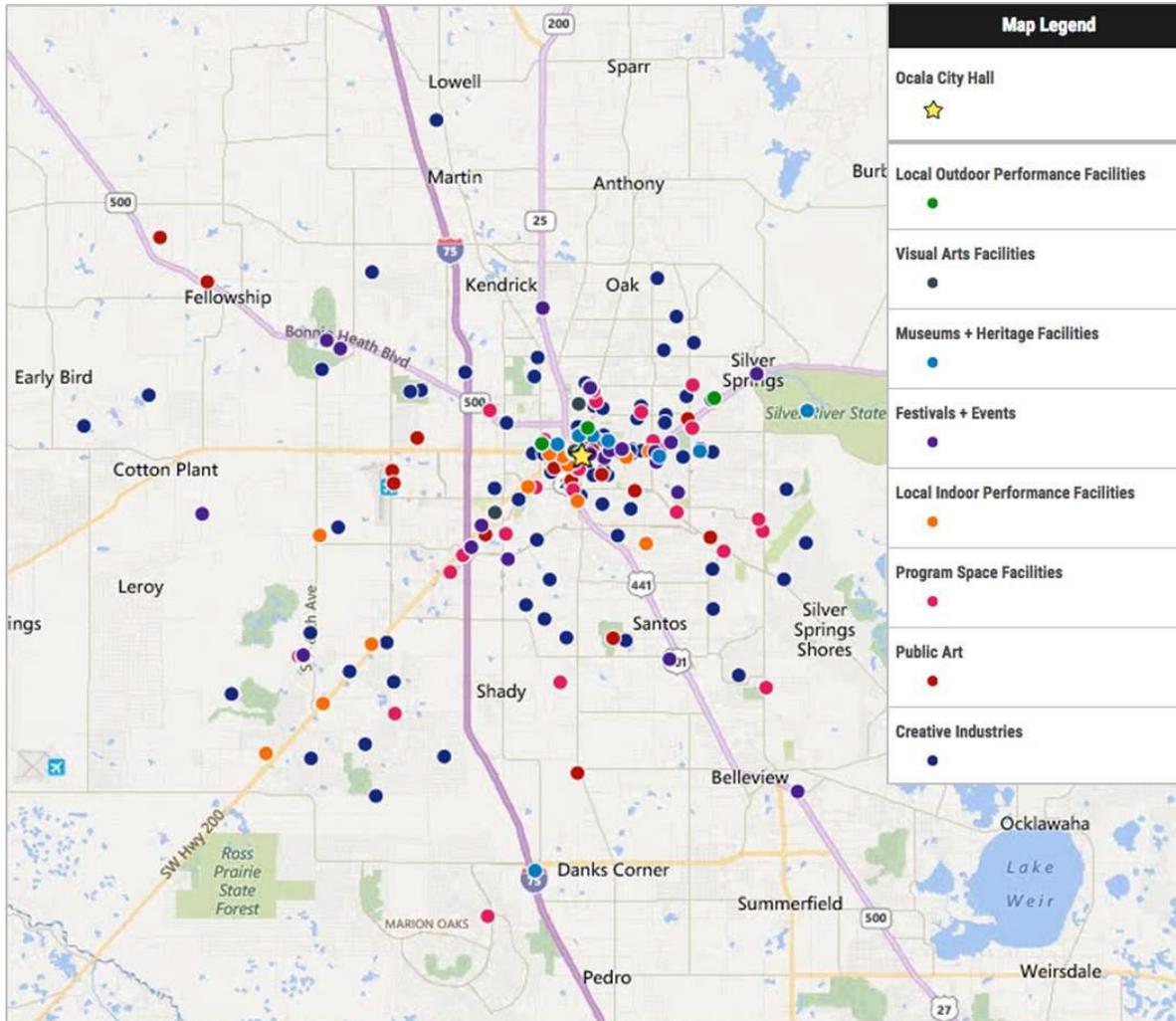
**Managing public art is not a simple or inexpensive endeavor. To ensure a comprehensive approach to both the placement of public art and the long term maintenance of same as the program grows, the City should develop a formal public art policy or plan to govern the management of this program over time.**



This suggests an opportunity to better distribute assets throughout the community, particularly festivals and events, museums and heritage attractions, the visual arts, and public art.

## 7.2 Asset Mapping

To understand the physical relationships between Ocala's cultural assets, the consulting team created a series of maps. This exercise will aid in thinking about the viability of creating a cultural district in Ocala by highlighting concentrations of assets. It will also provide a sense of how arts and cultural facilities, programs, and events might be more equitably distributed throughout the city. In the figure to the left, all of the inventoried assets have been mapped. This indicates there is a concentration of assets in and around Downtown Ocala. The further from Downtown one goes, the more sporadic assets become. Notably, there are more assets to the southwest and east of Ocala than to the north or west. Further, assets tend to accumulate around major roadways, particularly SW Highway 200. The creative industries have the widest distribution, followed by participatory programming facilities. Festivals and events, indoor performance facilities, and public art appear to be the most concentrated assets, largely found within the Downtown. Assets tend to be located to the east of Pine Avenue, leaving few between Pine Avenue and I-75.



## 7.2.a. The Opportunity for a Cultural District

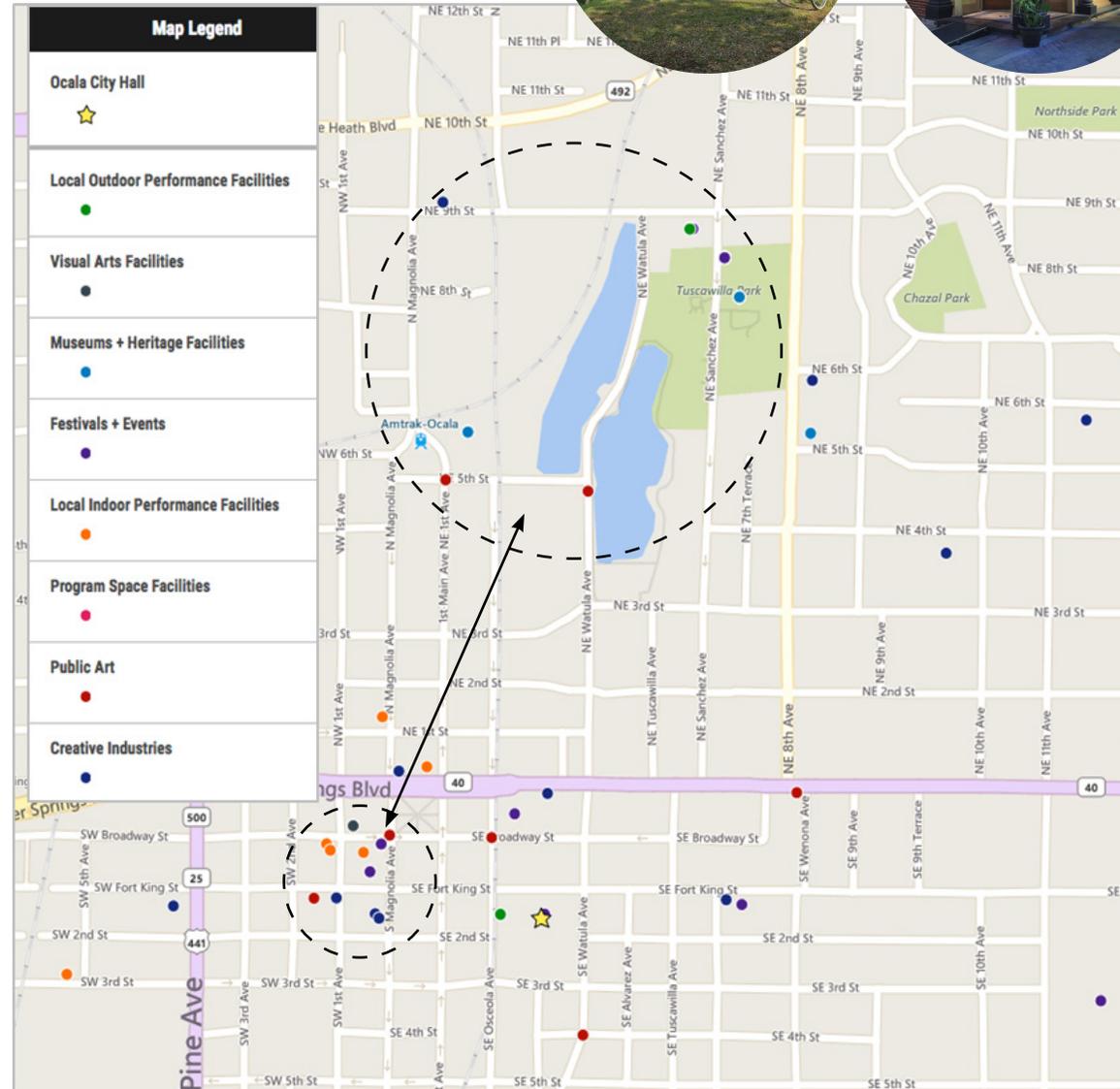
Mapping Ocala’s cultural assets suggests a few opportunities for cultural districts, which are defined by Americans for the Arts as a “well-recognized, labeled area of a city in which a high concentration of cultural facilities and programs serve as the main anchor of attraction.”

### Downtown District

The first, and most obvious, opportunity for a district is the aforementioned Tuscowilla Park cultural node, where facilities like the Discovery Center, Reilly Arts Center, and MAX can be found as well as the Tuscowilla Art Park and the Ocala Outdoor Sculpture Competition. This area is also soon to be better connected to the Downtown with the creation of the Osceola Trak. The Trak will create a multi-modal pathway from Tuscowilla to the Downtown, where additional cultural assets like the Marion Theatre and Brick City Center for the Arts surround the Ocala Downtown Square. This area is shown in the figure to the right.

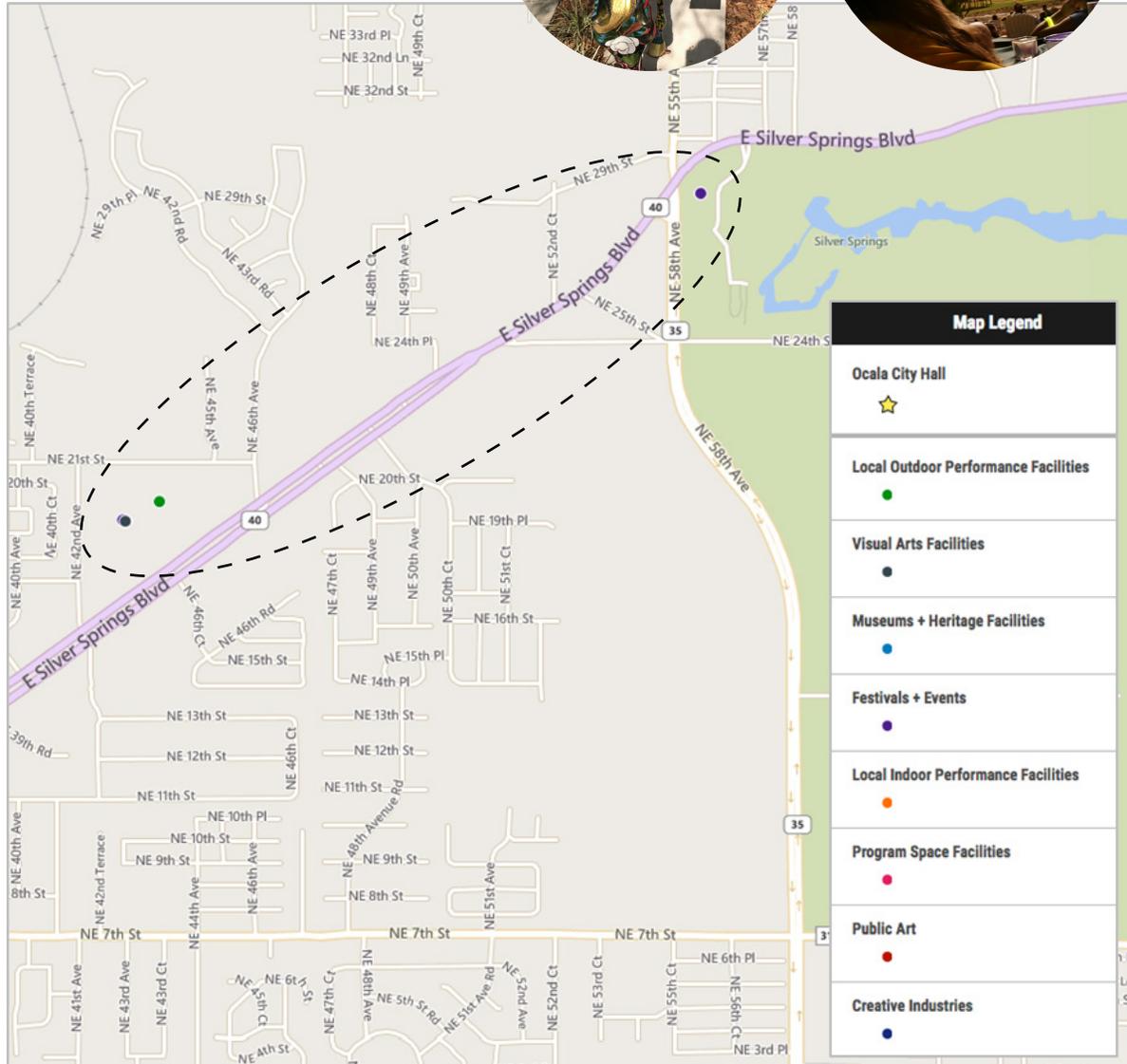


Below: Map of Ocala’s Historic Downtown and Tuscowilla Park.





Below: Map of Ocala's East Sub-district



### Ocala's East Sub-District

The next opportunity for a district is in the city's east end, where the Appleton Museum of Art, Ocala Civic Theatre, and Silver Springs State Park are located (see figure to left). Through wayfinding or, perhaps, a third destination-like venue (a restaurant, center for arts education or arts and ecology, or something other) at the Museum/Civic Theatre complex, this area could become a second destination for the arts in Ocala.

