



Macon Arts Alliance 2025 Strategic Plan

Approved July 23, 2020

Macon Arts Alliance offers sincere thanks to the board, staff, volunteers, external stakeholders, and community members who participated in the creation of this 5-year strategic plan.

Mission Statement

Macon Arts Alliance fosters support for the advancement of arts and culture in Central Georgia. We strive to be an innovative leader of a thriving regional arts community. We value strategic partnerships that strengthen the diversity and vibrancy of arts and culture for tourists, residents, artists, businesses, and civic organizations.

History and Vision

Macon Arts Alliance was founded in 1984 when a Chamber of Commerce Task Force recognized that a coordinated arts community would serve as a catalyst for cultural vibrancy in the area. In 1988, Macon Arts Alliance was designated the official arts agency for the City of Macon and Bibb County. In 2014, the newly consolidated Macon-Bibb County government reaffirmed the designation at its first official meeting. In 2019, municipal funding for Macon Arts Alliance (8% of our current operating budget) was moved from the General Fund to the Macon-Bibb Hotel/Motel Occupancy tax.

Beginning in March 2019, Macon Arts Alliance, through its leadership role in developing the 2020 Cultural Plan for Macon, participated in a series of events to engage the public in a discussion regarding how arts and culture can best serve the community. The year-long process included on-site visits, grass-roots conversations, interviews with community leaders, surveys, and research* of best practices in similar cities. Key findings from that process led to the development of 5 strategic priorities: Tourism, Education, Creative Industries, Neighborhood Development and Audience Development.

2020 proved to be a pivotal year. The COVID-19 global pandemic has and will continue to cause financial hardship for some time to come. Artists and arts and cultural institutions have been especially hard hit. Macon Arts Alliance has the opportunity to serve as a leader in channeling resources and guiding support as we move through the crisis. Racial inequity has also come to the forefront as a national priority that needs to be addressed. Macon Arts Alliance believes that arts and culture can play a pivotal role in uniting our community by promoting dialogue, understanding, and collaboration.

Macon Arts Alliance will have to continue to be collaborative, visible, innovative, fiscally responsible, and community-minded to remain sustainable.

Core Values

Macon Arts Alliance uses the following values to guide decisions and move the organization forward:

Collaboration * Community-Mindedness * Continuous Learning
Diversity * Innovation * Responsible Leadership

¹ Research was conducted by the global cultural consulting firm Lord Cultural Resources.

Strategic Priorities

Based on community feedback from 45 interviews with community leaders, 929 survey respondents, 100+ attendees at the initial call for response, and 75 community conversations held around the county (engaging all zip codes in some fashion), Macon Arts Alliance adopts the following strategic priorities:

- **Tourism:** Brand Macon as a vibrant, innovative, and creative destination
- **Education:** Ensure access for all to quality formal and informal arts education
- **Creative Industries:** Encourage innovation, creative enterprise, and entrepreneurship for artists at all career levels
- **Neighborhood Development:** Ensure social equity by helping Macon’s many neighborhoods develop their distinctive identities
- **Audience Development:** Engage and develop new and existing audiences for Macon’s cultural sector

Priority	Goal	Initiatives and Opportunities
Tourism	Brand Macon as a vibrant, innovative, and creative destination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Market events to a broad audience using Macon365 2. Advocate for the use of art to improve the aesthetic quality of public buildings, streetscapes, and open spaces 3. Work with community partners to explore leveraging Macon’s music history and talent 4. Market Fired Works and the Gallery to a regional audience
Education	Ensure access for all to quality formal and informal arts education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with the Bibb County School District and Macon-Bibb Parks and Recreation to foster educational opportunities for all ages 2. Use non-traditional methods to create opportunities for creative self-expression to those who lack access to arts programming
Creative Industries	Encourage innovation, creative enterprise, and entrepreneurship for artists at all career levels	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify availability and affordability of work/living space for artists and creative entrepreneurs 2. Advocate for fair compensation practices for artists of all disciplines 3. Advocate on the local, state, and national level for arts friendly policies and legislation 4. Establish curatorial services for local businesses 5. Encourage networking among the creative community 6. Maintain and grow the Creative Relief Fund to assist artists in financial distress
Neighborhood Development	Ensure social equity by helping Macon’s many neighborhoods develop their distinctive identities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify key impediments to accessing arts and cultural programming 2. Maintain and grow the Cultural Asset Map 3. Encourage neighborhoods to identify and celebrate their cultural identity 4. Encourage neighborhood Public Art that documents living history
Audience Development	Engage and develop new and existing audiences for	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure arts marketing efforts reflect diversity to promote inclusion

	Macon's cultural sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Expand and grow Macon365 as the community calendar3. Create a knowledge campaign about the power of the arts4. Create a data-driven integrated system to track audience trends across the community
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Conclusion

Macon Arts Alliance believes that arts and culture should be embedded in all sectors of the community, including health, education, law enforcement, government, business, housing, transportation, human services, sports, and others. By leveraging the power of creativity, we can help to unite our community by building relationships, fostering economic growth, and encouraging cultural connections throughout Central Georgia.