



Creative Economy Task Force Report

Submitted by the New Bedford Economic
Development Council

Katherine Knowles, Task Force Chair

To Scott W. Lang, Mayor
City of New Bedford

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February 2008

Report of the NBEDC Creative Economy Task Force

February 2008

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NEW BEDFORD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

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Uniting New Bedford's economic strengths

March 18, 2008

Scott W. Lang
Mayor, City of New Bedford
City Hall
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

Dear Mayor,

At its recent meeting, the Board of Directors concurred that the final report and recommendations for the city's Creative Economy be forwarded to you for your review, comment and action. The recommendations are the result of more than six months' work by the 60-member NBEDC Creative Economy Task Force.

The Board believes one specific recommendation of the many stands out in significance. It is #5 which states: "Employing a self-motivated city staff member with experience in the arts who would report to the Mayor's Office or the EDC to coordinate activities and build bridges".

Therefore, the Board concurred that:

1. A Creative Economy leadership position would be better placed within the NBEDC. The Board recognized that, at first, the creative economy program should not function within its own 501c3 organization, but may do so in the future.
2. The governance of the position should be structured within the existing staff of the NBEDC under the direction of the Executive Director.
3. The NBEDC would seek to fund the position from a combination of Community Development funds should the Mayor agree and through private grants.
4. The Board will consider future ways the position may become self-sustaining.
5. The NBEDC staff will thoroughly research existing models of job descriptions and qualifications for professional creative economy positions.

Attached please find a list of those who participated in the Task Force activities and a complete list of their recommendations. Also, enclosed for your reference are a compilation of memos, agenda and reports that document the group's activities, and under separate cover, background materials from other cities and regions.

On behalf of Katherine Knowles, Chair of the Task Force, and the Board of Directors, I respectfully submit these recommendations for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Matthew A. Morrissey
Executive Director

cc: Anthony Sapienza, President, NBEDC
Katherine Knowles, Chair, Creative Economy Task Force



Overview: Creative Economy Task Force Summary February 14, 2008

At a retreat in September 2007 the Task Force developed a roadmap which is shown in the attached figure. The roadmap consists of 17 barriers which were selected as high priority considerations from a list of 54 barriers that were collected and reviewed by the task force.

The Task Force organized itself in to small groups to identify immediate actions. One of these actions was the decision to examine eight aspirant cities and planning document to identify best practices. The aspirant city interviews were conducted from November through January.

Based upon investigations of approaches that have been successful in eight aspirant cities, the Task Force collectively identified and aggregated list of 51 best practices.

On February 14th, the task force assembled to identify highly preferred best practices and align those practices with the barriers in the roadmap. Twenty best practices which are aligned against the barriers in the road map suggest recommendations for the City. This overlay is shown in the attached figure.

The roadmap contains three of the highly influential barriers in the roadmap. Four best practices were judged to significantly address all three highly influential barriers: planning, engaging stakeholders, and communications. The rank list of these four practices are:

1. Complete a citywide master plan that maps assets and threats to the creative economy (option 10)[10];
2. Use neutral planning professions to assure plans have a neutral agenda (option 15)[10];
3. Establish a city-funded umbrella entity to advance creative economy (option 28)[5]; and
4. Create a citywide economic plan that includes the creative economy (option 7)[3]

In response to the roadmap need for a plan and effective leadership to implement that plan, the task force recommended:

5. Employing a self-motivated city staff member with experience in the arts who would report to the Mayor's Office of the EDC to coordinate activities and build bridges (option 3) [12].

In response to the need to engage all sectors of the community, the task force recommended:

6. Creating strong partnerships linking existing entities (option 43) [3] and
7. Supporting charettes that provide a means of community participation (option 6)[1].

And in response to the need for coordination and communication between various creative economy stakeholders, the task force recommended

8. Forging strong partnerships among institutions (the city, Schools, businesses, chamber of commerce, non-profit organizations, etc.) (option 42)[10] and
9. Fostering greater collaboration (option 39)[2].

Best practices which significantly addressed the highly influential roadmap barriers of planning, engaging stakeholders, and communications were recognized as also influencing all other significant barriers in the roadmap.

The task force proposed a specific best practice of

10. Strengthening university partnerships through shuttle and public transportation for students (option 3)[3] as a means of addressing the barrier of a lack of City infrastructure for transportation.

And the task force recommended an action item of

11. Partnering with higher education to keep graduates in the region (option 24)[3] as a means of addressing the need to create a pipeline of future leadership for the creative economy.

The most strongly preferred action item selected by the task force involved

12. Funding promotion and marketing of New Bedford to transform the City's image for both tourists and residents (option 5)[13].