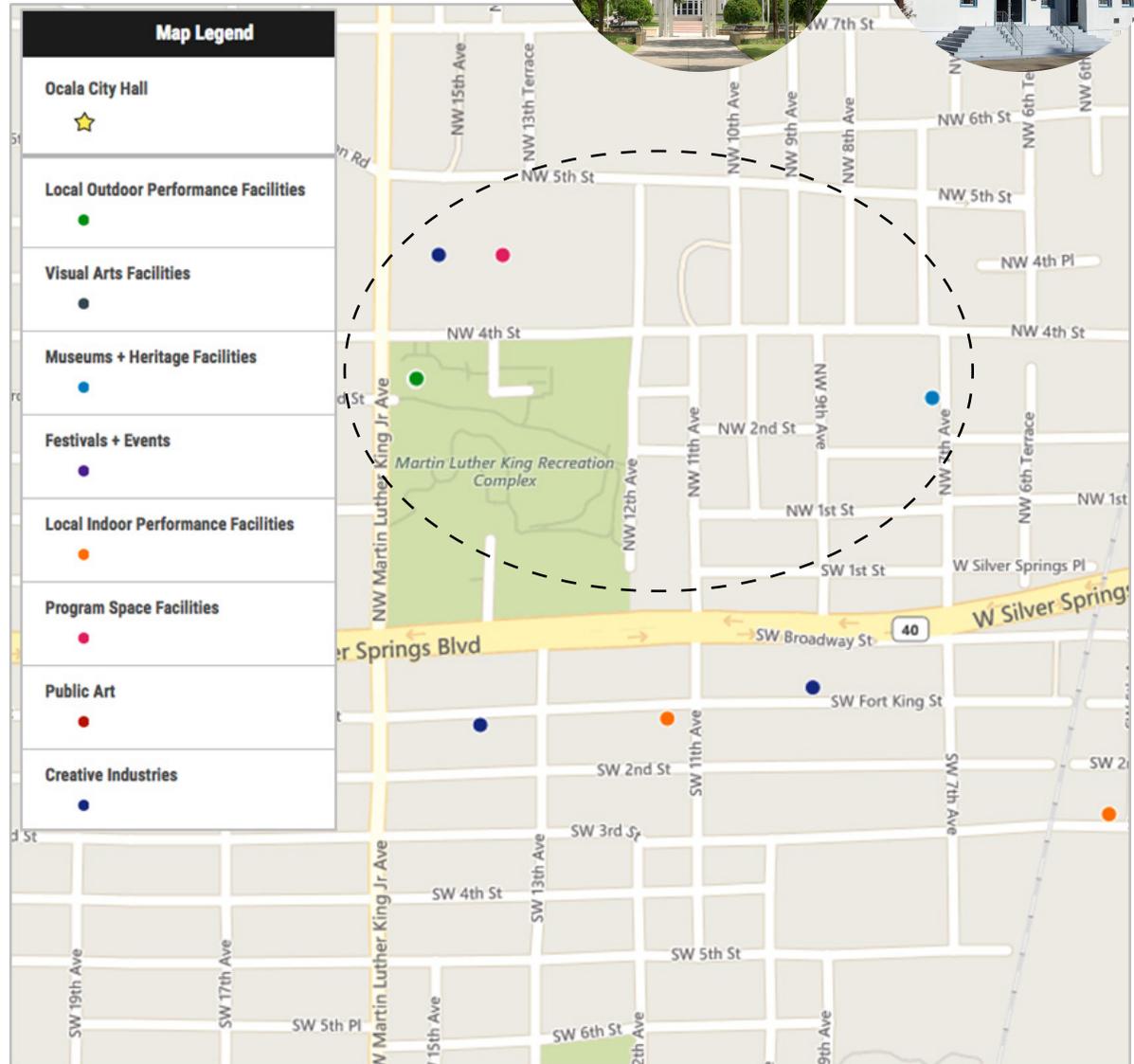


## Ocala's West Sub-District

The final district area is in Ocala's west end (see figure to right). Centered on the Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Complex, this district should highlight Ocala's history and heritage, particularly that of the African American community. Included in the district should be the Marion County Black History Museum and Archives and Madison Street Academy of Arts. Over time, additional assets, including public art, festivals, and events, should be developed to enhance the character and reputation of the district. The 2019 return of the Levitt AMP Ocala Music Series for a third year is an important milestone. Its location at Webb Field elevates the entire complex and brings new energy to an underused space located in the neighborhood of West Ocala.



Below: Map of Ocala's West Sub-district including Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Complex and the historic Westside Neighborhood.



## 7.4 Cultural Assets Conclusions

The Ocala community has a broad array of cultural assets, from performing arts and participatory programming facilities to museums and public art installations. Most of these assets are concentrated in the Downtown and to the east of I-75, creating gaps for facilities and programs in the areas to the north and west of the city. Other findings include:

- The city has a well-rounded collection of arts and cultural venues. As the arts and culture continue to grow, there may be opportunities and demand down the road for small creative space for the performing arts and additional artist studio space.
- Ocala supports an extensive calendar of community events. Annually, there are roughly 160 festivals and events accounting for 181 days of activity. Most events are arts and culture related, highlighting gaps for other activities in history/heritage and eco-culture.
- The city has a growing public art collection. As the collection continues to grow, there will be a need for formal policy and procedure to care for it over time.
- The asset mapping exercise identified three opportunities for districts in the city: the first is in the area of Tuscawilla Park and Downtown Ocala; the second is in the City's east end; and the third is in the area surrounding the Martin Luther King Recreation Complex.

NON-PUBLIC: INCLUDES NON-PROFIT + FOR-PROFIT

### A. Select Activity Generators

200,000 annual attendance  
\$3.9m operating budgets

**Benchmarking: Ocala Facility + Organization Activity + Attendance**

	Appleton Museum*	Reilly Arts Center	Ocala Civic Theatre*	Fine Arts for Ocala	Marion Cultural Alliance
<b>Annual Attendance</b>	46,000	45,000	60,000	38,000	10,486
<b>Operating Budget</b>	\$2.0M	\$1.7M	\$1.5M	\$194,393	\$205,131
<b>Estimated Number of Programs or Events Offered or Hosted per Year</b>	90, plus rotating exhibitors and special projects	115	141 performances, plus educational program and outreach	2	120 exhibit days and 18 events at Brick City Center for the ARTs, plus off-site events & events in partnership with the City of Ocala
	<small>*Annual attendance does not include number served through outreach programming</small>		<small>*Annual attendance does not include number served through outreach programming</small>		

### B. Non City Operated or Programmed Spaces

- Outdoor and indoor performance spaces
- Spaces that offer hands-on programming
- Visual arts and historic/cultural facilities

### C. Arts and Economic Prosperity<sup>®</sup> 5 (2018)

#### Nonprofit Cultural Arts Organizations Impact

Total Industry Expenditures	\$55,967,491
Full-Time Equivalent Jobs	1,422
Resident Household Income	\$29,432,000
Local Government Revenue	\$2,369,000

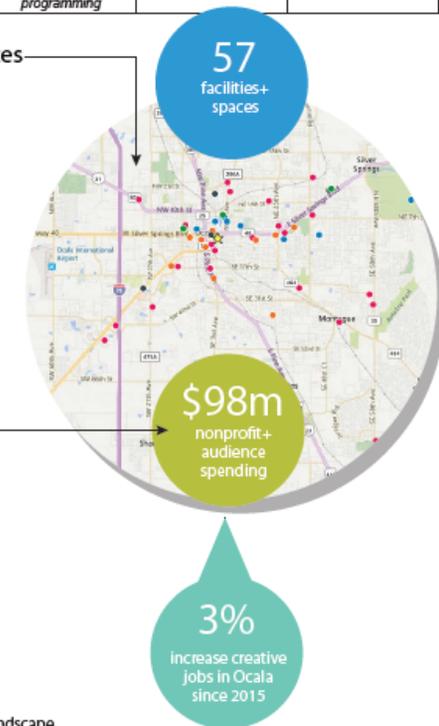
#### Audience Impact

Total Audience Expenditures	\$41,671,737
Full-Time Equivalent Jobs	891
Resident Household Income	\$18,946,000
Local Government Revenue	\$1,633,000
State Government Revenue	\$2,645,000

### D. Creative Vitality Index™

Ocala: .66 | Marion County .39 CVI

Unites States CVI = 1.0. Provides a snapshot of a regions creative landscape. Overview of creative jobs, industry earnings, FDR grants, and nonprofit revenues.



The Cultural Arts Ecosystem Dashboard shown above is intended to serve as a summary of Ocala's arts asset and activity generators in the community.

# 8 Physical Planning Considerations

The consulting team's focus during Phase 1 was on collecting information, understanding community needs, defining the cultural arts market, and analyzing gaps. Understanding Ocala's needs, agreeing on an overarching vision, and developing supporting objectives will be articulated prior to physical recommendations for meeting existing demands and accommodating change. However, observations about Ocala's overall organizational framework and initial design ideas about the intersection of cultural arts and placemaking have been conceptually outlined below.

## 8.1 Considering a Regional Cultural Arts Corridor + Central Hub

The notion of a cultural arts hub supports findings and recommendations that have grown out of numerous City plans over the past 15 years. The Tuscowilla Master Plan Report, the Downtown Master Plan, and Midtown Master Plan provide direction for developing an active mixed-use center anchored by cultural arts programming and venues. The nomenclature of 'regional' suggests that the amenities and experiences provided are at levels necessary to draw beyond the primary City of Ocala market area

and extend into the 45-mile catchment area.

A broader conceptual organizational framework featuring 'one' strong central district and flanking 'sub-districts' supports ongoing success in the Downtown, while acknowledging vital community assets with Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Complex to the west and Silver Springs State Park to the east. The two sub-districts are linked by a 6.5-mile stretch of East-West Silver Springs Boulevard, with the Downtown being 1.2 miles from the west sub-district and 5.5 miles from the east sub-district. Major north-south Silver Springs Boulevard intersections are at Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard (16th), Pine Avenue (301), 25th Avenue, and State Road 35. Improving residents' perception and experience of the corridor's relatively short distance would have significant impact on connecting (physically, psychologically, and through brand identity) a majority of the City's cultural arts and community assets. Development of a central district, complimented by two sub-districts provides a conceptual framework that offers a unique opportunity for Ocala to:

1. More cohesively connect cultural arts and recreational activities (spur visitation across all platforms).
2. Better articulate a nexus between commerce and cultural arts (leverage investment).
3. Improve community-wide visibility and access of cultural arts offerings.
4. Extend west of I-75 and engage horse country.
5. Join with the implementation of large-scale transportation proposals including those outlined in the County Greenway Study, City of Ocala Greenway System connecting parks and recreational facilities, and the Ocala/Marion 2035 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.



## 8.2 Downtown + Tuscowilla Park

Previous planning efforts have delineated the City's core into three districts:

Downtown, Midtown, and North Magnolia. The size and breadth of the Downtown and Midtown Districts may be too expansive for purposes of directing valuable public resources and marketing the 'Downtown' experience. Together, the two districts total 314-acres. Additionally, their current boundaries do not reflect existing and emerging assets. An approach that acknowledges the vibrancy of the Downtown with the nexus of cultural arts and recreation in Midtown as an all-encompassing experience could offer valuable synergies. A 'one downtown' approach offers branding clarity and an opportunity for cross fertilization as the Osceola Trak is completed.

A 'one downtown' concept is only as viable as the successful activation of the Osceola Trak and its termini—crossing East Silver Springs Boulevard and providing a sense of arrival at Northeast 5th Street. The trak offers an opportunity to bring together established arts anchors like the Marion Cultural Alliance with emerging artists' studios at the Magnolia Art Xchange and the performing arts at the Reilly Arts Center. Attracting residents and visitors through activation

of the Trak is critical to its success. People tend to gravitate to places that fulfill three fundamental needs:

**1. Safety + Protection:** The Trak provides safety and protection from offensive sensory inputs, unsafe traffic, and threatening people.

a. Consider roadway improvements for pedestrian safety across East Silver Springs Boulevard's wide right-of-way. A street diet would be effective for traffic calming and/or an 'arts-bridge' for pedestrians and bikes.

b. Extend the Trail across Northeast 5th Street with a gateway to Tuscowilla Art Park that provides a greater sense of arrival and orients visitors.

c. Design landscape to buffer portions of the vacant industrial edges.

d. Ensure people feel safe at all hours with adequate lighting, passive security, and police presence. Ultimately, Jane Jacob's "eyes on the street" method will be most effective, as increased activities attract passerby.

**2. Comfort + Ease:** The Trak improves ease of mobility with opportunities for standing, lingering, sitting, seeing, talking, listening, and playing. The connection between Downtown and Tuscowilla Art Park will improve dramatically with the widening of sidewalks along the Osceola Trak

and the introduction of a shared-use pathway for pedestrians and bicyclists. Later phases of the project can offer design that includes parklets (sitting areas) along the path, making it a 'place to be' as much as a 'place to traverse'. Introduction of a pilot bike share program at the trak's termini would encourage visitors to ride between Downtown and Tuscahill Park with docking stations on each end. Tuscahill Art and Tuscahill Parks would benefit from making the areas more welcoming through public-realm improvements that include seating, moveable chairs, tables, and festive lighting with outdoor and under-cover applications. Residents and visitors would be well served with improved wayfinding signage. A branding identity would give greater clarity to the parks' edges and better integrate peripheral uses that extend into the neighborhood (a district concept).

**3. Enjoyment + Amenities: The Trak is scaled for people, seasonal adaptations, beauty, durability, programmed activities, and cultural arts.** There are significant opportunities to build on the recent successes of the Reilly Arts Center, Discovery Center, Tuscahill Art Park, and the soon-to-open Magnolia Arts Xchange with new amenities and services that are ancillary to cultural arts and sciences. Frequent programming and specialty events produced by the City's Cultural Arts and Sciences Division have provided residents and visitors with dynamic events to attend. Filling the activation gaps with new amenities will provide a

more complete experience that includes culture, commerce, and recreation. **The cachet of an emerging arts node in combination with the natural beauty of the parks' setting offers an opportunity for food, beverage, and specialty retail to thrive.** Developing guidelines, incentives, streamlined approvals process, and/or City-owned facilities for private sector investment would change the perception of this important public asset from 'once-in-a-while' to a frequent destination. Building on previous planning recommendations, stakeholder input, and the Consulting Team's

- a. Fire Rescue Station #1 Reuse
- b. American Legion Building Re-use
- c. Lake related uses and/or boathouse
- d. Continue to improve and expand offerings at Tuscahill Art and Tuscahill Parks with upgrades to infrastructure and semi-permanent/permanent facilities for events and daily use. Provisions should be considered to reduce the labor-intensive effort to host events, provide for vendors, and improve the visitor experience.
- e. Pavilion(s) for visitor information and entry alongside support spaces
- f. Plan, design and test pop-up containers for near-term activation (i.e. the Downtown Market's coffee cube).

g. Continue Public Art Initiatives: From commissioned murals and sculptures to interactive light displays in underpasses, public art projects help define the city as a place that cultivates creativity. Not only are they free for anyone to enjoy, they also provide crucial support (financially and otherwise) for artists of all types. **This drive to accommodate art in Ocala's public places seems to have had significant impact on the community and offers further opportunity to draw visitors.** During Phases 2 and 3 of this study consideration should be made for the implementation of such projects through a designated and permanent funding source to pay for these types of cultural improvements.

h. Focus new grant opportunities and pilot programs within the conceptual framework of "one body, two wings". Concentration of resources, marketing efforts, branding identity and visitation along the Silver Springs Cultural Corridor may offer a more potent efficacy. The recent \$800,000 grant proposal through Bloomberg Philanthropies for the Ocala Progressive Arts Series offers a powerful example of an opportunity to engage strategic city planning with cultural arts through innovative installations to be located on seven catalytic sites. The opportunity of giving artful illumination of underutilized properties can be inclusive in its select locations and equitable through an ease of access for all.

