

SECTION TEN CULTURAL RESOURCES







OVERVIEW

The past, present and future role of the arts community in Shepherdstown was a frequent topic that was addressed during the planning process. The presence of a large arts community in the area was cited as a potential source for reinvigorating the once significant presence of the visual arts as a part of the Town's economy, particularly downtown. It was observed that as the visual arts community grew, it led to new businesses that catered to tourists. This led to increased rents which in turn led artists and their galleries to leave town. As a way to combat this cycle, and to provide a more sustainable model for future growth, several paths forward emerged, including the establishment of an "artists' colony" using underutilized structures along the rail corridor, as well as better integration into the overall downtown business community rather than attempting to revive the single purpose gallery spaces that once existed.

The greater role played today by the performing arts was cited as having significant economic potential for the Town. The Contemporary American Theater Festival, and the tourism potential generated by this event provides the Town with a unique event that many feel can be better integrated into the Town's marketing to draw tourists and spin-off further economic opportunities. While relegated primarily to the campus of Shepherd University,

the festival has a significant impact on the community, and better coordination between local businesses and the festival was often cited as being necessary to realize the full potential of this event.

Other arts and cultural related topics discussed during the process included the potential that was associated with the Opera House, ongoing talks to bring the National Symphony to town for performances, the need to better promote the historic architectural resources in town, and the potential for integrating regional arts organizations to take advantage of economies of scale.

The Town recognizes the value of its arts and cultural resources and understands the relationship of a sustainable and successful arts and cultural atmosphere to the overall quality of life and vibrancy those resources bring to the community from an economic and social perspective.

EXISTING FESTIVALS, EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS

On the page that follows, a brief list of the Shepherdstown and greater Shepherdstown festivals, events and attractions.



Theater & Film Festivals & Events

Contemporary American Theater Festival at Shepherd University
American Conservation Film Festival
Cut to the Chase Film Festival
Ryan Film Institute

General Festivals & Events

Shepherdstown GardenFest
Shepherdstown Boo!Fest
Shepherdstown DogFest
Shepherdstown StreetFest
Christmas in Shepherdstown

Arts and Cultural Resources

Goose Route Arts Collaborative
The Entler Hotel & Museum
Shepherdstown Public Library
Scarborough Library
Friends of Music Concert Series
Performing Arts Series at Shepherd University
Upper Potomac Music Weekends
Over the Mountain Studio Tour
Shepherdstown Music and Dance
The Shepherdstown Opera House

Additional Area Attractions

Antietam National Battlefield (Maryland)
The Civil War Discover Trail & Civil War Sites
George Tyler Moore Civil War Center
James Rumsey Steamboat Museum
Little House
Thomas Shepherd Grist Mill
Morgan's Grove Park
Popodicon
Historic Shepherdstown Walking Tour
Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail
The Elmwood Cemetery
The Tobacco Warehouse
Washington Heritage Trail
Yankuer Nature Preserve



The Town will actively promote and participate in the artistic and cultural resources and events that are vital to the economic prosperity and vibrant quality of life in Shepherdstown.

1.1 Develop Comprehensive Inventory

STRATEGY: Develop a complete inventory of local arts and cultural resources, artisans, musicians, organizations, and events.

JUSTIFICATION: A key step in promoting resources and events is ensuring that all events have been identified along with key contacts and information for each resource and event. The list will need to be maintained on a regular basis to keep it current.

1.2 Coordinate Marketing Efforts with the Town and Local Businesses

STRATEGY: Coordinate artistic, cultural, and live music events with civic and business leaders to assist with promotional and marketing efforts.

JUSTIFICATION: Maintaining close coordination with civic and business leaders during the marketing and promotions associated with events and festivals will help local businesses realize greater benefit from local events and festivals. This coordination provides local civic and business leaders opportunities to develop special events and business promotions that are related to the planned festival or event, generating more promotions for the event itself and local businesses.

1.3 Joint Marketing of Festivals and Events

STRATEGY: Identify complementary arts and cultural resources and events that can benefit from joint marketing

JUSTIFICATION: It is important to maximize and leverage the



planning and promotion of related events, while identifying events that may compete against one another. Events need to work together to ensure that resources are not duplicated or conflicted during the promotions leading up to the event and during the day of the event.

JUSTIFICATION: Many of the arts and cultural events that benefit Shepherdstown are held on Shepherd University's campus. The Town and Shepherd University should work closer together to develop spin-off events and activities that strengthen existing and future cultural and arts events and festivals.

1.4 Create a Public Appreciation Campaign

STRATEGY: Launch a local public appreciation campaign in support of the arts and cultural organizations and events.

JUSTIFICATION: An opportunity exists to garner greater support and interest in events and organizations that support the arts and culture within the greater Shepherdstown area.

1.5 Foster Partnerships between the University and the Town

STRATEGY: Identify ways to create synergy among the arts, cultural resources and Shepherd University to help strengthen and grow the creative arts community in Shepherdstown.



Artistic and cultural enterprises and events will play a significant role in the local economy.

2.1 Arts and Culture Improvement Plan

STRATEGY: Develop an action plan to promote the sustainment and growth of artistic and cultural events and businesses in the community.

JUSTIFICATION: The arts and culture have played significant roles in the local economy. However, this a cyclical pattern of short-term success of those business clusters led to higher rents and the demise of their success over time. This action plan is needed to identify impediments and actions needed to sustain the long-term viability and growth of the arts and culture business sectors and events.

2.2 Economic Impact of the Arts and Culture

STRATEGY: Conduct an economic impact analysis of artistic and cultural businesses and events on the community.

JUSTIFICATION: A more firm understanding of the impacts related to arts and cultural businesses and events will help demonstrate the level of existing needs within those business sectors. The analysis will help build greater support and identify resources that are needed to help grow and further develop those sectors of the local economy.



2.3

Expand Local Arts and Cultural Businesses

STRATEGY: Set realistic goals for the expansion of local art and cultural businesses based on the economic impact from this sector and work to promote its growth to meet those goals.

JUSTIFICATION: Once the impacts and actions needed to sustain and grow the arts and cultural business sectors have been identified, clear actions are needed to begin implementation.

2.4

Develop Arts and Cultural Based Business Incentives

STRATEGY: Consider the development of an incentive based strategy to reinvigorate and return the artisan and craft sectors to the local economy.

JUSTIFICATION: After identifying impediments to the sustainment and growth of arts and cultural businesses, incentives should be developed that help businesses in that sector overcome those obstacles to ensure those sectors of the economy are preserved to maintain the quality of life that is expected in Shepherdstown.

2.5

Identify Redevelopment Sites/Areas

STRATEGY: Consider sites and areas for redevelopment that can utilize arts and cultural based businesses, activities and initiatives as the drivers of change and improvements.

JUSTIFICATION: This strategy can help accomplish multiple planning objectives by revitalizing sites and areas of town with desired arts and culture related businesses.