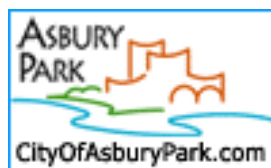


# THE ASBURY PARK CULTURAL PLAN

2006-2012

## MONMOUTH COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL ARTSCAP BLACK BOX OF ASBURY PARK

&



ARTSMARKET

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# THE ASBURY PARK CULTURAL PLAN 2006-2012

## **Introduction**

The Asbury Park Cultural Plan is the first large-scale cultural development plan jointly developed by artists, citizens, and government for any Monmouth County community. It is a direct result and goal born out of the Monmouth County Cultural Arts Plan, 'A Blueprint for the Arts'. It was developed to guide all of the organizations, individuals, and agencies that together work to make Asbury Park a wonderful community in which to live and work. Asbury Park has a long legacy of involvement in and support for the arts, heritage, culture and creativity. The arts are an essential part of the fabric of our community. Arts galleries and performing arts organizations make downtown Asbury Park a unique destination. Many artists who work around the world have historically and currently call Asbury Park their home. Cultural diversity, heritage, and historic preservation are values we embrace and link with the arts to form our shared community culture.

## **The Plan's Funders**

The Arts Coalition of Asbury Park, Black Box, and the Asbury Park Urban Enterprise Zone Program partnered with the Monmouth County Arts Council to develop this plan. The plan was funded through a Community Arts Collaboration grant from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, New Jersey Natural Gas, the Asbury Park Urban Enterprise Zone Program, the Mary Owen Borden Foundation, and the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

All of the arts organizations and artists who call Asbury Park their home, together with the City and the businesses that have taken leadership roles in the plan, join together to thank the funders of this venture. It will have a significant, lasting impact on our community.

## **Why We Need A Cultural Plan**

A cultural plan is a civic document, intended to guide and focus the efforts of every organization and agency that cares about arts and culture. It states goals and objectives to advocate for, to support financially, and to support through the work of individuals, organizations and agencies. The plan was developed

through a civic and open process, and will be implemented with the same spirit. It is a plan for the community, and as such is “owned” by the community.

The plan was developed in four stages. The Arts Coalition of Asbury Park, a group that came together representing the arts and cultural organizations that call Asbury Park home, did early goal setting. Subsequently, the Monmouth County Arts Council secured funding for formal planning. ArtsMarket, Inc., which served as the Monmouth County Arts Council's cultural planning counsel, was engaged to support the Asbury Park process.

A series of roundtables and forums launched the formal planning process. A major arts summit attended by approximately 300 community members provided the opportunity for extensive and broad based input on the themes and topics for the plan. Follow-up planning with the members of ArtsCap was conducted to help refine the goals and objectives. The draft plan was posted to the ArtsCAP web site and additional public comments invited.

### **Cultural Plan Mission**

The mission of the cultural plan for Asbury Park is to provide leadership and guidance, advocacy and support for the cultural development of Asbury Park, ensuring that the arts, culture and heritage are articulated priorities for all aspects of community development and planning.

### **Mission of the Arts Coalition of Asbury Park**

The Arts Coalition of Asbury Park (ArtsCAP), through collaborative professional affiliations, facilitates the development and advancement of an Arts Plan and District in Asbury Park, NJ., creating a support network for artists, artisans and community organizations, promoting arts education and multicultural arts programming to enhance the quality of life for its partners and community while preserving the integrity of Asbury Park's artistic, architectural, historic and cultural heritage. ArtsCAP's voice for the arts will develop and foster dialogue with the City Council, developers & investors to maintain, stabilize and promote the arts in Asbury Park.

Developed in the Black Box as a 'think tank' organization helping facilitate the development of an Arts District and Arts Plan for Asbury Park, the Arts Coalition of Asbury Park has evolved into and taken the responsibility and position of an arts council at the local level.

## **Implementing the Cultural Plan**

A cultural plan is a community-wide venture, developed with the input of hundreds of residents. It is a policy document that is intended to guide the work of many including nonprofit organizations, city and state elected officials and agency leaders, developers, funders, and residents who seek to support arts and cultural development. No single agency or entity is responsible for implementing the plan, but collectively all those agencies and organizations that support cultural development are responsible for identifying ways to meet the goals and work toward the outcomes. Annual review of the plan is recommended to note benchmarks of accomplishment and identify action steps appropriate for the next year.

## **Asbury Park Cultural Arts Goals**

**Goal 1:** Establish and ensure operations of at least one significant cultural arts center within Asbury Park to house the offices, rehearsal spaces, studios, galleries, and performance spaces for Asbury Park cultural arts organizations and to serve as the primary audience destination for the arts in Asbury Park.