### 8.3 A District

A district would provide Ocala a focal point to brand the City's unique cultural arts identity, embrace its historic significance, and celebrate the community's love of the outdoors through recreation. **Tusawilla Park offers significant emerging cultural arts and sciences assets with proximity to Downtown's growing vibrancy and within an authentic historic neighborhood setting. These are unique characteristics that newly constructed exurban areas cannot provide—unique character, anchored-sense of community, and available resources all provide a strong platform for the development of a district.** Bringing together business, cultural arts, and recreation in an authentic setting can advance community attachment and spur further economic development. Designating the area would be helpful for the purposes of branding, charting a shared vision, marketing, directing valuable public resources, and development incentives (historic tax credits, tax abatements, streamlined approvals/entitlements, and otherwise). Ultimately, it is an important way for the City to show support for cultural arts and sciences in combination with powerful economic development opportunities.

### 8.4 District Approaches to Consider

There are numerous approaches to district development, physical orientation, size (land area), and focus. Consideration of the approaches below need further study with strong merit for Ocala relying on a hybrid variation:

- **Downtown Area Focus District:** Typically encompasses an entire downtown area of city. Designation of this type of district is often tied to a tourism focus and common in smaller communities with highly walkable downtowns.
- **Cultural Compound District:** Frequently developed in areas somewhat removed from the central business district with larger, open green spaces and/or parks. These districts often include a major museum, performing arts, or science anchor.
- **Community Focus District:** Primarily anchored with community centers, artist studios, and educational venues adjacent to neighborhoods with affordable housing and commercial spaces. This type of district's mission typically includes the creation of a cultural hub and enhancement of the surrounding residential area for residents and adaptive reuse for cultural arts purposes and small business purposes.

The Arts Culture Bloomington Entertainment and Arts District (BEAD) in Bloomington, Indiana is a blend of a downtown focus with

strong recreational connections vis-a-vi the B-Line Trail (trails to trails program) and close proximity to the gates of Indiana University. While the City's institutional anchors and political makeup are not aligned with Ocala's there are similarities to their physical layout, proximity to larger cities, population, and downtown land area. The BEAD District totals approximately 266-acres encompassing most of downtown Bloomington and is organized into ten distinct character zones or sub-districts. The core of the district consists of a 105-acre area radiating out from Courthouse Square with a reach extending well-beyond downtown with a series of bike/pedestrian bridges along Clear Creek Park. Development spurred along its path includes a mixed-use, New Urbanist, residential enclave with cafes and a specialized bike shop facing the cultural-recreational corridor. The mix of culture, commerce, and recreation in a bungalow setting shares many similar characteristics of the Tusawilla Park neighborhood.

In comparison, Ocala's Downtown and Midtown totals approximately 314-acres with 108-acres in Downtown and 206-acres within the designated Midtown area. **For purposes of considering an Ocala District, emphasis should be**

placed on the 50-acre Tuscowilla core (Union Station with Tuscowilla Art and Tuscowilla Parks), the 125-acre 5-minute walking radius at the Osceola Trak's midpoint (2,400 linear feet), and Downtown. As the district matures, emphasis and resources may extend to include a larger sphere of influence. Programming recommendations put forth in Phase 2 of this study alongside characteristics of successful districts should provide impetus for further consideration and discussion of the following physical planning and design-oriented parameters:

- Continued invitation for residents and visitors through ongoing activation initiatives.
- Improvement to the public realm and ease of connections between existing community and cultural assets.
- Heighten visibility and marketing of City sponsored established nonprofit organizations and emerging arts' work.
- Area (size) that is walkable and of a scale that permits flexibility and future growth.
- Proximity of anchoring cultural arts and sciences that are interconnected.
- Heightened densities of development and concentration of uses that provide for a diverse range of activities.
- Broadly inclusive to residents with well-maintained public spaces, parks, and community offerings for all ages.

- Amenities and development that fills activity gaps between cultural arts and event programming—more people, more of the time, doing more things.

### 8.5 The West 'Sub-District'

The conceptual 'West Sub-District' framework centers around the 24-acre Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Complex at 12th Avenue and West Silver Springs Boulevard. The facility was conceived in 1951 and includes a wide array of community and recreational services including the Barbara Gaskin Washington Adult Activity Center, Webb Field, Gerig Field, Ed Croskey Recreation Center, Pinkey Woodbury Field, and the more recently added Hampton Aquatic Center. At the eastern edge of the Complex along Northwest 12th Avenue lies the West Ocala Historic District totaling approximately 350-acres and containing 104 designated historic buildings, as well as the College of Central Florida's Hampton Center.

Most recently the area has received City-wide attention for the Levitt AMP Ocala Music Series, which has completed its second year and is funded for a third to be implemented in summer 2019. The event is presented by the Marion Cultural Alliance (MCA) in partnership with the City of Ocala. Each year, the Levitt

Foundation awards \$25,000 in matching grants to up to 15 U.S.-based nonprofits serving small to mid-sized towns and cities to present the Levitt AMP Music Series. The initiative includes provision of 10 free concerts that are intended to inject new life into public spaces and create vibrant community destinations. Locating the series at Webb Field at the Martin Luther King Jr. Recreational Complex is an opportunity to use cultural arts to highlight an underutilized community asset within the historically rich neighborhood of West Ocala and direct momentum towards ongoing revitalization efforts.

**As the City moves forward with plans to develop a new community center at Reed Place, consideration should be given to finding new ways to utilize the existing facilities at the Martin Luther King Recreation Complex. These efforts should focus on new intergenerational programs, enhanced access to the arts and equitable allocation of resources and opportunities that can best emphasize cultural and heritage resources of this district.**

## 8.6 The East 'Sub-District'

The conceptual 'East Sub-District' framework stretches alongside a 3.5-mile portion of East Silver Springs Boulevard from the Marion County Museum of History and Archaeology to Silver Springs State Park. Punctuated at midpoint is the Appleton Cultural Center anchored by the Museum of Art and the Ocala Civic Theatre within a campus governed by the College of Central Florida. In addition, the area includes a considerable number of City-owned public facilities totaling approximately 272-acres, including the recently restored Fort King National Historic Landmark (1827), the Marion County Public Library, the Ocala Golf Club, and Fort King Tennis Center. A dynamic blend of City, County, State, and nonprofit facilities offer residents and visitors a wide range of community, cultural arts, and recreational activities, including learning opportunities such as the Silver River Museum and Environmental Education Center and the Fort King National Historic Landmark visitor's center.

**Further study should look at ways to support and integrate efforts at the Appleton Art Museum and Ocala Civic Theater, including an opportunity for reuse of the vacant Pioneer Garden Club facility.**

The City of Ocala should continue to seek ways to leverage the flexibility for large-scale events on the sizable-tracts of City-owned land to facilitate private or non-profit execution of these events and building on the success of Fine Arts for Ocala's (FAFO) Symphony Under the Stars located at the Ocala Municipal Golf Club annually on Mother's Day.



West 'Sub-District'



Downtown Core



East 'Sub-District'



# 9 Observations on the State of the Arts in Ocala

The following pages include a series of observations on the state of the arts in Ocala as well as a list of key issues and opportunities to be explored in greater detail through plan recommendations.

## 9.2 Key Issues + Opportunities

- The market for arts and culture is rather complex. Locally and regionally, the population is predominately of lower socioeconomic status, suggesting a need for hands-on, informal, and participatory programs that are offered for free or at very low cost. **While free and low-cost events may have little financial return, they are necessary to building community identity and sense of place.** There is also a well-educated, more affluent segment of the population that represents likely attendees of formal arts and cultural programs, such as more traditional performances and exhibitions. Then, there are visitors to Ocala, who appear to be of higher socioeconomic status but of varied interests, suggesting a need for both traditional and nontraditional programs that are authentic and distinct to the city.
- Ocala's arts and cultural community is quite robust, having organizations of varying shapes and sizes, independent artists, and creative industries. **The sector, however, has been limited in its ability to grow by a lack of community and corporate philanthropy.** Other gaps include an opportunity for more equitable

and inclusive programming; improved visibility of the Appleton Museum/Ocala Civic Theatre complex; staffing support; improved pathways for partnership development; and additional and improved access to arts education.

- The City of Ocala has made arts and culture a city planning priority, and the positive results are apparent. Over the last 15 to 20 years, the local arts and cultural sector has become a true community asset, connecting and convening citizens and visitors through facilities, programs, festivals, and events. **While many of the goals identified in planning documents like the Downtown Master Plan, Comprehensive Plan, and Ocala Vision 2035 Master Plan have been achieved, there are still objectives to be met, particularly those outlined as part of the Tuscowilla Park Cultural Arts Plan, Tuscowilla Master Plan Report, Midtown Master Plan, and 2017-2018 Strategic Plan.**
- The City should consider the development of a cultural affairs department to further the City's desire to elevate the value of arts in the community. **Although it appears that most cities the size of Ocala do have arts divisions, rather than departments, it might make sense at this time for the City of Ocala to make this move to demonstrate the City's commitment of the arts moving forward and to provide for enhanced exposure and policy making to reinforce a culture of support to the community's arts organizations.**

- With over 200 cultural assets, the community has a well-rounded collection of venues, programs, festivals, events, and public art works. Most of these assets, however, are concentrated around Ocala's Downtown and to the east of I-75, indicating a clear opportunity to develop new assets in particular target areas or better distribute assets throughout the community (particularly on the west side of Ocala). Further, there are concentrations of assets in three key areas, suggesting that there may be an opportunity to protect and leverage them through the creation of formal cultural districts.



## 9.2 Key Issues + Opportunities

The assessment suggests that there are a handful of key issues limiting the continued development of arts and culture in Ocala. They are:

- Ocala's cultural arts assets are concentrated on the east side of the city, indicating a need and opportunity to more equitably distribute facilities and programs.
- There is limited funding capacity in the community and a lack of public funding sources. There is not a designated funding source to support public art. In addition, the lack of resources has stifled the growth of Ocala's nonprofit arts and cultural sector. As a result of their limited fundraising potential, these organizations are understaffed, which has challenged marketing efforts and long-term program stability.
- The community relies heavily on the City of Ocala to provide cultural arts and events programming. The City has limited operational capacity to sustain current programming levels for the long term.
- The City has been a leader in cultural arts programming; however, given the amount of resources currently being spent on programming, the City is not currently positioned to provide the necessary policy making and technical support services.

- Despite a growing collection of public art, the City does not currently have a formalized public art policy to guide future growth and long-term maintenance, although small steps to develop one are currently being taken.

**Based on these issues, we believe that the community has a number of opportunities to advance the arts in Ocala:**

- Support the Marion Cultural Alliance as it continues to grow its role as a leader and resource for the arts and cultural community in and around Ocala. This should include continuing efforts to build partnerships across organizations including support for events and programs and, if possible, developing a shared resources program for administrative tasks like marketing and fundraising.
- Diversify arts and cultural programming, not just in terms of scope and content, but also in terms of how they are distributed throughout the community, and which organizations provide them.
- Significant effort should be placed on working with the Marion Cultural Alliance and the Community Foundation to build the operating capacity of Ocala's nonprofit cultural arts organizations.
- The City should give consideration to establishing a City of Ocala Cultural Affairs Department to better position this function within the organizational hierarchy.

- The City should coordinate with the Ocala Municipal Arts Commission to establish a formal public art policy and program to ensure long-term maintenance and care of Ocala's public art collection. This should also include policy and infrastructure to support place-making initiatives across the community.
- The City should collaborate with stakeholders to evaluate alternatives for establishing a dedicated and secure funding stream for the arts.
- Develop and brand Tuscowilla Park and Downtown Ocala as a Central District for cultural activity, and potentially Ocala's 'east' and 'west' assets, into designated sub-districts. This should include the strategic allocation of resources where they have maximum impact.
- The City should seek partners to coordinate and potentially help fund cultural arts events; and corporate sponsors or grants to offset Discovery Center programming and exhibits costs.
- As the operational capacity of the cultural arts non-profit organizations improves; and as the resources required for events and exhibits is decreased, the City should shift its resources toward a technical and logistics support role.

# PHASES 2-3 VISIONING AND IMPLEMENTATION

*"The City of Ocala is a community that places high value on quality of life for our citizens. The arts and culture are the heartbeat of a community without which we cannot thrive culturally or economically. The Community Cultural Arts Plan will provide a valuable roadmap for the next decade - this is where our past, present and future collide and define what we will look like and how we will perform as a community. I can envision where we are going and I believe the journey to get us there will be colorful and exciting! "*

- Kent Guinn, Mayor  
City of Ocala

Below: Tuscawilla Park Outdoor Sculpture Competition



*"Art is happening in every day of our lives, the house we live in, the clothes we wear and the music we listen to. All these would not be possible if it is not for the creative minds of humans. Art is a form of communication and it has been recorded throughout human history. This is why FAFO believes that cultural arts create a welcoming sense of place and contribute to a desirable quality of life."*

- Sagi Asokan, Fine Arts for Ocala

# 1 Introduction

Building on the findings of the phase I evaluation, this next portion of the work, the Visioning and Implementation Phase, focuses on developing a vision for the future of arts and culture in Ocala as well as identifying a series of specific policies and strategies through which to pursue it.

The plan's desired outcomes are as follows:

## Outcome 1:

**Determine the “State of the Ocala/Marion County Arts,” providing recommendations for strengthening initiatives.** The bulk of this work, determining the “state” of the arts in Ocala/Marion County, was completed in the Needs Assessment phase of the study, which included a market assessment, a review of public and private support for the arts, and cultural asset inventories and maps. **This work resulted in the identification of three strategies, key issues and related opportunities that are summarized and further developed throughout the remainder of this plan.**

## Outcome 2:

**Assess the feasibility of creating a cultural arts district in the Tusawilla Neighborhood.**

The feasibility of creating a cultural arts district in and around Tusawilla Park was also evaluated in the Needs Assessment. Given the walkable scale of Ocala's core, which has important cultural and historic spaces distributed throughout, **the consulting team suggested that City leadership focus on a one-downtown approach, as designating the Tusawilla Neighborhood as an arts district may have the unintended consequences of fragmenting Ocala's center.** In lieu of forming a singular arts district in the Tusawilla Neighborhood, **the findings suggest prioritizing community resources on the downtown and two flanking wings located along Silver Springs Boulevard.** In short, it is difficult to imagine an arts district without such important city assets as the Brick City Center for the Arts or Marion Theater or, conversely, the Reilly Arts Center or Discovery Center. Whether in nomenclature, marketing materials, or geographic location, the cluster of centrally located community resources are strengthened when all are part of a singular Downtown Ocala.

## Outcome 3:

**Recommend an economically viable arts funding policy.** From the outset of the planning effort, the City of

Ocala has expressed a clear interest in establishing a public funding mechanism for the arts. Findings from the Needs Assessment indicate this would benefit the arts community, particularly given the financial constraints of the market. Recommendations for possible funding mechanisms are included in this plan along with estimates of their potential return if implemented in Ocala.