This best practice was felt to address a roadmap need for a common brand and also to address the needs of a set of roadmap barriers related to positioning the city for growth of the creative economy sector (see below).

The task force identified two additional preferred best practices directed at the barrier of the City's brand image:

13. Renaming/promoting the city's downtown overlay district as an "arts overlay district" (option 17)[3] and
14. Increasing funds to market the city internally and externally (option 21)[6].

A set of five barriers were mapped by the task force as being mutually influenced by all of the other barriers in the roadmap. This set of barriers includes: lack of incentives to attract creative sector; perception that the City isn't a here-and-now economy; perception that the City is not "the place to be;" financial challenges of nonprofit organizations serving the creative economy; and a need to sell the City on a national/global scale on the basis of housing, incentives, and the arts. In the judgment of the task force, this set of barriers would be addressed by

15. Advocating for an uncapped state historic preservation tax credit for Massachusetts gateway cities (option 1)[9]
16. Increasing internal and external marketing (option 5)[3],
17. Marketing targeted at national and global companies (options 27)[3],
18. Promoting creative and cultural festivals (option 19)[3], and
19. Aggressively promoting the City's abundant and affordable mill space and natural setting (option 2)[3].

The task force aggregated three best practices related:

20. Supporting a unified, annual citywide internal and regional cultural festival for national promotion that included Summerfest and the Working Waterfront Festival (option 4, option 49 and option 50) [3].

In addition to the best practices that were identified as strongly preferred by the task force, individual task force members indicated their desire to offer best practices for consideration and for inclusion as an appendix for the group recommendation.

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Uniting New Bedford's economic strengths

September 2007

As you are aware, over the last several months, there have been significant developments in the area of the creative economy that position us to better understand and sustain this important sub-sector of our economy in New Bedford, including:

- The Lang Administration has done a substantial assessment of other communities' creative economies through a grant received from the Massachusetts Cultural Council.
- The Mayor has appointed a new Tourism Director, Ann Marie Lopes, and assigned Deborah Hynes from the Tourism Office, as the city's Creative Economy Coordinator. Both understand the value and importance of creativity in the overall economic development strategy of the city.
- The Community Foundation has for the last year facilitated a discussion about building the financial foundations of creative institutions.

Over the last several months, several Economic Development Council board members have asked that we explore ways to focus more of the business community's efforts on assisting in the growth of the creative economy.

In response, the NBEDC has established a Task Force that will be chaired by Executive Committee member Katherine Knowles, staffed by Deborah Hynes, and the NBEDC staff.

I write today to invite you to serve on this Task Force.

The goals of the Task Force are:

- To create a common and inclusive definition of the creative economy;
- To define the economic impact of all sectors of the creative economy within the city;
- To define the broader impact of the creative economy in several areas (Economic Development, Tourism, Quality of Life);
- To explore and define the ways peer cities have utilized the creative economy in the above areas; and
- To make policy recommendations to the Mayor on how to best leverage, build and sustain the creative economy in New Bedford within the context of other economic development initiatives.

We envision this will be a three-month process, with Task Force meetings possibly occurring bi-weekly. During that time, the NBEDC will support the Creative Economy Task Force in the following specific ways:

First, we will host a creative economic "road mapping" project to collect input from the community to define the creative economy and to identify players and opportunities that exist, or should exist, in order to grow the sector. This project will be managed through a collaborative program designed by the Community Foundation at a one and one-half day retreat session planned for September 11th and 12th, 2007.

Secondly, and also with continued participation from the Community Foundation's collaborative design program, we will provide the Task Force with additional perspectives on the city's creative economy, including:

- A high-level economic assessment of the dollar value of the creative economy in New Bedford performed by HR&A, one of the nation's leading economic assessment firms operating out of offices based in Manhattan; and
- A management assessment of the creative economy in the SouthCoast led by Dr. Eileen Peacock, Dean of the Charlton College of Business, UMass Dartmouth..

Third, we will support the Task Force in any way we can – hosting further meetings and gatherings, planning, and communicating planning efforts with the community.

This is a vibrant and important effort with far reaching impact which we expect will begin to surface rapidly. Your participation and good will is vital to the success of this effort. We will follow up with you by phone shortly.