**Goal 2:** Develop, market and provide formal designation and funding to establish cultural arts districts in Asbury Park, including at least a gallery district and potentially a music district or other neighborhood arts districts that maintain, support, and celebrate the community's ethnic diversity.

**Goal 3:** Establish a public art program and formal public art policies for the City of Asbury Park.

**Goal 4:** Support the development of historic preservation policies, plans and initiatives that protect the historic built environment and recognized historic districts of Asbury Park, with the Asbury Park Historical Society as a strong collaborative partner and lead.

**Goal 5:** Build partnerships and programs that provide outstanding, sustainable and broadly defined arts education for all ages for Asbury Park residents.

**Goal 6:** Support, strengthen, and stabilize the community of artists in Asbury Park.

**Goal 7:** Build Asbury Park's image and identity as an arts rich community, including its significant music, theatre, film and cultural heritage legacies.

**Goal 8:** Support the development of a public transportation loop that makes the arts and historic sites accessible to all residents.

**Goal 9:** Ensure the resources and support mechanisms, funding, and organizational capacity to implement the cultural plan.

## **The Plan in Detail: Goals, Outcomes, Objectives, Strategies, and Benchmarks**

**Goal 1. *Establish and ensure operations of at least one significant cultural arts center within Asbury Park to house the offices, rehearsal spaces, studios, galleries, and performance spaces for Asbury Park cultural arts organizations and to serve as the primary audience destination for the arts in Asbury Park.***

**Outcome:** Asbury Park will have a hub or center for culture that will serve its resident nonprofit cultural organizations and bring their audiences into downtown, creating arts and economic development benefits. The facility will enable the arts organizations of Asbury Park to grow in their programming and services offered to the community. By serving as the office, rehearsal, education, studio, gallery and performance home of over a dozen organizations, the Center will be active and vibrant every day and evening, and will serve as a catalyst for further arts development in downtown Asbury Park.

### **Objectives and Strategies:**

**A)** Identify building(s) suitable as a mixed-use cultural facility and conduct appropriate due diligence as to the feasibility of using them (it) as a cultural center. (Kinmouth/Savoy and/or other facility(ies)).

**A.1.)** Conduct feasibility study and utilize results in planning and fundraising for the prospective facility.

**B)** With the City and others as appropriate, determine the best and most workable operating and financial development model for the facility(ies).

**B. 1.)** Identify public private model for capitalizing and renovating the facility.

**B. 2.)** Identify appropriate management and operating model, organization and business plan.

**B. 3)** Develop and work with partner organizations/agencies a start up and operating financial strategy.

**C)** Develop plans and strategies to capitalize the project and provide operating revenue, including earned and contributed income, and the development of an operating endowment.

**C.1.)** As appropriate, structure campaign(s) and approaches to raising capital and endowment funds, using campaign counsel and leadership committee(s).

**D)** Ensure that operating agreements or other commitments provide for on-going use of the facility at affordable rates for area nonprofit and entrepreneurial arts and cultural organizations.

**D.1.)** Use the feasibility study and other counsel to ensure a workable model allowing for below market rentals as well as at market rentals.

**E)** Ensure that the facility has an operating endowment to provide for 5% of the annual operating costs.

**E.1.)** Structure an endowment campaign as a part of any facility capitalization.

**E.2.)** Seek naming gifts, bequests, and planned giving to ensure development of the endowment.

**F)** Develop the facility so that there is a mix of commercial arts space, nonprofit space, for profit and various production spaces (black box, film, music, dance and theatre) as well as galleries, to bring diverse audiences to the facility.

**Goal 2: *Develop, market and provide formal designation and funding to establish cultural arts districts in Asbury Park, including at least a gallery district and potentially a music district or other neighborhood arts districts that maintain, support and celebrate the community's ethnic diversity.***

**Outcome:** Downtown Asbury Park will contain at least one cultural arts/entertainment district, a district or block defined by/as a music heritage/performance district, and a district that reflects the historic culture, music and arts of the West Side.

**A)** Through networking and partnership with downtown businesses, infuse the area with art, visible in restaurants, bars, gathering places.

**A.1.)** Develop festivals, showcases, and special events that help define the various districts and build public awareness.

**B)** Through advocacy and partnership between the City of Asbury Park and arts organizations/arts leaders, develop ordinances and incentives for arts use on the main floor of buildings.