## Outcome 4:

**Create a marketing plan for the community's arts and culture offerings.**

Findings from the study suggest that there are specific and strategic branding opportunities to promote Ocala as a cultural arts community of choice. **The foremost challenge for more potent and succinct messaging is the lack of a centralized portal for cultural arts venues, programming, and events in Ocala.** The concluding chapter provides examples of how the City of Ocala might centralize arts and culture marketing and suggests three branding and identity themes.

*"The arts are the greatest catalyst for change in the world, because no change ever happens until the public culture is ready for it. The arts represent the first platform on which popular culture is constantly re-shaping itself. They serve as a community's expression of itself — a visitor can quickly tell who a community is through the cultural arts lens. So, as an integral part of humanity, the arts serve as entertainment, expression, diversion, a reflection, and a powerful economic driver to our community."*

- Jessi Miller, Magnolia Art Xchange



## STRATEGIC THINKING

Emphasize 'one downtown' by connecting Tuscawilla Park to a fully activated Osceola Trak. The Trak is an opportunity to better articulate a nexus between commerce and cultural arts by connecting established and emerging assets with infrastructure that blurs the East Silver Springs Boulevard divide.



# 2 Developing a Vision for Arts + Culture in Ocala

The City of Ocala has made arts and culture a planning priority, advancing community and economic development goals through programs and events, facilities, and funding. Now at a critical point of growth, continued success will require a strong vision and approach to guide the continued use of arts and culture as a community planning tool.

## 2.1 Vision + Goals

The Needs Assessment identified nine initial opportunities for arts and culture in Ocala as outlined to the right. To make the most of these opportunities, and understand the role they might play in advancing broader city planning goals, it is imperative to define a vision and goals for arts and culture in the community. To do so, the Steering Committee worked with the consulting team to complete a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) exercise, summarized on the next page. Based on these findings, the following vision was established:

## VISION

**“Cultural arts are essential to the community's long-term growth, economic development, and identity. Cultural arts provide an outlet for lifelong learning, enliven public spaces, and instill prideful community spirit.”**



## OPPORTUNITIES

Significant effort should be placed on working with Ocala Municipal Arts Commission, Marion Cultural Alliance and the Community Foundation to build the operating capacity of Ocala's nonprofit cultural arts organizations.

The City and County should collaborate with stakeholders to evaluate alternatives for establishing a dedicated, publicly supported and secure funding stream for the arts.

Support the Marion Cultural Alliance as it continues to grow its role as the umbrella arts alliance that will serve as a leader and resource for the arts and cultural community in and around Ocala. This should include continuing efforts to build partnerships across organizations, increasing their grant making capacity in support of events and programs and, if possible, assisting with development of a shared resources program for services such as marketing and fundraising.

The City should give consideration to establishing a City of Ocala Cultural Affairs Department to better position this function within the organizational hierarchy.

The City should seek partners to coordinate and potentially help fund cultural arts events; and corporate sponsors or grants to offset Discovery Center programming and exhibits costs.

As the operational capacity of the cultural arts nonprofit organizations improves; and as the resources required for events and exhibits is decreased, the City should shift its resources toward a technical and logistics support role.

The City should coordinate with the Ocala Municipal Arts Commission to establish a formal public art policy and program to ensure long-term maintenance and care of Ocala's public art collection. This should also include policy and infrastructure to support place-making initiatives across the community.

Diversify arts and cultural programming, not just in terms of scope and content, but also in terms of how they are distributed throughout the community, and which organizations provide them.

Develop and brand Tuscowilla Park and Downtown Ocala as a Central District for cultural activity, and potentially Ocala's 'east' and 'west' assets, into designated sub-districts. This should include the strategic allocation of resources where they have maximum impact.

**Figure Below: The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of arts and culture in Ocala.**

**STRENGTHS**

- The City of Ocala has made cultural arts a city planning priority
- Cultural arts are valued by the community
- Ocala is a regional hub and center for the arts
- There are several prominent arts programming providers
- The Ocala brand associated with the equine industry is nationally recognized
- Ocala has authenticity as Marion County’s historic center of commerce and community life

**WEAKNESSES**

- Support for cultural arts within City government is distributed across departments and offices
- The general long-term health of the nonprofit cultural arts community
- The ease of access and distribution across the Silver Springs Boulevard/HW 40 corridor
- College of Central Florida students and faculty are not actively engaged in the community’s cultural life
- The Ocala market is stratified with regard to educational attainment and household income

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- The development of the Osceola Trak from downtown to Tusawilla Art Park
- More diverse and culturally representative programming
- Inventive and out-of-the-box arts programming to attract new audiences
- Attracting families and a younger population
- The strategic and equitable distribution of resources across the three ‘cultural arts districts/clusters’
- The Appleton Museum and the Ocala Civic Theatre complex as a complete destination experience

**THREATS**

- Limitations on philanthropic funding and corporate community anchors that can provide sponsorships or in-kind services
- Ocala is not a destination for cultural arts beyond its regional context
- Community expectations tend towards free, publicly-provided programs and events
- The population is aging and seasonal
- Cultural arts organizations are siloed



In pursuit of the vision, the Steering Committee and consulting team identified four goals:

1. Support the economic development of the City by fostering a community spirit that engenders greater attachment to place.
2. Build on the Downtown Master Plan's success in creating a mixed-use cultural and activity center.
3. Broaden Ocala's national reputation as a horse capital to become a regional destination of choice.
4. Contribute to Ocala's position as a multi-generational community, engaging children, youth, families, and older adults of all socio-economic status.

Using the previously listed arts and culture key issues, three over-arching strategies and nine opportunities have been identified to pursue these goals. Each strategy and recommendation is listed briefly in the figure on the next page. Later in Section 4, these strategies and opportunities are developed into more specific recommendations. For a cultural plan to be most effective, the investments made in the cultural sector must be justified in terms of potential need and value delivered to

the broader community. While a cultural plan should bring more visibility to the arts and culture present in a community (and contribute to their long-term sustainability), it should also indicate how public and private investments in the cultural sector can support economic, community, planning, and/or tourism development goals (to name a few).

Over the last 15 years, multiple planning processes have resulted in a clear set of objectives for the Ocala community. These objectives were covered in greater detail in the Needs Assessment, but are briefly summarized here as:

- Build strong, vibrant neighborhoods that connect the community.
- Establish Ocala as a local and regional economic hub.
- Provide, preserve, revitalize, and/or enhance cultural and recreational resources.
- Use creative placemaking and community identity to highlight Ocala as a dynamic and friendly community for residents and visitors alike.
- Contribute to Ocala's identity as a fiscally sustainable and operationally excellent city.
- Provide equitable access to public services and amenities.
- Establish Ocala as one of the best cities for the arts in the region, state, and country.
- Enliven the Tuscowilla Park Neighborhood with complementary uses that will support and sustain cultural arts.



# STRATEGIES

# KEY ISSUES

# OPPORTUNITIES

## Strategy A.

Improve the long-term sustainability of arts and culture in Ocala.

There is limited funding capacity in the community and a lack of public funding sources. There is not a designated funding source to support public art. In addition, the lack of resources has stifled the growth of Ocala's nonprofit arts and cultural sector. As a result of their limited fundraising potential, these organizations are understaffed, which has challenged marketing efforts and long-term program stability.

Significant effort should be placed on working with Ocala Municipal Arts Commission, Marion Cultural Alliance and the Community Foundation to build the operating capacity of Ocala's nonprofit cultural arts organizations.

The City and County should collaborate with stakeholders to evaluate alternatives for establishing a dedicated, publicly supported and secure funding stream for the arts.

The community relies heavily on the City of Ocala to provide cultural arts and events programming. The City has limited operational capacity to sustain current programming levels for the long term.

Support Marion Cultural Alliance as it continues to grow its role as the umbrella arts alliance that will serve as a leader and resource for the arts and cultural community in and around Ocala. This should include continuing efforts to build partnerships across organizations, increasing their grant making capacity in support of events and programs and, if possible, assisting with development of a shared resources program for services like marketing and fundraising.

## Strategy B.

Re-position the City from an extensive event provider to a policy maker and technical resource.

The City has been a leader in Cultural Arts programming. However, given the amount of resources currently being spent on programming, the City is not currently positioned to provide the necessary policy making and technical support services.

The City should give consideration to establishing a City of Ocala Cultural Affairs Department to better position this function within the organizational hierarchy.

The City should seek partners to coordinate and potentially help fund cultural arts events; and corporate sponsors or grants to offset Discovery Center programming and exhibits costs.

Despite a growing collection of public art, the City does not currently have a formalized public art policy to guide future growth and long-term maintenance, although small steps to develop one are currently being taken.

As the operational capacity of the cultural arts non-profit organizations improves; and as the resources required for events and exhibits is decreased, the City should shift its resources toward a technical and logistics support role.

The City should coordinate with the Ocala Municipal Arts Commission to establish a formal public art policy and program to ensure long-term maintenance and care of Ocala's public art collection. This should also include policy and infrastructure to support place-making initiatives across the community.

## Strategy C.

Create signature places and programs that celebrate the authentic past, present and future of Ocala.

Ocala's cultural arts assets are concentrated on the east side of the city, indicating a need and opportunity to more equitably distribute facilities and programs.

Diversify arts and cultural programming, not just in terms of scope and content, but also in terms of how they are distributed throughout the community, and which organizations provide them.

Develop and brand Tuscowilla Park and Downtown Ocala as a Central District for cultural activity, and potentially Ocala's 'east' and 'west' assets, into designated sub-districts. This should include the strategic allocation of resources where they have maximum impact.

# 3 Cultural Infrastructure + Plan Implementation

## 3.1 The Role of the City

City of Ocala leadership are, and have been, strong proponents of arts and culture in the community. This support has been crucial to the development of the arts and cultural sector over the last 18 years. Now, the sector is at a point of transition: if the arts and culture are to continue to be seen as defining features of Ocala, the City's involvement with them must transform from that of enthusiastic supporter to strategic leader. This is suggested in many of the strategies outlined in the previous chapter. Ultimately, in taking a strategic leadership role, the City's focus for the next 10 years (as it relates to this plan) should be on how arts and culture can be used to support and achieve broader goals around economic, community, neighborhood, workforce, and tourism development. For the most part, this will be accomplished through policy. In some cases, however, it will also require the development of successful partnerships within and beyond the cultural sector.

## 3.2 The Role of the Cultural Arts and Sciences Division

The Cultural Arts and Sciences Division is well managed, functions efficiently,

and operates as the primary conduit for community-wide arts and cultural programming in Ocala. Given limited City resources, **the City will need to transition from program provider to policy maker/facilitator to successfully accomplish the broad set of cultural development initiatives laid out in this plan. Given the City's interest in elevating community support for the arts, the City's cultural arts program could benefit from the development of a separate Cultural Affairs Department.**

Whether as a separate department or a division within Recreation and Parks, the CAS Team will need to transition from its role as primary events provider over time to ensure gaps in service are not created. As the private non-profits and other partners begin to fill the events/programming gap the City CAS staff will also need to transition into a policy creator and implementer, public art manager, grant writer, and service provider (these later two may be in partnership with the Marion Cultural Alliance). More specifically, the CAS Team must place more focus on:

- Acting as a bridge between the public and private sectors to build general support for the arts in Ocala and the initiatives identified in this plan.
- Identifying and mobilizing additional resources from the City and private sector in support of cultural development initiatives and goals.
- Establishing a public art program that ensures the long-term sustainability of public art in the city.
- Formalizing partnerships for arts and cultural events and programs to reduce City expenditures on same.
- Efforts that support artists and arts organizations in endeavors related to goals and priorities set out in this plan, similar to the role that the CAS Division has played in advancing the Magnolia Art Xchange (in partnership with the MAX non-profit) or Levitt AMP Ocala Music Series (produced in partnership with Marion Cultural Alliance).

First and foremost, Ocala's Cultural Arts and Sciences Program should continue to be led by a Division Head or a Department Head who should be responsible for implementation of the Community Cultural Arts Master Plan, distributing tasks and responsibilities where necessary. The CAS pro-forma shows the **upgrade to a department head** beginning with the FY2021 budget.

Regardless of whether the arts and sciences responsibilities are met through a division or a department, there are some pressing staffing needs which are outlined below.

The most pressing need is for **two part-time customer service attendants** at the Discovery Center. These positions will free up the four full-time staff to concentrate on the more professional functions and hands on programming. These positions will be included in the FY2020 budget request.

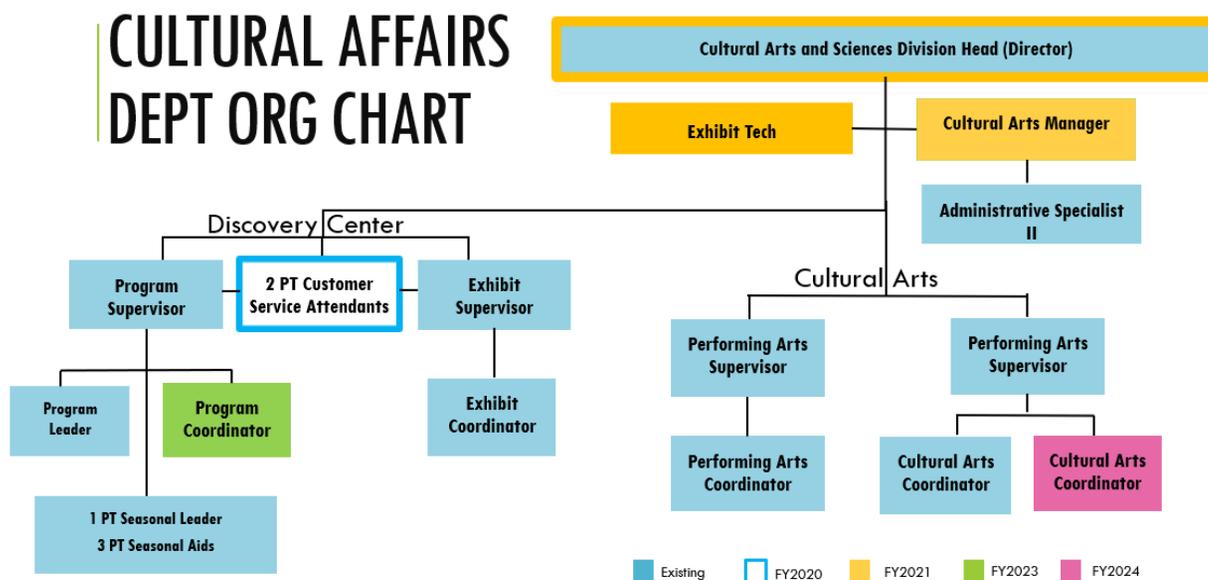
Another pressing need is an **Exhibit Tech**. This position would be responsible for installation of public art works and assist with construction and installation of exhibits at the Discovery Center. It would also be responsible for moving, deinstallation and/or maintenance of public art works and/or exhibits. This position has been added to the CAS pro-forma as a new position in FY2021 and is shared between the Discovery Center and Visual Arts.