Sincerely,



Tony Sapienza,
President, New Bedford Economic Development Council
President, Joseph Abboud Manufacturing

CC:

Scott W. Lang, Mayor, City of New Bedford
Matthew A. Morrissey, Executive Director, NBEDC
Ann Marie Lopes, Director City of New Bedford Office of Tourism and Marketing
Deborah Hynes, Creative Economy Coordinator, Office of Tourism

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CREATIVE ECONOMY TASK FORCE

Nia	Barros	Chairperson	CEDC of S.E. MA., Inc.
Celia	Britto		Redevelopment Authority
Dr. William	Cooper	Superintendent	Old Rochester Regional Schools District
Len	Coriaty	Executive Director	Workforce Investment Board
Dan	Costa	Treasurer	CEDC of S.E. MA., Inc.
Carl J.	Cruz	Assistant Chief Probation Officer	Bristol County Probate Court
Pat	Daughton	Partner Liaison	AHA!
Craig	Dutra	Staff	
Julie	Early		
Chris	Fallon		
John J.	Feitelberg	President and CEO	HUB International Feitelberg
Kate	Fentress		
John	Fernandes		The Greater Southeastern Massachusetts Labor Council
David J.	Ferreira		Massachusetts Association of Vocational Administrators
Jenny	Fialho		BCP Bank
Tom	Flannagan	Consultant	SouthCoast Community Collaborative Design Studio
Barbie	Foster	Board Member	Butonwoo Park Zoo
Brenda	Francis		New Directions
Nicholas	Francis		Francis Photography
David	Freitas		BAE Systems
Jane	Friedman		Assistant Solicitor, City of New Bedford
Freddie	Fuentes	Assistant Superintendent for Equity and Diversity,	New Bedford Public Schools
Stephen	Fulchino	Director	New Bedford Library
Dennis	Galvam		NSTAR, Vice President
Richard	Gamache		Julius Koch
Nilsa	Garcia-Rey	Executive Director	GALLERY X, Inc.
Seth	Garfield	Vice President	Cuttyhunk Shellfish
Ben	Gilbarg		
Jeff	Glassman		President, Darn It!
Rob	Gould	President	Café Arpeggio
Barbara	Grunkemeyer	Consultant	New Bedford Economic Development Council, Inc.
Angappa	Gunasekaran	Assistant Professor, Dept of Decision and Information Sciences,	Charlton School of Business, UMass Dartmouth
William	Hall		Mar-Lees Seafood
Sister Kathleen	Harrington	Executive Director	John Boyd Child care Center
Jennifer	Hausladen	Board Member	Butonwoo Park Zoo
Brian	Hawes		Business Bulletin
Peter	Hawes	President	WHALE
Lee	Heald	Interim Director	AHA!
Jim	Henry	Treasurer	Redevelopment Authority
Mark	Hess	Project Manager	Halkeen
Nelson	Hockert-Lotz		
Tony	Kopaczewski	President	South End Business Association

Tom	Lyons	Co-Chair	SouthCoast Development Partnership
Jean	MacCormack	Chancellor	UMass Dartmouth
Roseanne	Medeiros	Board Chairman	North End Business Association
Jennifer	Menard	Executive Director	SouthCoast Development Partnership
Donna	Motta	Executive Director,	Downtown New Bedford, Inc.
Peter	Muise	Chairman	NB Area Chamber of Commerce
Roy	Nascimento	President	NB Area Chamber of Commerce
Donna	O'Conner		Small Business Association
Laura	Orleans	Director	Working Waterfront
Kevin T.	Pelland	Chairman	Downtown New Bedford, Inc.
Roger	Race		Brooke Ocean Technology, USA
Carl	Ribeiro	Chairman	Greater NB Industrial Foundation
Lisa	Schmid Alvord		
Charles	Simpson	Chairman	Workforce Investment Board
John	Sinnott	Senior Development Director	Struever, Brothers Eccles and Rouse
Desa	VanLaarhoven		Marion Institute
Corinn	Williams	Executive Director	CEDC of S.E. MA., Inc.
Jill	MacLean	Assistant City Planner	City of New Bedford

**Creative Economy
September 11 – 12, 2007
Summary of Action Plan / Next Steps**

Lack of plan and effective leadership to implement the plan

Design and manage a plan to address the barriers in the road map with specific goals and a timeline.

Identify resources: roles and responsibilities with clear lines of leadership; develop timelines; coordinate all tasks and resources of each project within the timeline.

Set up regular monitoring of progress of all projects among leaders. Hold quarterly meetings to assess progress.

Implement the plan - leaders of community, civic and business organizations embrace the creative economy as a key objective in their own strategic planning and operations.

Support and staff communication, meetings and events (NBEDC)

Lack of coordination and communication between various creative economy stakeholders.

Identify stakeholders.

Ask committee members for names and contact info of anyone who may be interested or who should be invited.

Create a "What Is Creative Economy in New Bedford" orientation package: (what is the Creative Economy; how important is it; what will they be asked to do; what time commitment is involved, progress to date, etc.)

Send invitation to new possible members to the Creative Economy committee (task force) with an orientation package and current list of committee members.

Regularly update members on progress to date.

Invite newest members to the next quarterly meetings for discussions through the "road map" or similar process.

Engage all sectors and groups in the planning process including ethnic groups, class, business and nonprofit.