**B.1.)** Develop incentives for affordable live workspace for artists within the district(s).

**C)** Develop formal district designation(s), ordinances and other binding mechanisms that will support the development of the districts and ensure they are maintained over time.

**D)** Advocate and work with developers to protect, develop, and market districts.

**E)** Ensure that districts remain authentic to Asbury Park including its heritage, arts, and cultural diversity. Where appropriate support non-traditional neighborhood arts venues and developing new ones where needed.

**F)** Support and provide assistance and leadership for emerging organizations and entities that will help define the districts, such as the NJ Music Hall of Fame.

***Goal 3: Establish a public art program and formal public art policies for the City of Asbury Park.***

**Outcome:** Asbury Park will have a strong public/private public art program that sites works of public art throughout the community and that ensures new developments plan for and install works of public art within public areas.

**A)** Support and expand upon ArtsCAP's existing public art program through funding for additional Mural Arts projects.

**B)** Advocate for and secure a two percent for art City of Asbury Park program.

**B.1.)** Provide training and models from other municipalities to inform local decision makers.

**C)** Develop a public art master plan that inventories existing public artworks, identifies sites for works of public art, funding mechanisms, recommends policies and approaches to identifying artists, specifically Asbury Park artists, and that identifies means and funding for the maintenance of public art works.

**D)** Advocate for and ensure policy development that creates incentives and requirements for private sector developers to include works of public art within public spaces.

**E)** Create and maintain an artist slide bank/inventory to be made accessible to developers to assist them in identifying artists for public art works.

**F)** Establish a public art commission and oversight groups as appropriate to steward public and private sector public art programs.

**Goal 4: Support the development of historic preservation policies, plans and initiatives that protect the historic built environment and recognized historic districts of Asbury Park, with the Asbury Park Historical Society as a strong collaborative partner and lead.**

**Outcome:** Asbury Park is known for its historic architecture and heritage, Citywide, evidenced in neighborhoods, downtown, and in preservation as a part of new development.

**Key Historical/Arts Buildings to be included/preserved:**

- *Howard Johnson/ Open Air Band shell/Amphitheater*
- *Baronet Theater as an Arts Cinema & Theatrical Venue.*
- *Fastlane as a Cabaret/Burlesque/Music venue.*
- *Stephen Crane House*
- *Carousel Casino Buildings*
- *Churches*
- *Savoy Theater/Kinmouth Building.*
- *Paramount Theater & Convention Hall*

**A)** Establish a historical preservation commission within the City of Asbury Park to assist the City in setting policies, ordinances, and procedures that ensure historic architecture is maintained according to professional standards, including a review process and, as appropriate, zoning and ordinances.

- B)** Build public awareness of existing historic architecture with a plaque/signage program that identifies historic homes and buildings, and their stories.
- C)** Ensure preservation of important arts and cultural landmarks such as the band shell, music venues, theatres, and historic arts buildings.

**Goal 5: *Build partnerships and programs that provide outstanding, sustainable and broadly defined arts education for all ages for Asbury Park residents.***

**Outcome:** Arts education opportunities will be available for all residents, all ages, and will be known as a central service provided by Asbury Park arts organizations. Education opportunities will be in and out of schools, enhanced by partnerships between schools and area arts organizations, and will address a wide range of subjects and learning areas.

- A)** Inventory area artists, arts educators and arts organizations and their programs, identifying means to connect various programs to the schools/appropriate grade levels. Create a directory and communications with the school department to facilitate school use of the programs and services.
- B)** Identify funding streams to strengthen and support the partnerships and development of nonprofit arts organizations' education programs and services.
  - B.1.)** Work in partnership with Brookdale Community College to build a lasting implementation partnership.
- C)** Identify new means to integrate arts education experiences into life long learning offered by the Community Center and other civic organizations and area churches, for the benefit of all ages.
- D)** Acknowledge the community's legacy with programs that connect youth to music studios, film production, theatrical training, and mural arts programs, providing training in professions.
  - D.1.)** Partner with existing social services/work with training programs that provide training and work opportunities.

**Goal 6: Support, stabilize and strengthen the community of artists in Asbury Park.**

**Outcome:** Asbury Park's arts community will be active, visible, and inclusive. The community of artists will be stable and able to grow in the face of challenges and opportunities posed by real estate redevelopment.