If CAS becomes its own department, and/or as the CAS team transitions into a technical advisor/policy maker/facilitator role a higher level administrator, **Cultural Arts Manager**, is needed to oversee all department administrative functions.

This position would also assist with grant writing, reports, asset inventories, etc. This position has also been added to the CAS pro-forma as a new position in FY2021 under the Administration division.

Moving forward, as programs grow, there may be a need for an additional **Discovery Center Program Coordinator**. For purposes of projecting expenses this position has been included in the Discovery Center pro-forma beginning FY2023, but it should be evaluated and funded based on program numbers and financial results.

In the same vein, an additional Visual Arts Coordinator may be needed in several years. However, given the expectation that the City's role in provision of performing arts/events will be reduced, it is highly possible that one of the performing arts positions could be re-purposed to meet this need. The additional position has been plugged into the pro-form effective FY2024; however, staffing needs should be re-evaluated before funding this position. See organizational chart below.



### 3.3 The Role of Marion Cultural Alliance

The Marion Cultural Alliance's mission is to champion, convene, and create opportunity for Marion County artists and arts organizations. Further, the organization's five-year strategic plan (adopted in 2016) identifies three pillars: provide arts leadership, expand funding for the arts and artists, and grow arts audiences and support. These are strong goals that align with the initiatives identified to advance arts and culture in this plan. Marion Cultural Alliance should continue to pursue this mission and its strategic plan objectives, working to position itself as the go-to organization for Ocala and Marion County artists, arts enthusiasts, arts educators, and arts organizations over the next 10 years. The sustainability of other providers is going to be reflective of MCA's sustainability.

### 3.4 Partnerships

Partnerships will be essential to the successful implementation of the cultural plan. A sampling of potential partners includes:

- **Artists and Local Arts Organizations:** Although the City of Ocala and MCA will play a key role in driving the Community Cultural Arts Master Plan forward, its success will truly be dependent upon securing buy-in from Ocala's nonprofit arts organizations and artists. Everyone should feel that there is a place and role for them within this plan and understand where and how they might be involved. Although there is more than one way for any entity to participate in driving the plan, institutions and organizations like The Reilly Art Center, Ocala Symphony Orchestra, MAX, Ocala Civic Theatre, and the Appleton Museum might choose to take responsibility for activating each of their respective sub-districts or developing new programs or partnerships that result in activities combining recreation and the arts. Other organizations like the Ocala Film Foundation, Fine Arts For Ocala, or the Historic Ocala Preservation Society might consider opportunities to more broadly distribute programs throughout the community, diversify offerings, or take on an inclusive marketing initiative.
- **The Ocala/Marion County Chamber and Economic Partnership:** The Ocala/Marion County Chamber and Economic Partnership has proven to be an effective and reliable partner for the arts in Ocala. The City and MCA should continue to cultivate this relationship, collaborating on networking and professional development initiatives, corporate sponsorship and partnership opportunities, and unique programs and events that emphasize

the connections between the arts and business, including economic development, business retention and corporate recruitment, tourism, and so on.

- **The Community Foundation of Ocala/Marion County:** The Community Foundation of Ocala/Marion County is a centralized portal for philanthropic giving in the community. The should serve as a resource for capacity building for the non profit arts and culture organizations through their Non-Profit Business Council. MCA should continue to utilize the community foundation as a resource as they continue to build their endowment.
- **Marion County Public Schools, the College of Central Florida, Senior Learners, and Master the Possibilities:** Marion County Public Schools, the College of Central Florida, Senior Learners, and Master the Possibilities should also be considered as partners in the creation of multigenerational programs and spaces. The input and involvement of all four entities (including the input and involvement of their constituents) will be crucial to establishing initiatives that appeal to and reflect the community as a whole.
- **The Ocala/Marion County Visitors and Convention Bureau:** The Ocala/Marion County Visitors and Convention Bureau (CVB) is the county's tourism agency. The City and CVB should continue to work together to market Ocala's arts and cultural assets and events, placing extra emphasis on branding Ocala as the region's arts and culture destination. Consideration should be given to dedicating a portion of funding to MCA's grant program.

### 3.5 Funding Cultural Development

The Community Cultural Arts Master Plan has been created to provide the City of Ocala with a series of feasible and achievable strategies and tactics for advancing arts and culture in Ocala.

Establishing a designated funding stream for the arts should alleviate some pressure. Even then, additional funding sources will be needed to support the implementation of this plan and further cultural development in the city. To fill annual funding requirements, the City should pursue funding through a four-pronged approach. While not all these recommendations should or can be pursued, we are providing a number of ideas for the City to consider as it works to increase support for arts development in the community. It is also important to note that grant writing and management of grants for cultural arts is a full-time endeavor for a community the size of Ocala. However, these positions typically pay for themselves.

#### Strategy 1: Pursue Regional and State Funding

State funding for arts and culture received a major blow when former Governor Rick Scott cut funding for the arts for Fiscal Year 2019 from \$25 million to \$2.6 million—a change of roughly 90%. With this, the State of Florida fell from 10th in the nation in arts and culture appropriations

per capita to 48th. Although this cut has mobilized arts organizations and local and county governments across the state to advocate for increased funding, it is too soon to tell if and how the budget might change for Fiscal Year 2020.

Nevertheless, while competition for funds from the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs may now be at an all-time high, there are additional regional and state funding resources that might be pursued, either by the CAS Division, the Community Foundation, OMAC, Marion Cultural Alliance, or Ocala’s arts and culture nonprofits. In instances where the CAS Division, OMAC, and/or Marion Cultural Alliance are not eligible for funds, but local nonprofits may be, both the CAS Division and MCA should take a lead in encouraging arts and culture organizations to apply, providing support in the process. In some cases, the CAS Division and MCA may want to make a demonstrated effort to acquire outside funds a required part of their grant application or sponsorship processes.

Examples of regional and state funding sources include:

- Florida Division of Historical Resources: The Florida Division of Historical Resources (DHR) preserves and promotes the state’s historical,

archaeological, and folk culture resources. The Division is responsible for two granting programs: Small Matching Grants provide funding to assist local, regional, and state-wide efforts to preserve significant history and archaeological resources. Eligible initiatives include surveying and planning projects, nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, education and publication efforts, Main Street start-up or re-start grants, historical marker projects, and special statewide projects. Special Category Historic Preservation Grants provide funding to assist major local, regional, and state-wide efforts to preserve significant historic structures and archaeological resources, assist major archaeological excavations or research projects, and assist in the development and fabrication of major museum exhibits that promote the history of Florida. Depending on the project, the maximum award for a Small Matching grant is \$50,000 and \$500,000 for a Special Category grant. For Fiscal Year 2019, the following Marion County projects received Small Matching Grants from DHR:

- o City of Ocala: \$50,000 for Phase 1 of an Historic Property Survey
- o Ocala Main Street: \$20,000 for Re-start-up of Ocala Main Street
- o Volunteers of America of Florida, Inc.: \$50,000 for Ocala Ritz Veterans Village

For FY2020, the City has a small matching grant and a special category

grant submitted to support further development of the Fort King National Historic Landmark.

- Florida Humanities Council: The Florida Humanities Council is a nonprofit organization funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, Florida Department of State Division of Cultural Affairs, and private donations. The organization's mission is to "engage Floridians with humanities content that both stirs curiosity and affects people's everyday lives" ([www.floridahumanities.org](http://www.floridahumanities.org)). This is achieved through programming partnerships with Florida libraries, museums, and nonprofits and through a granting program. The granting program aims to fund projects that respond to local community needs, are collaborative, attract diverse audiences, encourage active participation, and explore humanities topics and disciplines in interesting and engaging ways. Grants are awarded in five cycles each year, with a maximum funding amount of \$5,000. There were no grants awarded in Marion County in 2018.
- South Arts: South Arts is a nonprofit Regional Arts Organization (one of six in the country) funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, member states (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee), foundations, businesses, and individuals. Its mission is to "strengthen the South through

advancing excellence in the arts, connecting the arts to key state and national policies and nurturing a vibrant quality of life" ([www.southarts.org](http://www.southarts.org)). South Arts supports regional arts through seven granting programs:

- o Traditional Arts Touring: Funds projects that bring traditional artists or ensembles and scholars or folklorists to Southern communities for multi-day residencies.
- o Express Grants: A quick-turnaround grant program providing Southern communities with populations of 50,000 or below with funds to present Southern guest artists from outside of the presenter's state.
- o Performing Arts Touring: Grants to support organizations presenting guest Southern artists from outside of the presenter's state.
- o Southern Creatives Places: Grants for small and rural communities planning or implementing creative placemaking projects.
- o Literary Arts Touring: Grants to support presented engagements by Southern writers from outside of the presenter's state.
- o Professional Development and Artistic Planning: Funding to support the professional development needs of Southern presenters, programmers, and/or curators. Ultimately, these grants are intended to strengthen program design and increase organizational capacity.
- o Launchpad: A year-long program for

professionals new to the field of performing arts presenting. Participation in the program comes with the opportunity to receive funding to join the participant's statewide presenters' network and support artist fees for a specific set of artists.

In addition to these programs, South Arts supports multiple touring arts programs, including Southern Circuit. Southern Circuit brings new independent films to communities throughout the South, working with partners within those communities to facilitate meet and greets, expand film programming, and encourage community engagement. For the 2018-2019 Southern Circuit Tour, the Ocala Film Foundation has been named a Screening Partner.

### **Strategy 2: Work with Marion County to Increase Funding and/or Support for the Arts**

In planning for the future of the arts and culture in Ocala, the consulting team would encourage the City to work with Marion County to increase County funding and support for the arts. While the County works as a conduit for the Florida Arts License Plate program, bringing in up to \$6,000 annually and provides some marketing grants for cultural arts events, it does not otherwise

provide any direct support for arts and culture. Ocala is the County seat and Marion County's economic and cultural hub; and, just as the Marion County Public Library System or Marion County Public Schools serve the entire Marion County community, Ocala's artists and arts organizations do, too, sending shows and programs on the road or inviting County schools and students into their facilities for educational programs. In short, strong and sustainable arts and cultural assets may be good for Ocala, but they are good for the County, too.

How a county might support the arts varies from state to state and county to county. A few examples of how counties in Florida are supporting the arts are included below.

- Orange County: Orange County's general fund is funded through property-tax revenue. Prior to 2008, money from the fund went to support the arts at \$1 per capita. Following the recession, however, this number dropped to \$.57. In July, spurred by increased community activism and the loss of a major international exhibition due to a lack of funding, Orange County commissioners voted to restore general fund support for the arts to its pre-2008, \$1 per capita level. Along with funding from the general fund, Orange County also funds the arts through a 6% bed-tax. These funds are typically only awarded

to organizations or projects that will appeal to tourists, whereas general fund dollars will be available to the County's smaller and more grassroots organizations.

- Brevard County: In Brevard County, 16 arts and cultural programs and events were recently awarded \$150,000 from the County's Cultural Marketing Program. Funded by a 5% Tourist Development Tax, the money must be used for out-of-county marketing efforts. To be eligible for funding, applicants must demonstrate that they have a marketing plan, have a history of programmatic excellence, be deemed as building Brevard as a cultural destination, provide attendee data, and estimate the event's economic impact. In 2018, award amounts ranged from \$6,600 to \$11,400.
- Monroe County: Monroe County supports arts and culture through a percent for art program. For county construction projects, with the exception of sewage treatment plants, 1% of construction costs are set aside for the acquisition, installation, and/or maintenance of artworks. The 1% is applied to any new construction projects exceeding \$500,000 or renovation projects that exceed \$100,000. In addition, the County is able to accept appropriations, gifts, grants, and donations specifically for public art.

### **Strategy 3: Pursue National and Initiative-specific Funding**

Some of the strategies and tactics recommended above might be eligible for national and/or initiative-specific funding. Grant programs like the National Endowment for the Arts' Our Town Place-based Projects Grant Program, The Kresge Foundation's Creative Placemaking initiatives, and the Ford Foundation's Creativity and Free Expression grants support efforts in placemaking, equity, and inclusion. Other entities like AARP and the National Institute of Health provide funds for projects and initiatives related to efforts in becoming an all-ages or multigeneration community. The Foundation Center and Grantmakers in the Arts are excellent resources for researching and identifying funding opportunities both at a national and more local level.

### **Strategy 4: Create Incentives for Private Sector Investment**

While there are a few major corporate players already involved in the arts, the private sector has not historically been fully engaged in supporting Ocala's arts and cultural communities. There are opportunities in this regard:

1. Create pathways and incentives for commercial property owners and developers to bring cultural activity into their spaces. This might include pop-up or temporary installations, or longer-term leases that give favorable terms to non-profit cultural organizations.

2. Work with the Ocala/Marion County Chamber and Economic Partnership to teach local businesses how and why to sponsor cultural programs, showing how sponsorship deals are made and how to maximize the value of sponsorships to local businesses. This might involve an aggressive marketing effort highlighting the findings of the recent Economic Prosperity and the Arts Study, inviting business leaders that have benefited from the arts to speak at exCEPtional Mornings Breakfasts, or an arts sponsorship-focused on-demand workshop or Power Talk.

3. Develop a program with Marion Cultural Alliance and Ocala/Marion County Chamber and Economic Partnership that helps key local groups form relationships with local and regional businesses and industries.

4. Create programs designed to increase in-kind services, supplies, and volunteer expertise in support of the arts. (As a note, sponsorships do not have to always be about money but can be barter for supplies or professional services.

The monetary value of these services can also be shown in budgetary documents as a form of revenue.) Connect with national support organizations (Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts or Business Volunteers for the Arts, for example) to learn about and access their services.

### 3.6 Marketing for the Arts in Ocala

Findings from this study suggest specific branding opportunities to promote Ocala as a cultural arts community of choice. The foremost challenge for more potent and succinct messaging is the lack of a centralized portal for cultural arts venues, programming, and events in Ocala. Today, there are over six print media sources announcing activities and upwards of 50 digital footprints for residents and visitors to sort through. The Feel Downtown Ocala online presence is graphically robust, but clearly limited in its scope—downtown life. Similarly, the Ocala/Marion County VCB website hosts an events calendar. VCB marketing dollars, however, are intended to be put towards events and activities that attract tourists—especially overnight visitors—and can be exclusive of smaller, grassroots, and community-focused happenings that might not have as broad of an appeal. This suggests an opportunity for a universal arts and culture landing page that is neither confined by geographic boundaries nor

estimates of attendance. The City of Ocala should partner with MCA on this endeavor. Examples are provided below.