Define the planning process

Design a major orientation/planning charette to include a wider group

Develop a list of specific types of organizations and groups to contact; including contact name and info

Contact (reach out) via email, phone or mail with invitation/overview (personal contact from a committee member most effective)

Send a more detailed orientation package (NBEDC)

Organize and present an orientation/planning charette early 2008

Make the harbor tourist and resident[s] friendly with restaurants and mixed use

Engage the Harbor Development Commission in the planning and implementation of Creative Economy strategies and activities.

Meet with restaurant owners about their special role in the creative economy

Lack of city infrastructure that focuses on pathways, parks, and the transportation around the city

Lack of serious investment and reform of educational institutions and programs that reflect a knowledge based economy education

The need to create a pipeline of leadership development of youth to keep the creative economy going in the future

The DNA of creative economy is mapped onto the K-12 curriculum instruction and assessment beginning

Sell the City to the national/global creative sector through available housing stock, tax incentives, and promotion of the arts

Challenges to arts and culture nonprofit business sustainability, specifically financial sustainability

Overcoming the perception that New Bedford is a blighted community rather than "it's the place to be"

Perceptual issues that the city is really branded as a "here and now" economy

Lack if incentives to attract the creative sector

Lack of a common brand

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Uniting New Bedford's economic strengths

October 12, 2007

Dear Member of the Creative Economy Task Force,
Thank you for joining the effort to design our approach for supporting the creative economy in New Bedford. As Mayor Lang stated at the meeting, our charge over the next few months, is to develop recommendations that will help the city better support and underpin its creative economy initiative.

It is the pairing of the cultural, ethnic and arts communities with the businesses based in creative economic development that will ensure a bright future for our city and attract external populations, companies, tourists and residents. We believe that this aspect of the city's life must be an integral part of the city's larger economic and social agenda.

Reaching consensus on complex issues is not easy, but over a day and a half we have come some distance. Together, we have affirmed that we must draw upon additional voices as we develop a comprehensive plan, identify leadership and frame a structure to implement the plan.

While many of us may have individually held similar views about some of the things we must do to move forward, far more important is our collective agreement on where to start. This is a big step forward.

To build upon our work and to sustain our momentum we are scheduling our next meeting. The date and time proposed are Tuesday, October 30 from 9 am to 12 noon at the New Bedford Economic Development Council office, 1213 Purchase Street, New Bedford. Please let us know of your availability as soon as possible.

At this three-hour meeting we will review our progress; expand participation in the planning process to those who are integral to linking the creative economy to citywide economic development; establish subcommittees; milestones and timelines; and prepare initial recommendations for Mayor Lang.

One action item from our past meeting is to reach deeper into and across the city. Please send us your list of individuals, to be interviewed and invited into the task force process. We currently have a list of 40 names representing a host of diverse interests, but we want more. Please send those names, with email addresses, as soon as possible to Deirdre Jarvis at the NBEDC djarvis@nbedc.org

Finally, we have begun to collect data from other communities about how they are building their creative economies and the impact of those efforts. To expand this understanding, we are reaching out to other economic and community development offices with the hope of scheduling site visits to various aspirant cities. We need to decide how our task force will participate. Again, this effort speaks to our need to organize our subcommittees. Our next meeting will move us to a higher level of action.

We hope you are able to join us for this important meeting as we move forward in our efforts. Please RSVP to Deirdre Jarvis at 508.991.3122 x10, djarvis@nbedc.org.

All the best,
Katherine Knowles
Creative Economy Task Force Chair



AGENDA

Creative Economy Task Force
New Bedford Economic Development Council
October 30, 2007
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Quest Center

1. Welcome

Katherine Knowles, Chair

A. Purpose and overview

2. Review of Findings from September 11 & 12 Meeting

Tom Flanagan, Facilitator
(Handout)

Main Problems & Main Solutions

A. Planning and Implementation

B. Coordination/Communication

C. Engaging All Sectors

3. Discussion and Action Plan

Matthew Morrissey, NBEDC Executive Director
(Handout)

A. Engagement of as broad a population as possible

B. External Assessment – Aspirant Cities

C. Internal Assessment- City of New Bedford

4. Wrap up

Katherine Knowles, Chair

A. Summary of Discussion and confirmation of upcoming activities



Timeline and Action Agenda
Draft for Discussion
Creative Economy Task Force
New Bedford Economic Development Council
October 30, 2007
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Quest Center

Timeline:

