

The **Cultural Resources Asset Inventory** is a collaborative, comprehensive assessment of Buncombe County's cultural resources. It captures and communicates the scope of economic activity within the creative sector of the economy, including additional information not captured by traditional economic development methods. The Inventory also gathers information about cultural amenities and resources such as arts education programs, arts nonprofits, arts presenters, special events, cultural destinations, and more. The inventory will be used by Buncombe Cultural Alliance members and other community partners to further goals and current initiatives related to the enhancement of arts, culture, and entertainment in Buncombe County. It will serve as a key tool for public policy, community planning and investment/resource allocation as we move forward with developing arts-based developments, strategic resources for creative entrepreneurs, and creative sector infrastructure.

The **Cultural Resources Asset Inventory** is the first step towards a comprehensive county-wide Cultural Plan.

Background:

Need for the Cultural Resources Asset Inventory was identified by the Buncombe Cultural Alliance in 2014. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Our Town grant program has been identified as the most viable source of Federal funds to support the project. The Our Town grant program is designed for communities that are ready for significant Creative Placemaking implementation projects with an emphasis on broad cross-sector partnerships. The City of Asheville's River Arts Innovation District is a perfect example.

If granted through the 2015-2016 grant process, NEA funds will be matched in cash and in-kind by community partners, including the City of Asheville and the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce's Economic Development Coalition, along with a variety of private partners. The City of Asheville is the Asheville Area Arts Council's primary application partner. Other partnerships are currently being solidified.

To partner, or to support the project, email Kitty Love, Asheville Area Arts Council Executive Director at kitty@ashevillearts.com.

Objectives:

- To cultivate collective impact within the genre of cultural vitality through diverse strategic community partnerships and alliances;
- To develop a comprehensive community engagement process that builds lasting relationships within creative sector and broader community;
- To synthesize and graphically represent data for the purpose of informing public policy, community planning and investment/resource allocation that aligns with enhanced cultural vitality;
- To identify strategies for success that would strengthen Buncombe County cultural vitality, creative industries and the local economy.

Scope & Data:

The data captured will be synthesized to provide new information about the scale and nature of economic activity related to cultural and creative industry based businesses in Buncombe County. This can include the export and local sales of creative product, the number of artisans and creative industry businesses in the area, supply chain information, related professional services industries supported, available and related real estate use, and the like. In addition, the inventory will capture existing cultural amenities, creative assets and educational opportunities.

For more detailed information on possible data sets, please download the draft project scope: [Project Description for Cultural Resources Asset Inventory](#)

Outcomes:

- The process identifies need and resources for the creation and support of new and existing strategy in order to support long range cultural planning, as seen in planning efforts such as Imagine Chattanooga 2020 (<http://imaginechattanooga2020.org/>) which provides for return on investment metrics for funding partners.
- Information gathered provides feasibility for arts based development and related uses, such as artist workforce housing and production studios.
- Cultivation of artist resources – including business professional development support for artists, identification and research on demographics of artists in this region, actively identify potential artist studio/and or live/work spaces, identify the need for programs and services for artist development such as co-working, training, equipment for production and marketing. Supports the scaling up of creative businesses.
- Geographic scope and information of cultural amenities and cultural resources for web access tools for patronage such as AshevilleArtsAlive.com
- Supports the implementation of existing plans such as the [Asheville Downtown Master Plan](#) (City of Asheville), GroWNC plan (Land of Sky Regional Council) RAD plans, EDC's 5x5
- Provides cultural resource data to enhance existing GIS based tools such as the [WNC Vitality Index](#) and GroWNC maps, similar to CultureBlocks.com in Philadelphia.
- Increases the area's eligibility for additional Creative Placemaking funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, ArtPlace, SmArt Initiative, and similar funds.
- Develops an open source, business-to-business database of arts and culture partners, for uses such as AshevilleArtsAlive.com
- Develops an accessible set of tools for understanding the geographic location and relationship between existing cultural resources, including artists/designers/creative professionals, organizations, supply chains, venues, galleries, events, etc.
- Integrates tools into existing engagement platforms, such AshevilleArtsAlive.com

Current Partners:

- City of Asheville: Primary NEA application partner, data partner, 25K pledge, in-kind support via staff hours
- Economic Development Coalition of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce: In-kind partnership, 5x5 plan for job creation, arts and economic impact study
- Buncombe Cultural Alliance: Official endorsement, project oversight

- Town of Black Mountain
- Public Art and Cultural Commission of the City of Asheville: Official endorsement
- UNC Asheville's National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center (NEMAC)
- Asheville Convention and Visitor's Bureau
- Community Foundation of Western North Carolina

Potential Partners:

- Buncombe County
- Other Buncombe County municipalities
- Private foundations and funders