### Georgetown Arts & Culture Page Georgetown, TX

The City of Georgetown's Arts & Culture page (<https://arts.georgetown.org/>) is the community's go-to spot for information on arts and culture in the community. The site hosts a calendar of events, posts announcements about calls for artists or opportunities for grants, contains information on the City's public art program and cultural district, profiles leaders in the arts community, and maintains a galleries and business directory.

The calendar of events is particularly useful. Through an easily navigable interface, the community's art, music, theatre, and cultural events can be sorted according to location, type, or organizer. A short calendar submission form allows for any arts and culture event to be listed on the website, making the process easy to manage by city staffers.

## Art and Culture Landing Page Boynton Beach, FL

The City of Boynton Beach's Art and Culture landing page offering a portal for information regarding exhibits, events, and cultural activities. It is easy to navigate with a clean and easy to read graphic interface that is organized by genres that include the Children's Museum, Exhibits & Events, Dance, Music, History, and Public Art.



The art and culture in Boynton Beach is very diverse. The City hosts art exhibits, events and cultural activities for all generations, abilities and demographics. We invite you to explore what we have to offer, and feel free to contact us with any suggestions or comments.

## Branding and Identity

An overarching theme that extends beyond cultural arts is residents' passion for recreation and the County's growing position as an ecotourism destination in North Central Florida. Furthermore, and without question, Ocala is known nationally as a leader in the equine industry. Finding a branding message that promotes a nexus between equine notoriety, thriving recreational opportunities, and an enlivened cultural arts scene will be effective.

Indeed, findings from the Needs Assessment show that many residents prefer to take part in arts and culture as part of their everyday life. **Interests of this nature align with national trends towards events, participatory activities, informal gatherings, experimental programming, and spontaneity.** This does not diminish the importance of traditional arts in Ocala but suggests augmentation to engage new audiences. Ultimately, extending the reach of cultural arts by more effectively intertwining programming with ancillary activities is good for cultivating community spirit. Venues, public spaces, and programming should foster ways for residents to enjoy cultural arts, a range of culinary treats, experiential retail, historic walks, bike paths, and

other activities. When combined, such programs promote well-being and spur economic development. While the above are high-level notions of Ocala's 'brand', the study has elicited new ideas and built on existing themes.



Throughout the planning process engagement with stakeholders, arts organizations, and residents have consistently demonstrated a strong community spirit. The plan's outreach materials typically included the graphic "hART Ocala" (heart – art – Ocala). While this is by no means original, it is exemplary of residents' love of cultural arts and the public spaces they gather. A new digital signature can better integrate Ocala's community life and the entire cultural arts ecosystem using shared technology infrastructure that spotlights the City, County, and State offerings with a one-stop-shop.



**"The Ocala/Marion County Visitors and Convention Bureau will continue to build, refine and grow the customer journey and the experiential elements that define our community offerings. The collective programming of authentic experiences available around our destination's natural and cultural icons, such as attractions, activities, culinary, sports and theatrical arts further underscore our dynamic story and distinctive experiences that highlight Ocala/Marion County's unique brand of people, history, and culture."**

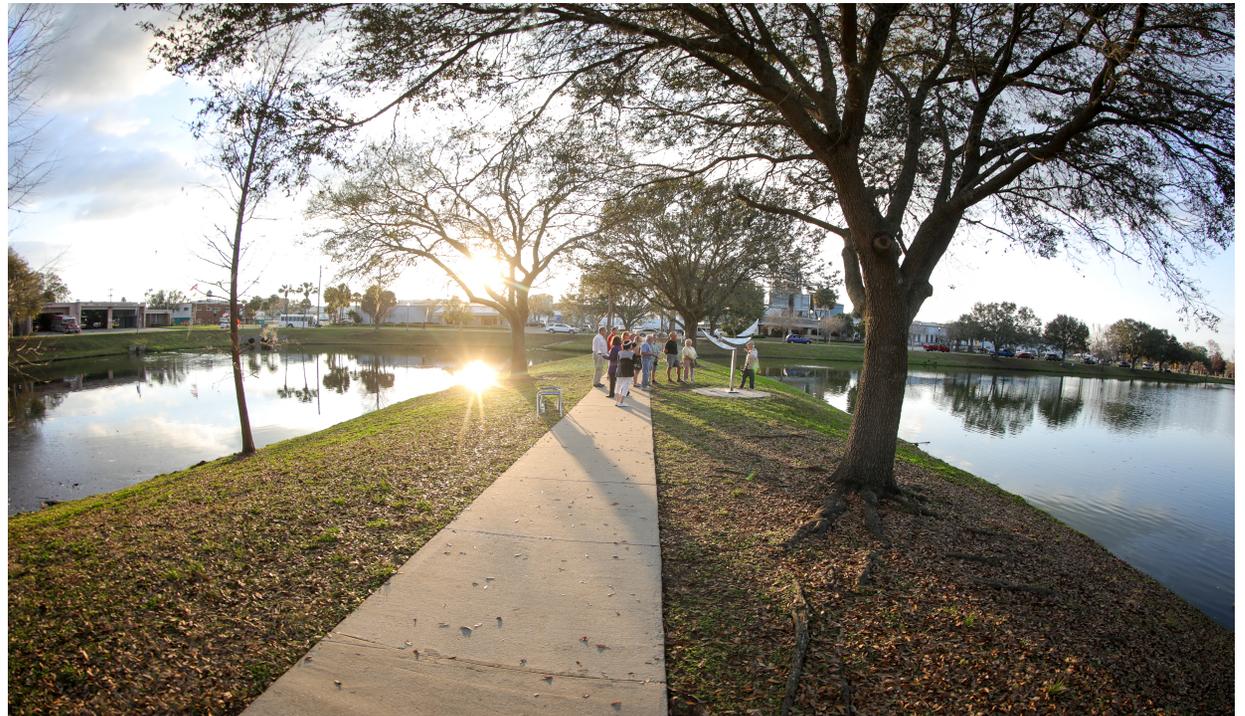
- Loretta Shaffer, Marion County, Director of Tourist Development

# 4 Cultural Development Strategies

Building on previous chapters and phases of the study, the following cultural development strategies and recommendations provide a framework for advancing arts and culture in Ocala over the next 10 years. Many of these recommendations will require the leadership of the City of Ocala to ensure successful implementation. However, this plan is intended to be a **Community Cultural Arts Master Plan**. While some recommendations might be led by the City, they will require the participation of Ocala's artists and arts nonprofits, as well as a number of other community partners, to be successful. And, in some cases, these organizations will need to select key recommendations on which to lead and focus their own efforts. Diversifying the content and distribution of programs might be one such recommendation in which this is the case. Just as this should be a priority for City of Ocala, it should also be a priority for each and every one of Ocala's nonprofit arts providers. **In short, the consulting team would like to stress that what is written here are recommendations that any artist or organization who feels particularly strong about it should feel empowered to champion it and move it forward.**

**"Arts and culture are the very fabric of our identity - from the music we listen to, to how we decorate our homes, to the clothes that we wear, to our very belief system - this is the collision of arts and culture in our lives. In Ocala, arts and culture are an essential element to our community as evidenced by the \$3 ROI on arts and cultural expenditures. The Community Cultural Arts Plan is a culmination of ideas, concepts, and strategies gathered through input from our community that will spear-head us into the next level of incorporating arts and culture in a more impactful, sustainable way over the next 10-years."**

- Laura Walker, City of Ocala Cultural Arts and Sciences Division Head



## Strategy A: Improve the Long-term Sustainability of Arts and Culture in Ocala.

**OPPORTUNITY 1: Significant effort should be placed on working with Ocala Municipal Arts Commission (OMAC), Marion Cultural Alliance (MCA), and the Community Foundation to build the operating capacity of Ocala’s non-profit cultural arts organizations.**

### **RECOMMENDATION 1.1**

**The City and the County should provide support to the Community Foundation in their efforts to provide a solid Non-Profit Resource Center in support of local community arts organizations.**

### Why?

The arts organizations have been limited in their ability to grow by a lack of community and corporate philanthropy. As the non-profit cultural arts organizations build their operating capacity, it will remove some pressure from the City to operate at a high level as a funder, program provider, and facilities manager/operator.

- 1.1.1 The City should work with the Community Foundation and the Marion Cultural Alliance to catalogue and quantify the needs of each cultural arts organization and assist them with planning for how to meet those needs.
- 1.1.2 The City and County should provide financial support for the Community Foundation’s grant writing efforts in support of community arts and cultural endeavors.
- 1.1.3 The Chamber and Economic Partnership (CEP) should provide technical support to the Community Foundation.
- 1.1.4 The Community Foundation should provide technical assistance to non-profit arts and cultural organizations in grant writing.

### **RECOMMENDATION 1.2**

**The City and County should make arts and culture funding a legislative priority at local, State and Federal levels.**

## Why?

Interviews of the leadership from non-profit cultural arts organizations indicate the need for additional support for the arts in the form of direct funding. State funding for the arts has been cut dramatically in the past few years which has negatively impacted local arts organizations. These organizations need that funding to be re-instated.

- 1.2.1 CAS staff should work with OMAC and MCA to annually inform City and County leaders of changes in State and Federal arts funding levels and provide the suggested language for their legislative priority lists.
- 1.2.2 OMAC, MCA, CEP and TDC should meet with local representatives at the State and Federal levels to discuss arts funding challenges, effects on local programs and impact on tourism and economic development.
- 1.2.3 MCA should consider hosting an annual legislative forum to invite local, state and federal elected officials to learn more about the local arts in Ocala/Marion and the impact funding at all levels has on operations, events/programs and capital projects.

**OPPORTUNITY 2: The City and County should collaborate with stakeholders to evaluate alternatives for establishing a dedicated, publicly supported and secure funding stream for the arts.**

### **RECOMMENDATION 2.1**

**Consideration should be given to a funding mechanism such as a percent for the arts fee on new commercial development or voter approved special ad valorem tax for arts and culture in the City of Ocala and Marion County jurisdictions.**

## Why?

Fundraising for the arts in Ocala is challenged by market demographics and a lack of corporate headquarters in the community. Local philanthropic giving is difficult to come by. State funding for the arts is not consistent. A protected funding stream is safe from sudden changes in the political environment, ensuring continued support for the arts. Additional funding will contribute to the vitality and diversity of Ocala's arts and cultural programming.

- 2.1.1 OMAC, CEP and MCA should evaluate alternatives for implementing such a fee or tax (including estimated revenues) and present recommendations for consideration. This would include consideration of alternatives that would permits developers to spend the percentage for the arts funding on their own property with City and MCA serving as technical advisors; or in cases where that doesn't make sense, alternatively the fee is designated to the City or County for art projects on public property (similar to the City's Tree Fund).
- 2.1.2 OMAC, CEP and MCA should make recommendations on how the funding would be utilized.
- 2.1.3 OMAC, CEP and MCA should survey the community to determine if there is adequate public support for recommendations.
- 2.1.4 OMAC, CEP and MCA should coordinate with City and Counted elected officials for feedback and staff support for advancing the funding initiative.

## RECOMMENDATION 2.2

Consideration should be given to permanently designating a percent of City of Ocala and Marion County government funded construction projects to public art either at the location of the project for public access facilities or on other public property as appropriate based on restrictions of the CIP funding source.

## Why?

Public funding for the arts reduces the draw on an already burdened philanthropic environment.

- 2.2.1 The City of Ocala and Marion County staff should evaluate which projects could feasibly be subject to such a fee and analyze the potential impact.
- 2.2.2 If warranted, City and County staff should prepare ordinances for consideration by their respective elected officials.

Strategy B: Re-position the City from an extensive event provider to a policy maker and technical resources.

**OPPORTUNITY 3: Support Marion Cultural Alliance as it continues to grow its role as the umbrella arts alliance that will serve as a leader and resource for the arts and cultural community in and around Ocala. This should include continuing efforts to build partnerships across organizations, increasing their grant making capacity in support of events and programs and, if possible, assisting with development of a shared resources program for services such as marketing and fundraising.**

**RECOMMENDATION 3.1**

**Support should be provided to MCA to help them establish a marketing and staffing co-op to provide marketing and administrative support to non-profit cultural arts organizations.**

Why?

Interviews with the leadership of non-profit arts organizations indicated they are lacking administrative and marketing resources that would help make them assume more programming responsibilities. The City would like to see MCA better position themselves as a resource to other non-profit arts organizations as a building block to more sustainable arts organizations, so they can assume more programming responsibilities.

- 3.1.1 City should assist MCA in developing a business plan for a marketing, grant making and other services co-op.
- 3.1.2 City, County and MCA should determine how this co-op could be funded (i.e. Contributions from non-profits who will utilize it, etc.)
- 3.1.3 MCA to investigate options and funding requirements for a marketing firm or staff to assist non-profits in managing their marketing needs.
- 3.1.4 MCA to investigate options and funding requirements to provide staff support to small cultural arts non-profits who can't otherwise afford to hire staff for these functions.
- 3.1.5 MCA and City should work together to create an MCA hosted cultural arts "landing page" for all things cultural arts in the community.
- 3.1.6 The Community Foundation Non-Profit Resource Center should provide support to MCA for these services.

**RECOMMENDATION 3.2**

**MCA should continue to expand programming at the Brick City Center for the Arts.**

## Why?

The Brick City Center for the Arts has been a consistent provider of gallery space in Downtown Ocala. The facility is ideally located to provide unique and readily accessible arts and cultural programming. There are few arts facilities located in the Central Business District, therefore this resource needs to be utilized to its capacity.

- 3.2.1 Build on MCA's existing portfolio of programs and exhibitions at Brick City Center for the Arts.
- 3.2.2 Experiment with Courtyard programming to better utilize this venue.

### **RECOMMENDATION 3.3**

**MCA should be positioned to connect non-profit cultural arts organizations with partners and resources to assist them with programming development and execution.**

## Why?

MCA is an important resource for artists and arts organizations in the community, offering space to display work and providing access to professional development workshops. Independent artists and arts organizations indicated that their biggest barrier to partnership development is time.

- 3.3.1 MCA should research and develop a list of partnership opportunities and facilitate those relationships.
- 3.3.2 MCA should coordinate with the CEP to develop a program to educate local businesses about the benefits of partnerships/sponsorships with cultural arts organizations.
- 3.3.3 MCA and the CEP should develop a program that helps key local arts organizations form relationships with regional businesses and industries.
- 3.3.4 MCA and CEP should expand workshops to increase the capacity of “artpreneurs.”

### **RECOMMENDATION 3.4**

**MCA should begin preparing for their 2020 Strategic Plan update.**

## Why?

A strong arts council or alliance in a community can serve as an important resource for artists and arts nonprofits, helping to build capacity and sustainability with the sector, strengthening it overall.

- 3.4.1 City staff and OMAC should provide advice and support to MCA in development and implementation of their strategic plan.

### **RECOMMENDATION 3.5**

**Support efforts to increase and better execute the community's grant making capacity and streamline grants for the arts in the community under an umbrella organization.**

## Why?

Cultural arts organizations often rely on grants to sustain their operations and programming. The current system often necessitates that these organizations submit two to three separate grants for local funding alone in support of a single event. This unnecessarily impacts resources that are already squeezed.