Today, October 30: *Meeting to agree on action agenda and timeline*

- Agree on summary of the retreat
- Agree on 1. Engagement, 2. External information gathering and 3. Internal information gathering
- Agree on How to enhance engagement of more people
 - A Sub-committee will identify a list of individuals interested in the CE, including general businesses, restaurants, retailers, developers, ethnic groups, youth groups, visual artists, galleries, museums, music shops and instructors, art education, international import/export business.....
- Agree on the cities to study (number could be more than 5)
- Agree on which cities to visit (number should not exceed 5)
- Agree on the number of groups and each persons top three preferences (on 5 x 8 cards)
- Agree on the type of reporting:
 - NBEDC staff identify questions to consider while reading and use as a guide during site visits and report to chair
 - Chairs of each group meet to assimilate findings in a matrix developed by NBEDC staff for presentation to the whole group
- Agree on general timeline of activity, including the next meeting time December 15 9-11 at the NBEDC

November 1-December 14: *Work of the task force*

- Staff obtains all necessary preliminary information on cities creative economy (and other relevant material) and disseminates to the task force (On NBEDC website)
- Staff schedules site visits
- Sub committees analyze city documentation and site visits take place
- Either interviews, or focus groups are initiated
- The City's CE economic impact data is gathered and analyzed
- The City's CE assets are cataloged

December 18: *Full task force meeting*

- Presentation of additional perspectives on the creative economy
- Subcommittee presentations by city
- NBEDC Preliminary presentation of economic impact of the creative economy

December 17-January 7: *Develop working draft of recommendations*

- Staff will assimilate a working draft of the recommendation from the presentations and information gathered from sub committees on Engagement, and internal and external review.
- The assimilation will be sent to the full task force for review and comment

January 6: *Full Task force review of the working draft of recommendations*

- The full task force will come together for a full discussion about the draft recommendations

January 15: *Public Presentation of Draft of recommendations*

- The full task force will advertise and present at an open meeting the recommendations to the public at large. Particular effort will be made by the task force to have broad representation at this meeting

January 16-30: *Inclusion of Public comments of recommendations*

- Staff will augment the recommendations as appropriate and send the draft document to the Full Task force for review

January 30: *Full Task force final review*

- The full task force comes together for a final review of the recommendations before they are submitted to the Mayor

January 31: *Final recommendations are submitted to the Mayor*

Action Agenda:

A. Sub Committee on Engagement:

Members: Ann Marie Lopes, Keri Cox, Karie Vincente, Deb Hynes, Celeste Bernado, Laura Orleans

1. Discussion will take place around how best to ensure the broadest possible input
2. Phone calls and interviews
3. Focus groups by areas of affinity
4. Other

B. Sub Committee(s) on External Information gathering:

1. Define the small cities (Portland ME, Portsmouth NH, Providence RI, Lowell, MA, Pittsfield/North Adams/Berkshires).
2. Review cities' CE planning material, visit the city and ask questions, and present of the city's best practices we might emulate back to the larger group.
3. Assemble small teams to review plans of other cities (Baltimore, MD; Paduca, KY; Charlotte, NC; Worcester, MA).
4. Each person stated top three preferences; to be synthesized by NBEDC staff (we will get back to each with date, the city, and material on the city).
5. A separate area on our web site will contain all relevant material and planning documents, divided by city for you to review in advance.
6. Committee members will review the material using questions formulated by the NBEDC as a guide for preparation for the site visit and ultimately for reporting out to the larger group on findings and recommendations.

C. Committee of the whole on Internal Information gathering:

1. The staff will pull together material (through contact with many of you) over the next month on the catalog of CE in NB
2. The NBEDC is working with HR&A Advisors on a broad economic development strategy and assessment. Over the next month they will look at the economic impact of the creative economy in NB.



AGENDA

Creative Economy Task Force
New Bedford Economic Development Council
January 24, 2008
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Quest Center

5. Welcome

Tony Sapienza, President, NBEDC and President & COO Joseph Abboud Mfg.

6. Meeting Overview and Expectations

Katherine Knowles,

NBEDC Board of Directors member, and Chair, Creative Economy Task Force

Matthew Morrissey, Executive Director, NBEDC

7. Aspirant City Presentations

Portsmouth	Sally Sapienza, Independent Curator
Providence	Derek Santos, Director of Business Development, NBEDC
Pawtucket	Jill Maclean, Assistant City Planner, City of New Bedford
Pittsfield	Keri Cox, Owner, MediumStudio
North/Adams	Hank Mastey, Director, Mass Cultural Council
Worcester	Deborah Hynes, Creative Economy Coordinator, City of NB
Lowell	Andrew Simpson, Sales Director, Riversand Technologies
Portland	Kathryn Duff, Architect

8. Discussion

Craig Dutra, Community Foundation, Facilitator

9. Wrap up

Katherine Knowles

Matthew Morrissey

Aspirant City Site Visits Report Summary

The Creative Economy Task Force met on October 30th and concluded that assessing what other cities have done would be critical to making relevant recommendations to the Mayor. It was agreed that the process will benefit from researching and learning the best practices of cities identified as having characteristics similar to New Bedford. The task force agreed to research and visit eight cities; Providence, Pawtucket, Lowell, Portland, Portsmouth, Pittsfield, North Adams, and Worcester. Relevant background documents were gathered and made available on the NBEDC website for reference.

