

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Genesis

The United Arts Council of Greater Greensboro began its work to revisit and revise its strategic plan in July 2007. This action was propelled by a number of factors and local market trends, including:

- Revenue Generation –
 - We need more substantial growth of our annual fund
 - We are experiencing a growing interest on the part of companies to restrict their corporate gifts for a specific purpose.
 - Guilford County Commissioners eliminated all funding of the arts from the County budget in June 2007
 - Locally, entities are exploring alternative tax revenue streams. The arts industry must be a part of this dialogue, identifying sustained revenue sources for the arts long-term.
 - During 1999 - 2000, the UAC formed an endowment fund. Its balance is currently \$275,000. We want to increase this fund's assets and, as a result, its potential impact on inspiring growth of the arts in Greensboro.
- Population Growth and Changing Demographics – Greensboro has an increasingly diverse population; we need to ensure we are reaching and engaging these populations through our local arts programming
- Arts Economic Impact Study Results – Findings from our first-ever Guilford County study enable us to build a stronger case of support for the arts. Additionally, findings help us understand more clearly the priorities of our local market to realize the greatest areas of gain from the non-profit arts industry.

Process

The United Arts Council used quantitative and qualitative research to understand what the community wants, needs and expects from the arts industry in general and the UAC in particular. Our results are shaped with input from nearly 2,000 citizens:

- Surveys (685 respondents)
- Arts & Economic Impact Prosperity Study (1,174 non-profit arts audience members)
- Forums and Focus Groups (60 attendees)
- Stakeholder Interviews (15 in-depth interviews)

Our board of directors and staff has engaged in extensive dialogue and review of findings through bi-monthly board meetings and four retreats since July 2007.

Key Themes

Four major themes emerged from the research:

- **A Vision for the Arts:** The UAC provides strategic and financial leadership for the arts to help establish Greensboro as a nationally recognized, vibrant center for the arts and a community rich in creative expression.
- **Community Priorities:** The UAC helps build a stronger, more vibrant community by focusing in the benefits of the arts on key priorities in the community, including education, economic development and cultural tourism.
- **Investing in the Arts:** The UAC works to continually increase the overall investment in the arts and to ensure flexibility in supporting a broad and diverse range of creative expression in our community.
- **Community Engagement:** In addition to enhancing the community's awareness, participation and support of the arts, the UAC helps increase the reach of the arts among key audiences through greater engagement and participation in the arts and arts leadership.

Strategic Plan Summary

Vision: Greensboro is nationally recognized as a vibrant center for the Arts with a community rich in creative expression.

Mission: To inspire growth of creative expression in our community by providing strategic and financial leadership to arts organizations, artists and educators that enhances quality of life and cultivates economic vitality and educational engagement with the Arts.

Tagline: Investing In Our Creative Community

Key Focus Areas:

- 1) Strategic Leadership
- 2) Financial Leadership
- 3) Advocacy, Outreach and Education

1. Strategic Leadership

Critical Objective: Lead efforts to incorporate the arts into the fabric of our community through three key channels – education, economic development and cultural tourism – to strengthen the long-term viability and quality of life of our community

Goal #1: Awareness & Relevance – Enhance community awareness of the UAC's mission through a comprehensive branding campaign. Emphasize the leadership role that the UAC

plays in promoting value for the arts in connection with community priorities and sectors (ie: ensure the arts have a “seat at the table”).

Goal #2: Relationship building & collaboration within the arts: Develop stronger relationships among 1) Arts Organizations, 2) Artists, and 3) Educators, to create a united voice for the arts in Greater Greensboro.

Goal #3: Connect arts to key community priorities: Create a platform for the arts to become a higher priority by promoting the value of the arts among local educational leadership, economic developers, community planners, business leaders and organizations promoting cultural tourism.

2. Financial Leadership

Critical Objective: Secure and invest an unprecedented increase in funding of the arts to ensure that high quality, diverse arts and arts programs are available to all.

Goal #1: Fundraising– Secure an unprecedented increase in funding of the arts in both public and private sectors.

Goal #2: Investment – Develop and implement a Strategic Partner Investment model for grantmaking linked to UAC strategic priorities. Investments will ensure the availability of a broad array of artistic opportunities/venues that reflect the diversity of the community.

Goal #3 Fiscal Accountability - Continue ongoing communication with stakeholders* and community to report on financial and general organizational progress.

**Stakeholders include – citizens, donors, key community leadership, United Arts Partners and their boards, elected officials*

3. Advocacy, Outreach and Education

Critical Objective: Enhance the community’s awareness, appreciation, participation and support of the arts to ensure a healthy and vibrant arts environment for current and future generations

Goal #1: Community Outreach – Evaluate and develop strategies to engage younger generations and more diverse audiences in the arts (most specifically African American and Latino). Ensure that our diverse community is engaged in and reflected in our local arts offerings.

Goal #2: Marketing and communications plan: Develop a comprehensive marketing and communications plan to support UAC mission, goals and tactics.

Goal #3: Advocacy - Develop and execute a comprehensive advocacy plan that outlines multi-year communication and funding strategies for our state, city, and county government bodies.

Summary of What is Different:

- Approach to fundraising.
 - Grow annual campaign revenue, broadening our base of donors and growing leadership giving.
 - Generate resources beyond the UAC's annual campaign. Conduct a feasibility study to identify priorities and funding goals for the following outcomes:
 - Endowment – Build an endowment for the arts (grow existing endowment and consider new endowment resources).
 - Enhancement Fund – Establish an enhancement fund (similar in concept to venture capital) to infuse significant financial resources in growing the arts.
 - Alternative revenue streams – Secure alternative tax revenue for the arts that will yield significant sustained annual funding.

- Approach to investment of resources.
 - Moving away from investing the largest portion of our financial resources in the form of sustained operating support grants to a set group of affiliates. Moving toward investing our financial resources in arts organizations, artists and schools whose output is advancing UAC's strategic priorities.
 - Moving away from a defined affiliate model (where annual funding for basic operations is more or less guaranteed) to a new model that supports a broader, more strategic investment of UAC's financial resources. We will apply this model concept to all investments including those to arts organizations, artists and schools.

- Develop deeper relationships with the core arts audiences and donors.

- Establish new relationships and engaging growth population sectors – young adults, African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos – including closing the reported “product gap” and making the UAC and the arts more relevant.

- Establish Greensboro as a cultural destination.

- Increase awareness and understanding of the UAC and the arts.