- 3.5.1 MCA, CEP, TDC and OMAC should make a coordinated review of local grant programs and determine whether these should be consolidated under one umbrella (i.e. TDC, MCA) and as appropriate coordinate efforts to facilitate this consolidation and establish priorities and policies to govern same.
- 3.5.2 A concerted community effort should be made in determining a plan of action for growing MCA's endowment in support of arts grants.
- 3.5.3 If a designated funding source for the arts is established, a percentage of that should be designated for grant making in support of capacity building objectives of this plan.

**OPPORTUNITY 4: The City should give consideration to establishing a City of Ocala Cultural Affairs Department to better position this function within the organizational hierarchy.**

### **RECOMMENDATION 4.1**

**The City should develop a staffing plan and funding outline for Council's consideration in developing a Cultural Affairs Department.**

## Why?

Although it appears that most cities the size of Ocala do have arts divisions, rather than departments, it might make sense at this time for the City of Ocala to make this move to demonstrate the City's commitment of the arts moving forward and to provide for enhanced exposure and policy making to reinforce a culture of support to the community's arts organizations.

- 4.1.1 Develop a plan for implementation with the FY2021 budget cycle.
- 4.1.2 Obtain City Council approval.

**OPPORTUNITY 5: The City should seek partners to coordinate and potentially help fund cultural arts events; and corporate sponsors or grants to offset Discovery Center programming and exhibits costs.**

### **RECOMMENDATION 5.1**

**The City should seek or continue partnerships for management or assistance with coordination of its cultural arts programs to reduce the impact of these programs on City resources.**

## Why?

There appears to be competing priorities between the City's role as an events producer, public art asset manager, programmer, technical advisors, partner to outside organizations and public policy managers. By divesting some of its events responsibilities, the City can redirect those resources into policy maker/technical support roles. Given the community's desire for outdoor events and festivals, the City should ascertain that the private sector is prepared to pick up this function or an important programming gap will exist. While free and low-cost events may have little financial return, they are necessary to building community identity and sense of place.

- 5.1.1 The City should issue a request for proposal for a partner to manage the annual Harvest Fest Music and Food Truck Festival.
- 5.1.2 The City and MCA should continue to partner to bring the Levitt AMP Ocala Music series to MLK Recreation Complex with more MCA participation in way of volunteers and sponsor solicitation.

- 5.1.3 The City should seek partnerships with non-profit arts organizations and the schools (i.e. West Port) to provide free/reduced cost performances at the Art Park. This will provide free venue space for rehearsals while providing activity in the Art Park and minimizing use of City resources.
- 5.1.4 The City should seek a partnership with the Appleton Museum of Art to assist with funding and implementation of the Ocala Outdoor Sculpture Competition (OOSC). Through combined expertise, this would move the OOSC to the next level.
- 5.1.5 The City should continue to partner with the Ocala Film Foundation on the Walk of Fame on South Magnolia/Marion Theater block.
- 5.1.6 The City should continue to partner with the Ocala Culinary Festival on the grand tasting event.
- 5.1.7 The City should continue to partner with the Magnolia Art Xchange on execution of the Emerging and Student Artist contest and exhibition.

### **RECOMMENDATION 5.2**

**The City should continue to provide quality outdoor venues and support services need to provide quality outdoor events and festivals.**

## Why?

The Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) conducted by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) suggests that attendance at traditional performing arts programs that take place in more formal venues has largely been replaced by participation in a broader set of cultural and entertainment programs, including attendance at outdoor arts festivals, films and other forms of live music. As the City continues to develop areas such as Midtown and Downtown, some of the older venues (Downtown and Citizens' Circle) are appearing to be "dated".

- 5.2.1 The City should ensure that facilities stay updated as development continues around them. Provide necessary capital maintenance and facility upgrades at event venues that are heavily used. This might include things as simple as replacement of dated amenities, but also would include addition of restrooms, stage coverings and built in sound and light as appropriate.
- 5.2.2 The City should continue to provide event logistics and support services that are needed for outside organizations to successfully execute arts and cultural events.

### **RECOMMENDATION 5.3**

**The City should work toward a more sustainable operating model at the Discovery Center ensuring the City's core value of "Stay small as we grow" is integrated into all planning measures to minimize increased impact on City resources.**

## Why?

The Discovery Center (DC) is an important cultural asset for the Ocala Community. There is a growing movement to incorporate STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) education into both traditional and non-traditional learning environments. The movement is based on the belief that arts and design will transform the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy as science and technology did in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Discovery Center provides a high quality non-traditional learning environment that supports out-of-the-classroom education that is important to developing STEAM interests for local students.

- 5.3.1 The City should work to develop a more functional non-profit/foundation that is positioned to positively impact the financial position of the DC, especially as pertains to the ongoing costs of exhibits.
- 5.3.2 The City should continue communications with the committee working on the capital campaign for DC expansion with special attention on the impact their recommendations will have on the City's ongoing operating expenses.
- 5.3.3 The City should develop a member and donor database and manage same to maximize on-going giving campaigns in support of operations.

**OPPORTUNITY 6: As the operational capacity of the cultural arts non-profit organizations improves; and as the resources required for events and exhibits is decreased, the City should shift its resources toward a technical and logistics support role.**

### RECOMMENDATION 6.1

The City should position itself as a technical advisor to work closely with MCA in assisting non-profit and programmers and operators to execute quality art programs and installations of visual art assets at their facilities. The City should consider options for providing this same support for commercial organizations.

## Why?

Many arts organizations need behind the scenes technical and logistics support to successfully execute an event. City staff has a level of familiarity with event logistics and public event zones that lends itself to this type of support. The CAS division's technical and logistics support of Fine Arts for Ocala's Ocala Art Festival is a good model for the type of support the City can provide for these types of programs, events and projects.

Commercial operators who have a passion for the arts, may need technical assistance in putting out a call for artist or advice on how to install a gallery system and manage that space, etc. If the City is positioned to provide this type of support, it might result in more private investment in arts on private property.

- 6.1.1 The City should begin development of resource manuals, workshops and materials in partnership with MCA to begin community outreach in this regard.
- 6.1.2 The City should implement a policy through the event permitting process that pairs organizations with CAS staff for events considered art or culture in nature. In this manner, the City can assist these organizations in providing a high-quality event.

**OPPORTUNITY 7: The City should coordinate with the Ocala Municipal Arts Commission (OMAC) to establish a formal public art policy and program to ensure long-term maintenance and care of Ocala’s public art collection. This should also include policy and infrastructure to support place-making initiatives across the community.**

**RECOMMENDATION 7.1**

**The City should adopt a public art policy/master plan to guide placement and maintenance of art on public property throughout the City.**

## Why?

The City of Ocala has a growing public art collection. Managing public art is not a simple or inexpensive endeavor. To ensure a comprehensive approach to both placement of public art and the long-term maintenance of same as the program grows, a formal public art policy or plan will assist the City with management of this program over time.

- 7.1.1 The City should draft a policy for review and endorsement by OMAC.
- 7.1.2 The City should review the plan in a workshop with City Council.
- 7.1.3 City Council should adopt the plan.
- 7.1.4 The City should procure and implement an inventory management system and ensure that all art the City is responsible for (owned or loaned) is properly cataloged.

## RECOMMENDATION 7.2

The City should ensure that proper regulations are in place for public art on private commercial property to require coordination with the City Cultural Arts staff and final submission and approval by the Ocala Municipal Arts Commission.

### Why?

The City wants to ensure a cohesive approach to public art throughout the community. This process of City staff and OMAC review will allow not only for oversight, but also provide opportunities to provide technical advice and perhaps help facilitate partnerships.

- 7.2.1 The City should review policies and regulations from other cities and develop best practices for the City of Ocala.
- 7.2.2 The City should secure the review and approval of the best practices by OMAC.
- 7.2.3 The City should revise Ordinance SEC. 122-968 Public Art to incorporate the best practices.

Strategy C: Create signature places and programs that celebrate the authentic past, present and future of Ocala.

**OPPORTUNITY 8: Diversify arts and cultural programming, not just in terms of scope and content, but also in terms of how they are distributed throughout the community, and which organizations provide them.**

## RECOMMENDATION 8.1

The City should support the Reilly Art Center black box expansion at Tuscawilla Park.

## Why?

The cultural facilities asset inventory suggests there is an opportunity to develop a small, high-quality creative space in Ocala. Such a space should be highly flexible to accommodate a variety of performance types and genres.

8.1.1 The City and Reilly Art Center should amend the current lease to provide the space needed to expand.

8.1.2 The Reilly Art Center should fund and construct the expansion.

### RECOMMENDATION 8.2

The City should ensure the new community center in west Ocala has the necessary infrastructure to support both indoor and outdoor performing and visual arts programs and develop partnerships to facilitate execution of programs.

## Why?

The National Center for Arts Research study “At What Cost?” suggests that “...As commute times increase, arts participation becomes radically local. Arts participation becomes even more local in low socioeconomic communities, where non-monetary costs such as the hassle of travel compound the financial barriers of attending.” This will be the first facility of its kind in west Ocala. The potential to expand programming through this facility is tremendous and the City should capitalize on it.

8.2.1 The City should ensure the scope of work for the community center includes requirements for provision of the necessary infrastructure for performing and participatory art programs.

8.2.2 The City should ensure the scope of work includes the provision of an allocation for public art at the community center.

8.2.3 The City should begin planning for arts and cultural based programming (visual, performing, culinary, etc.) well in advance of the facility opening.

### RECOMMENDATION 8.3

The City should support investment in and continued operation of the historic Marion Theater.

## Why?

**Marion Theater is a historic icon in Downtown. Its presence provides a sense of place and vibrancy that would cease to exist in its absence. The theater is an important historic city asset with a powerful presence well worth the public investments. These types of resources contribute to an atmosphere that can't otherwise be replicated.**

**8.3.1** The City should continue to support investment in the Marion Theater.

**8.3.2** The City should begin preparing for the eventual sunseting of the current operator's contract and ensure that this facility continues to be in operation as a cultural arts facility.

### **RECOMMENDATION 8.4**

**The City and County (as joint property owners) should continue to support investment in and operations of the Fort King National Historic Landmark (FKNHL). The City should work toward a more sustainable operating model at the FKNHL ensuring the City's core value of "Stay small as we grow" is integrated into planning measures to minimize increased impact on City resources.**

## Why?

**A National Historic Landmark has great potential as an economic driver. The FKNHL is the most important historic site in Ocala/Marion County as relates to national, state and local history. Programs that blur the lines between recreation/ecotourism, heritage tourism and culture can attract new and diverse audiences and create opportunities for individuals of varying interests to connect.**

**8.4.1** The City should complete a FKNHL Master Plan document to outline the timeline and resource needs for reconstruction of historic Fort King. This plan should be reviewed by the FKHA.

**8.4.2** The City and County should have a joint workshop to discuss the long-term development and ongoing operating expenses of the FKNHL and how those expense will be funded/shared.

**8.4.3** The City and County should work with the FKHA to plan, design, fund and construct a NHL quality museum and visitor's center.

**8.4.4** Understanding that the archaeology component of this project will be a long-term endeavor that comes with responsibilities to manage and store related City/County/State owned artifacts, the City and County should develop a plan for the most efficient and effective means of handling this component of the project; making necessary provisions and accommodations for management of archaeological functions associated with the FKNHL and in compliance with State and local regulations.

- 8.4.5 The City should coordinate with the FKHA to develop a member and donor database and manage same to maximize on-going giving campaigns in support of development and operations.
- 8.4.6 The City and County should coordinate with the Community Foundation on potential public and private funding alternatives to support the extensive re-construction and development undertakings that will occur at this site.
- 8.4.7 The City should review the Fort King NHL Collections Policy and update as appropriate. This policy should ensure that all items in the collection (which includes artifacts, archival materials, historical memorabilia, heirlooms, and period reproductions) have clear provenance relating to Fort King.
- 8.4.8 The City should procure and implement an inventory management system and ensure all items in the collection are properly cataloged.

### **RECOMMENDATION 8.5**

**The City should coordinate with the CEP/Main Street on opportunities to better engage the equine industry.**

## Why?

**Visitors associated with the equine industry indicate they are likely to return (80%), they are of a higher socio-economic status with more discretionary income (an indicator of arts participation). There appears to be an opportunity to encourage these visitors to stay in Ocala/Marion County longer through engagement in the arts.**

- 8.5.1 Development of equine related features in the Downtown landscape to provide a unique atmosphere that will speak to the importance of the equine industry in the Ocala/Marion County community.
- 8.5.2 The City should coordinate with CEP and Main Street on ways to close the gap from the equine facilities located primarily west of I-75 and Downtown Ocala.
- 8.5.3 The City and MCA should identify partners who can aid in the selection or development of programming that might appeal to the equine visitor and timing of same based on the scheduling of equine events, sales, etc.
- 8.5.4 MCA should work closely with the TDC to develop marketing materials specifically targeted to the equine visitors.
- 8.5.5 OMAC, MCA, TDC and CEP/Main Street should look for opportunities to infuse equine art into places and spaces where equine visitors and operators are already engaged.

### **RECOMMENDATION 8.6**

**The City should coordinate with MCA to determine the need for either a residency and/or in-house artist programs.**

## Why?

MCA is an important resource for artists and arts organizations in the community, offering space to display work and providing access to professional development workshops. Research suggests there might be an opportunity for a residency and/or in-house artist program as part of Brick City Center for the Arts or the Appleton Museum of Arts. There may also be an additional opportunity for artist studio space. This will become more apparent once MAX is launched.

- 8.6.1 The City and MCA should partner in researching the possibility of an Artist in Residence program.
- 8.6.2 The City and MCA should investigate opportunities and application of these programs and determine appropriate partners.