All visits took place during a four week period from mid-November to mid-December, were attended by twenty one members of the task force, and were staffed and coordinated by the NBEDC. We met with a total of fifty six host city representatives including seven economic development directors, two city managers and four mayors, and of course many fantastic artists.

This report outlines the findings of each task force visiting team, including the results of follow meetings held during in mid-January to focus on key discussion points for the full task force. These discussion items are meant to serve as a jumping-off points a discussion to formulate the recommendations and strategies that the task force will present to Mayor Lang for consideration and implementation.

Providence, RI
November 15, 2007

Population

170,435 (US Census, 2006 American Community Survey Data)

Government Structure

Strong mayoral form of government elected every 4 years.

Who We Met

Thom Dellar, Director of Planning & Development
Dan Baudouin, Providence Foundation
Clay Rockerfeller, Steelyard
Umberto (Bert) Creca, AS220
Donald W. King, Artistic Director PBRC

Visiting Team

John Sinnott
Liz Isherwood
Deborah Hynes
Catherine Rollins
Matthew Morrissey
Derek Santos

Agenda

Meeting Location: Struever Bros., Eccles & Rousse
Rising Sun Mills
Bldg. 6
166 Valley Street, Suite 103
Providence, RI

10:00am: Mr. John Sinnott will take the group through renovated mill spaces in the morning

12:00pm: Lunch discussion with City officials to discuss Providence's Creative Economy

1:00pm: Conclude Visit and depart for Pawtucket, RI

Visiting Team Day Trip Report

Providence, RI
November 15, 2007

General Observations

- The Arts Community in Providence has a more than twenty year history of being proactive force to change city. Bert Creca of AS220 has been a driving force and an iconic leader for the artist community since the beginning, and remains to this day.
- The uncapped state historic preservation tax credit has proven an effective tool for mill revitalization projects. Without this incentive many of these projects would not be possible.

- Providence had a long history of a strong Mayor who placed a high value (regardless of motivation) on a successful arts and culture environment
- Creative economy is defined broadly and includes technology, research, and design (i.e. architectural) firms in addition to traditionally defined artists.
- Close coordination and communication with city and private entities. Lasting relationships have been built and trust established. "Ties and T-shirts at the same table with mutual respect".
- Strong partnerships with Universities and the private sector was key driver in beginning revitalization more than 20 years ago. The Providence Foundation (private organization similar to the NBEDC) played key role in early development projects.
- Status as the capitol of RI offers unique advantages.
- Major development projects still underway and spreading in areas outside of the downtown, in large part due to uncapped historic preservation tax credits.
- Struever Brothers places a high value on the integration of art into their development projects.
- Development projects apply a mixed use model and use Brownfield sites.
- As expected, Providence has a well staffed Planning and Development Office that fully appreciates and understands the role that the creative economy has and continues to play in the city's growth and development.

What Works Well

- A strong Arts Community in place that looks to established leaders for guidance and advice. New artists and organizations continue to establish themselves but are not seen as a threat from the "old guard".
- The uncapped state historic preservation tax credit.
- The presence of the Universities has been a key factor in revitalization.
- Very good and personal relationships have been established and the city and private sector find ways to work together to solve issues.
- Large scale events are well marketed (i.e. water fire).

What Could be Better

- Some early development projects were too far ahead of the curve and failed originally.
- Some residents still have an inferiority complex about what kind of city Providence is, and the "Renaissance City" has not changed much for them.
- In some cases developers and the city are not in harmony with the Arts Community.
- Success has made it difficult for the City to respond quickly to artist concerns or inquiries for assistance.

What They Do That Could Work for Us

- Advocate for an uncapped state historic preservation tax credit for gateway cities in Massachusetts.
- Make greater efforts to establish effective working relationships between the Arts Community and City officials and departments.
- Make greater efforts to have a greater sense of unity amongst the Arts and Culture Communities.
- Create stronger and more tangible partnerships with the University.
- Strengthen our Planning and Development capacity.
- Strengthen our marketing and promotion (external and internal).

**Visiting Team Follow-Up
Providence, RI
November 15, 2007**

The Top Takeaways

- Rhode Island has an uncapped State Historic Preservation Tax Credit that is a decided advantage for mill rehabilitation projects that have proven to naturally fit well with creative uses.
- Providence has found that empowering artists and giving them a voice and seat at the table has produced better results, realizing that the individual groups needed each other.
- The visiting team was impressed by how the diverse groups work together; partnership now seems natural and the parties include City, private developers, artists, non-profits, and the business community.