- A)** Inventory all artists in Asbury Park, creating a database that makes it easy for all groups to reach and involve all artists.
- B)** Ensure that Asbury Park's on-going redevelopment includes affordable live work space and study space for artists, including real estate incentives from the City that encourage developers to provide lasting, stable artists' space.
  - B.1.)** Inventory artist studio space and live work space as a baseline for development of additional studio and live work space.
- C)** Maintain ArtsCAP meetings and events that bring artists together for social and professional advancement & exchange.
- D)** Through effective communications, ensure that artists in Asbury Park remain aware of progress on the cultural plan and can be an advocacy force to support its goals especially those impacting the arts community such as artist live work space, affordable rentals and marketing.
- E)** Market the work of Asbury Park artists through consortia efforts.

**Goal 7: Build Asbury Park's image and identity as an arts rich community, including its significant music, theatre, and film legacies.**

**Outcome:** Asbury Park will have a national and international reputation as an arts-rich city, and its heritage as an arts community will be realized once again with new emphasis on its unique arts heritage and roots. Asbury Park's arts events and cultural heritage will be highly visible. Its wonderful theatres will be celebrated, and it will continue to develop its arts infrastructure for wide ranging events and culture that build's the public's awareness of Asbury Park. This will include continued development as a site for filming and recording studios, post production editing and sound facilities, recording studios including the support of

existing local studios such as Aeria Record and the ongoing support of the Garden State Film Festival, the Black Box, El Lobo Negro and Dunbar Repertory.

- A)** Support the development of the NJ Music Hall of Fame with appropriate planning and market analysis, providing it with a strong foundation for implementation.
  - A.1.)** Ensure that the Hall of Fame has the significance in scope to attract funding and visitation.
- B)** Develop programs that connect music and film studios with young people, providing unique internships and programs that involve the next generation of artists in the industry.
- C)** Advocate for City zoning and rules that protect working artists, particularly but not limited to noise variances for music recording studios and music venues.
- D)** Inventory rehearsals spaces available for artists and advocate for the development of more spaces.
- E)** Market Asbury Park as a site for recording and rehearsing and develop an inventory of musicians on call (MOC) for various projects, and as a film location, developing incentives for film companies to do work in Asbury Park.
- F)** Advocate for the development of music venues including the HoJo Band Shell and others.
- G)** Advocate for unique opportunities such as the proposed Butterfly Conservatory, potential linking it with the public art program and community parks.
- H)** Develop a marketing plan, target markets, demographics, (that include but are not exclusive to the growing LGBT, artists/arts advocates and culturally diverse community) branding logo, tagline, messaging, strategic consistent messages.
- I)** Market Asbury Park as a place for artists to move to, live and work, and establish incentives for artists to live and work in the community.

- J) Create a centralized ticketing facility. Develop public information kiosks and information centers on arts and culture.
- K) Produce monthly newsletters and calendar.
- L) Link all arts web sites and market all the sites via the calendar and other means.
- M) Develop and create an Asbury Park brand that includes identifying its unique mix of arts and culture and that attracts tourist participation.
- N) Maintain and develop events and festivals that market and promote Asbury Park.

**Goal 8: Support the development of a public transportation loop that makes the arts and historic sites accessible to all residents.**

**Outcome:** As a community of one square mile, Asbury Park will be a model of accessibility, offering its population opportunities to access cultural destinations, arts districts, historic sites, area churches, and educational sites, linked with the NJ Transit Station. Public transportation will alleviate downtown parking issues and encourage public participation in civic events.

- A) Advocate for green public transportation such as containerized natural gas busses. Provide economic and demographic information to support the advocacy for the green bus system.
- B) Develop a transportation loop that links all Asbury Park neighborhoods and destinations, ensuring accessibility for tourists, residents, seniors, volunteers and students.

**Goal 9: Ensure the resources and support mechanisms, funding, and organizational capacity to implement the cultural plan.**

**Outcome:** Asbury Park's cultural arts plan has the funding to afford professional administration, marketing, and advocacy to ensure that goals are met.

- A) Work with the Monmouth County Arts Council and the City of Asbury Park to guide the implementation and funding of the

plan.

- B)** Identify and seek public and private sector funding to support ArtsCap as the administrator of the plan.
- C)** Seek and secure project specific funding for each of the goals in this plan.
- D)** Develop the ArtsCap membership base and local business and individual contributions.
- E)** Professionally staff ArtsCap as an arts agency for Asbury Park, overseeing the programs and projects of this plan.

## **Physical Sites & Services Plan**

Initial suggestion for the Arts District/Arts Plan involve the idea of establishing an Arts Education Hub in an appropriate building in Asbury Park as well as an integrated arts district in the Downtown area. It is felt that a large 'Arts Center' would be inappropriate for this community.

*(Additional ideas will be added to this section as artists and others contribute suggestions/plans).*