### RECOMMENDATION 8.7

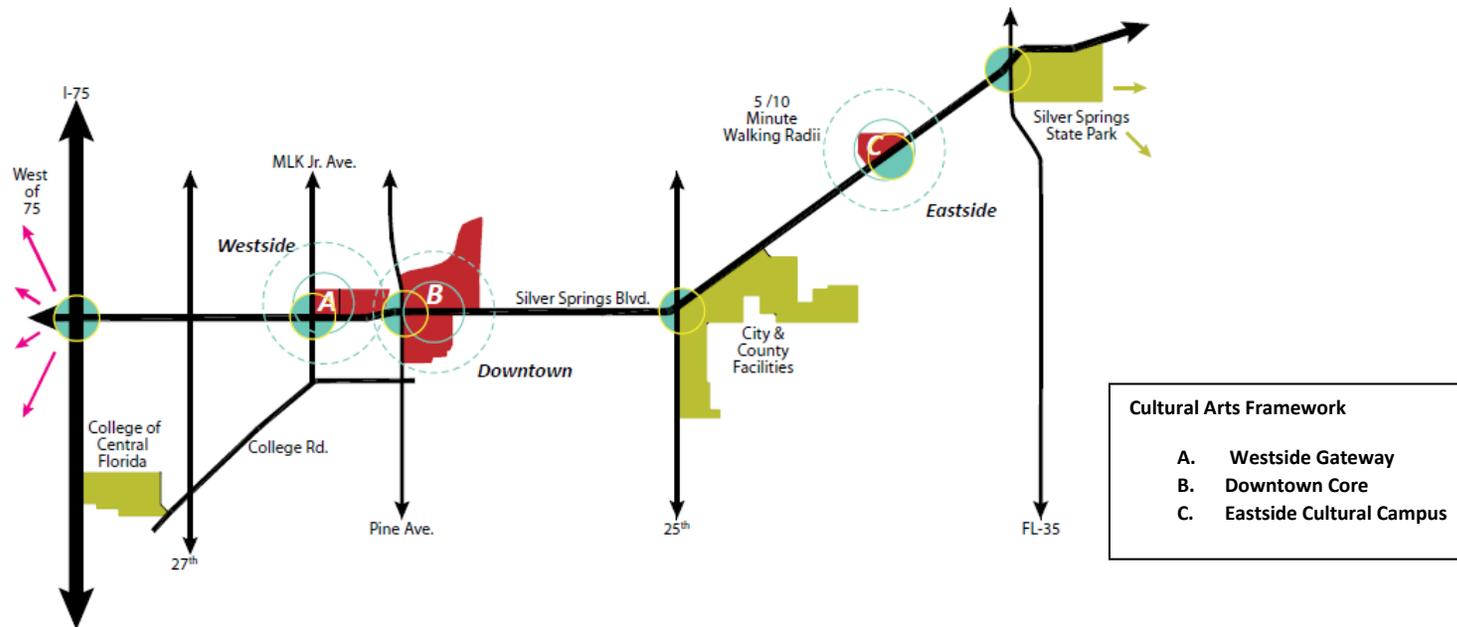
**The City should coordinate with cultural arts organizations to review recent, current and upcoming programs, assessing the diversity of content, program distribution and inclusivity; and collectively make recommendations for change.**

## Why?

The community surveys and programming inventory suggests there is a need for more diverse programming in terms of the type/content of programs as well as where programming is provided. The plan emphasizes that the cultural sector has begun to think more critically and intentionally about issues related to diversity, equity and access. This should result in decentralized programming, with cultural organizations taking events and programs into neighborhoods not traditionally served by the arts. Interviewees indicated they would like to see more venues and activities that are spread throughout the community. Widening programming distribution can contribute to placemaking initiatives.

- 8.7.1 City staff should coordinate with MCA to conduct a review to analyze diversity, equity and access issues and present findings to OMAC.
- 8.7.2 City staff should develop recommendations and best practices based on findings of the review and feedback from OMAC and get City Council approval.
- 8.7.3 The City and MCA should identify artists, organizations and partners for programs and events implementation in underserved neighborhoods.

**OPPORTUNITY 9: Develop and brand Tuscawilla Park and Downtown Ocala as a Central District for cultural activity, and potentially Ocala’s ‘east’ and ‘west’ assets, into designated sub-districts. This should include the strategic allocation of resources where they have maximum impact.**



**RECOMMENDATION 9.1**  
Continue the development of a cultural corridor in Downtown Ocala.

Why?

As emphasized in the phase 1 report, there is a shift away from buildings that might be termed “palaces of the arts” to cultural districts, an area in which multiple smaller facilities are developed with a walkable radius. These districts also tend to be better at motivating commercial development, as they are relatively porous and accommodating of other building projects.

- 9.1.1 The City should ensure that visual arts are incorporated into the Osceola Trak including interactive art which encourages users to be engaged and provides a unique experience.
- 9.1.2 The City should ensure the Trak is continued through Tuscawilla Park using the Watula corridor and developing a strong sense of place.
- 9.1.3 The City should continue to facilitate catalytic development of signature places in Mid-Town and Tucawilla areas to provide social gathering places. This includes redevelopment of the American Legion Building and the Fire Station at Tuscawilla.
- 9.1.4 The City should continue to find ways to creatively incorporate a wide assortment of live foliage throughout the downtown corridor. While the planters and live foliage are not catalogued as arts assets, they provide tremendous visual appeal and may later be incorporated in living art projects.

## **RECOMMENDATION 9.2**

**The City should plan for redevelopment of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Recreation Complex as a west Ocala cultural arts/heritage sub-district and gateway to strengthen community identity.**

### Why?

**As the City moves forward with plans to develop a new community center at Reed Place, consideration should be given to finding new ways to utilize the existing facilities at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Recreation Complex. These efforts should focus on new intergenerational programs, enhanced access to the arts, and the equitable allocation of resources and opportunities that can best emphasize cultural and heritage resources of this district. The existing distribution of cultural arts assets indicates a clear opportunity to develop new assets in particular target areas or better distribute assets throughout the community particularly on the west side of Ocala. There currently are concentrations of assets in three key areas indicating an opportunity to leverage them through the creation of formal cultural districts.**

- 9.2.1 The City should coordinate efforts to enhance and further develop the 24-acre Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Recreation Complex as a neighborhood gateway along the Silver Springs Corridor, providing for enhanced pedestrian and bicyclists movement throughout the park.
- 9.2.2 The City should coordinate the redevelopment of vacant parcels on the Boulevard between MLK, Jr. Recreation Complex and Downtown to best promote walkability along this corridor.
- 9.2.3 The City should study the feasibility of the adaptive reuse of the E.D. Croskey Recreation Center to include museum and heritage center uses to give heightened visibility to the neighborhood's historic legacy and programming, promote accessibility to life-long learning, and promote heritage tourism opportunities.

- 9.2.4 The City and MCA should identify stakeholders and likely partners.
- 9.2.5 The City should coordinate with stakeholders to envision redevelopment options, incorporate best practices for quality placemaking, and develop a five to ten-year redevelopment plan.
- 9.2.6 The City should develop a long-term plan for funding of needed improvements.
- 9.2.7 The City should coordinate with the Community Foundation on private and government grant opportunities.

### **RECOMMENDATION 9.3**

**The City and MCA should coordinate with the College of Central Florida (Appleton Museum of Art) and the Ocala Civic Theater for redevelopment of their campus into an east Ocala cultural arts sub-district and in doing so, close the divide between this east Ocala sub-district and the Downtown Ocala cultural district.**

## Why?

The plan indicates further study should look at ways to support and integrate efforts at the Appleton Art Museum and Ocala Civic Theater, including an opportunity for reuse of the vacant Pioneer Garden Club facility. The plan also indicates there is broad interest in findings ways to shorten that physical/mental distance from the Appleton/Civic Theater to Downtown. The existing distribution of cultural arts assets indicates a clear opportunity to develop new assets in particular target areas or better distribute assets throughout the community. There currently are concentrations of assets in three key areas indicating an opportunity to leverage them through the creation of formal cultural districts.

- 9.3.1 The City and MCA should meet with stakeholders to envision redevelopment options incorporating best practices for quality place making and develop a five to ten-year redevelopment plan. Consideration should be given to how the vacant land in this complex could be utilized to connect the arts with recreational pursuits; and to the development of informal gathering spaces and those that facilitate informal programming.
- 9.3.2 Consideration should be given to better connectivity to this facility from planned bike and pedestrian trails.
- 9.3.3 Stakeholders should develop a long-term plan for funding needed for improvements.
- 9.3.4 Stakeholders should coordinate with the Community Foundation on private and government grant opportunities.

**City of Ocala  
Cultural Arts Master Plan**

**Cultural Arts Administration**

	FY2019 YEE	FY2020 Request	Change	FY2021	Change	FY2022	Change	FY2023	Change	FY2024	Change
Personnel Expense	\$ 147,800	\$ 151,495	3,695	\$ 274,890	123,395	\$ 281,762	6,872	\$ 288,806	7,044	\$ 296,027	7,220
Operating Expense	\$ 311,793	\$ 313,213	1,420	\$ 321,044	7,830	\$ 329,070	8,026	\$ 337,296	8,227	\$ 345,729	8,432
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 459,593</b>	<b>\$ 464,708</b>	<b>5,115</b>	<b>\$ 595,934</b>	<b>131,225</b>	<b>\$ 610,832</b>	<b>14,898</b>	<b>\$ 626,103</b>	<b>15,271</b>	<b>\$ 641,755</b>	<b>15,653</b>
Revenues	6,000	6,000	-	6,150	150	6,304	154	6,461	158	6,623	162
<b>Net Cost for Administration</b>	<b>(453,593)</b>	<b>(458,708)</b>	<b>5,115</b>	<b>(589,784)</b>	<b>131,075</b>	<b>(604,528)</b>	<b>14,745</b>	<b>(619,642)</b>	<b>15,113</b>	<b>(635,133)</b>	<b>15,491</b>

**Discovery Center**

Personnel Expense	\$ 262,727	\$ 260,485	(2,241)	\$ 290,827	30,341	\$ 298,097	7,271	\$ 366,798	68,700	\$ 375,968	9,170
Operating Expense	\$ 244,709	\$ 263,030	18,321	\$ 269,606	6,576	\$ 276,346	6,740	\$ 283,255	6,909	\$ 290,336	7,081
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 507,436</b>	<b>\$ 523,516</b>	<b>16,080</b>	<b>\$ 560,433</b>	<b>36,917</b>	<b>\$ 574,444</b>	<b>14,011</b>	<b>\$ 650,053</b>	<b>75,609</b>	<b>\$ 666,304</b>	<b>16,251</b>
Revenues	174,000	185,550	11,550	190,189	4,639	194,943	4,755	199,817	4,874	204,812	4,995
<b>Net Cost for Discovery Center</b>	<b>(333,436)</b>	<b>(337,966)</b>	<b>4,530</b>	<b>(370,244)</b>	<b>32,278</b>	<b>(379,500)</b>	<b>9,256</b>	<b>(450,236)</b>	<b>70,736</b>	<b>(461,491)</b>	<b>11,256</b>

**Performing Arts**

Personnel Expense	\$ 128,079	\$ 130,042	\$ 1,963	\$ 133,293	\$ 3,251	\$ 136,625	\$ 3,332	\$ 140,041	\$ 3,416	\$ 143,542	\$ 3,501
Operating Expense	\$ 393,938	\$ 365,404	\$ (28,534)	\$ 374,539	\$ 9,135	\$ 383,902	\$ 9,363	\$ 393,500	\$ 9,598	\$ 403,337	\$ 9,837
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 522,017</b>	<b>\$ 495,446</b>	<b>\$ (26,571)</b>	<b>\$ 507,832</b>	<b>\$ 12,386</b>	<b>\$ 520,528</b>	<b>\$ 12,696</b>	<b>\$ 533,541</b>	<b>\$ 13,013</b>	<b>\$ 546,879</b>	<b>\$ 13,339</b>
Revenues	112,137	122,500	10,363	125,563	3,062	128,702	3,139	131,919	3,218	135,217	3,298
<b>Net Cost for Performing Arts</b>	<b>(409,880)</b>	<b>(372,946)</b>	<b>(36,934)</b>	<b>(382,269)</b>	<b>9,324</b>	<b>(391,826)</b>	<b>9,557</b>	<b>(401,622)</b>	<b>9,796</b>	<b>(411,662)</b>	<b>10,041</b>

**Visual Arts**

Personnel Expense	\$ 128,079	\$ 137,951	\$ 9,872	\$ 165,229	\$ 27,278	\$ 169,359	\$ 4,131	\$ 173,593	\$ 4,234	\$ 244,933	\$ 71,340
Operating Expense	\$ 55,155	\$ 78,875	\$ 23,720	\$ 80,847	\$ 1,972	\$ 82,868	\$ 2,021	\$ 84,940	\$ 2,072	\$ 87,063	\$ 2,123
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 183,234</b>	<b>\$ 216,826</b>	<b>\$ 33,592</b>	<b>\$ 246,076</b>	<b>\$ 29,250</b>	<b>\$ 252,228</b>	<b>\$ 6,152</b>	<b>\$ 258,533</b>	<b>\$ 6,306</b>	<b>\$ 331,997</b>	<b>\$ 73,463</b>
Revenues	18,000	22,600	4,600	23,165	565	23,744	579	24,338	594	24,946	608
<b>Net Cost for Visual Arts</b>	<b>(165,234)</b>	<b>(194,226)</b>	<b>28,992</b>	<b>(222,911)</b>	<b>28,685</b>	<b>(228,483)</b>	<b>5,573</b>	<b>(234,196)</b>	<b>5,712</b>	<b>(307,050)</b>	<b>72,855</b>

**Profit/Loss**

<b>Total Cultural Arts &amp; Sciences Department Expense</b>	<b>\$ 1,672,280</b>	<b>\$ 1,700,496</b>	<b>\$ 28,216</b>	<b>\$ 1,910,274</b>	<b>\$ 209,778</b>	<b>\$ 1,958,031</b>	<b>\$ 47,757</b>	<b>\$ 2,068,229</b>	<b>\$ 110,199</b>	<b>\$ 2,186,935</b>	<b>\$ 118,706</b>
<b>Total Cultural Arts &amp; Sciences Department Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 310,137</b>	<b>\$ 336,650</b>	<b>\$ 26,513</b>	<b>\$ 345,066</b>	<b>\$ 8,416</b>	<b>\$ 353,693</b>	<b>\$ 8,627</b>	<b>\$ 362,535</b>	<b>\$ 8,842</b>	<b>\$ 371,599</b>	<b>\$ 9,063</b>
<b>Cultural Arts &amp; Sciences Department Net Cost</b>	<b>\$ (1,362,143)</b>	<b>\$ (1,363,846)</b>	<b>1,703</b>	<b>\$ (1,565,208)</b>	<b>201,362</b>	<b>\$ (1,604,338)</b>	<b>39,130</b>	<b>\$ (1,705,694)</b>	<b>101,356</b>	<b>\$ (1,815,337)</b>	<b>109,642</b>

Except for positions added in per Phase II + III, Section 3, assumes annual rate of inflation of 2.5%

**THIS SECTION TO BE FURTHER DEVELOPED AFTER RECOMMENDATIONS BY CITY COUNCIL**

**New Costs Related to Plan Recommendations**

New Public Art											
Reduction in Performing Arts Expenditures											
<b>Total New Costs</b>											

**POTENTIAL New Contributed Income**

Permit Fee for Arts (.5% first 5 years/1% after)	0	0		620,210		635,715		651,608		667,898	
Corporate/Foundation/State/NEA Grants	0	0		30,000		60,000		60,000		60,000	
<b>Total New Income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>650,210</b>		<b>695,715</b>		<b>711,608</b>		<b>727,898</b>	
<b>Total Department Profit/Loss after New Contributed Income</b>	<b>(1,362,143)</b>	<b>(1,363,846)</b>	<b>1,703</b>	<b>(914,998)</b>		<b>(908,623)</b>		<b>(994,086)</b>		<b>(1,087,438)</b>	



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