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Advocate for an uncapped state historic preservation tax credit for Massachusetts gateway cities.
- Encourage developers of historic mills to proactively partner with cultural/creative groups and organizations such as "Your Theater" as a potential tenants
- Promote and facilitate an effort, led by the City of New Bedford, to bring "t-shirts and ties" together on mutually beneficial projects.
- Proactively take a roll (the City) to ensure that all potential partners, both large and small, are involved and no one is excluded.
- Foster greater collaboration amongst all stakeholders.
- Target developers as a group for outreach and partnership.

**Pawtucket, RI
November 15, 2007**

Population

76,396 (US Census, 2006 American Community Survey Data)

Government Structure

Strong mayoral form of government, elected every 2 years.

Who We Met

Michael Cassidy, Director of Planning
Herbert Weiss, Economic and Cultural Affairs Officer
The Rhode Island Foundation

Visiting Team

Deborah Hynes
Catherine Rollins
Anne Louro
Jill Maclean
Derek Santos

Agenda

Meeting Location: Blackstone Valley NPS Visitor's Center
175 Main Street
Pawtucket, RI

2:00pm: Discussion with City officials
Film by the Rhode Island Foundation followed by open discussion

4:00pm: Conclude Visit

**Visiting Team Day Trip Report
Pawtucket, RI
November 15, 2007**

General Observations

- Pawtucket's close proximity to Providence puts the city at a big advantage at capturing "artist leakage" since space in Pawtucket is easier to locate and less expensive.
- City leaders and staff "get it" in terms of the creative economy, and place a strong emphasis on customer relations, treating all artists as "small business". City staff is well aware that Providence can not always handle the demand and Pawtucket is aggressive in pursuing these artists.
- City has an Economic and Cultural Affairs Officer who works out of the Planning and Development Office. This position serves as the liaison between City government and the artist community.
- The City works very closely with the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council and serves as the headquarters for this entity.
- Pawtucket is similar to New Bedford in that it has a National Park Service presence.
- The uncapped state historic preservation tax credit has proven an effective tool for mill revitalization projects. Without this incentive many mill revitalization projects would not be possible.

- Strong Director of Planning and Development who oversees planning, re-development and economic development. This director fully understands that the creative economy is the key driver for Pawtucket's future growth and development.

What Works Well

- The City Planner "believed in the creative economy before it even had a name" and gained approval and support from the various Mayors and City Councilors over the past twenty years.
- The current Mayor and City Council completely support the city's efforts and resources applied to the creative economy.
- With a limited budget, the City decided to focus their efforts on sustaining one outstanding annual event, which is the Pawtucket Arts Festival, held in their National Park. The City Planner was forward thinking and realized that as the festival grew, it would cost more to stage; rather than asking for a set monetary amount, he asked that 0.01% of the City's annual budget be set aside purely for the festival, ensuring that as the City's budget grew, so would the funding for the festival, which currently costs \$180,000.
- All of the City staff is aware that the Economic and Cultural Affairs Officer is the "go to" person for anything related to the creative economy and all inquiries are automatically funneled through this position (this person is also known to the artists as well, who pass along his name to other artists looking to move to Pawtucket).
- The creative economy is looked upon favorably by the public so much so that a private foundation was formed solely to support the creative economy through various means, including fundraising, loans, marketing, etc. The Foundation supports the artists through the creation of a support network consisting of private donors and business institutions.
- The City is committed to permitting and assisting artists and business owners as efficiently as possible.
- The City maintains a current mill and factory inventory, which the Economic and Cultural Affairs Officer has at the ready to assist artists and entrepreneurs in finding suitable work or living spaces.
- The City pays for and produces a yearly booklet of all the local artists, restaurants, shops, and other creative businesses and distributes these booklets at various locations throughout the city to help promote the creative economy.

What Could be Better

- Downtown architecture not a significant asset.
- Access into city could be improved.

What They Do That Could Work for Us

- A "cultural affairs" staff person who advocates for and serves as liaison to the creative economy, while actively seeking out new enterprises for the city.
- A fixed percentage of the annual budget is set aside for the marketing of the creative economy
- The City could work more closely with the Southeastern Tourism Council.
- A strong Planning and Development Office with foresight and resourcefulness.
- An efficient and effective permitting process at all levels of city government.
- Maintain an up-to-date mill inventory.

**Visiting Team Follow-up
Pawtucket, RI
November 15, 2007**

The Top Takeaways

- Pawtucket officials acknowledge and take advantage of the fact that they are a less expensive option than Providence. The City actively markets their availability of affordable mill space for artists, and other creative businesses.
- The Mayor ensures full cooperation amongst staff and all municipal departments works well together and understand the importance of creative economy projects.
- Pawtucket has a very dedicated municipal staff person (Office of Planning and Development) that is assigned specifically to the creative economy. This person serves as the control point and knows all the staff, artists, developers, creative businesses and is known by them as well. All City departments know to send any "creative" inquiries to this staffer.
- The City of Pawtucket believes that it is to their benefit to support and fund one annual Arts Festival (funded through a fixed percentage of general operating budget), with a focus on the quality of the event, rather than spreading their efforts into various events.

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Embrace and aggressively promote New Bedford's affordability, abundance of mill space, and its appealing location between Boston and Providence.
 - Strive to work as a cohesive and efficient municipal government in order to provide the most effective service to potential developers, artists, etc.
 - Employ and fully fund a full-time City of New Bedford staff person, dedicated to the promotion, marketing, and coordination of creative economy activities.
 - Recognize that New Bedford has many cultural and creative events that have a positive impact on the city and provide a sense of vibrancy.
 - Support any efforts to sustain and strengthen these events because they have the ability to promote New Bedford as a creative, festive and, "cool city" not only to tourists, but to residents as well.
-
- *Something else to consider – there could be an opportunity with South Coast Development Partnership (as a Mayoral priority) specifically for funding of marketing campaigns and additional studies.*

Pittsfield, MA
November 28, 2007

Population

45,793 (2000 US Census)

Government Structure

Strong mayoral form of government, elected every 2 years.

Who We Met

Mayor James Ruberto
Tyler Fairbanks, BEDC
Helena Fruscio, Project Coordinator of Berkshire Creative,
Megan Whilden, Director Pittsfield Cultural Development
David Fleming, Colonial Theatre
Stuart Chase, Berkshire Museum Shop
Peter Dudek, Storefront Artist Project
Crispina French, Crispina Design Workshop
Leslie Ferris, Ferrin Gallery

Visiting Team

Henry Mastey
Keri Cox
Jill Maclean
Joyce Goodman
Linda Johannesen
Derek Santos

Agenda

Meeting Location: Colonial Theatre
Location: 111 South St.
Pittsfield, MA 01201

10:00am: Welcome from Tyler Fairbank and Megan Whilden

Walking Tour of Downtown Pittsfield, guided by Tyler Fairbank, BEDC

Tour Stops: Colonial Theatre, David Fleming
Berkshire Museum Shop, Stuart Chase
Storefront Artist Project, Peter Dudek
Crispina Design Workshop, Crispina French
Ferrin Gallery, Leslie Ferrin

11:30am: Lunch at Burger - To be joined by Mayor James Ruberto
Discussion Topics: Creative Economy Open Discussion

12:30pm: Conclude Visit and depart for North Adams, MA

General Observations

- The Mayor enthusiastically supports the creative economy, even though he publicly admits that he did not understand it in the beginning. He recognizes its' value for the growth and sustainability not only for his city, but for the entire Berkshire

County. The Mayor sees himself as a spokesperson for the creative economy in the region.

- The Berkshire Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) acts as the EDC for all the towns and cities in the Berkshire County, rather than each individual community having their own. The communities recognize that they are stronger collectively since their individual populations are very small.
- *The Berkshire Strategy Project* provides a comprehensive evaluation of the entire regional economy with a baseline of current metrics and a detailed analysis of selected industry clusters; it also contains a prioritization of key areas of focus to increase the competitiveness of the region.
- *The Berkshire Creative Economy Project* focuses on the Creative cluster comprising nonprofit institutions, individual artists and commercial businesses that produce and distribute creative products and services. The Creative Economy Project identifies how the region can leverage its richness of cultural and artistic assets to help grow the regional economy.
- The City departments and local businesses just seem to “get it” and value the creative economy for helping turn around the City’s economy.
- The BEDC released *The Berkshire Blueprint*, an action plan intended to move the regional economy toward increased prosperity that preserves and maintains Berkshire County’s quality of life and markets the Berkshire lifestyle to attract visitors, firms and entrepreneurs.
- The Colonial Theater has been restored and is an anchor in the downtown.
- Berkshire Museum (though closed for renovation) is a tourism draw.
- The population of the Berkshire County is approximately 133,000.
- Linear downtown, with several major routes intersecting it, which creates a feeling that it is not very pedestrian friendly.
- The main street consists of 2-3 story buildings, containing restaurants, a few galleries and shops with residential above.
- The City owns and runs the Berkshire Museum store, which sells popular, unusual and one of a kind gifts.
- There is a noticeable amount of vacant storefronts and there are few establishments off the main street.

What Works Well

- The City Council is supportive of the creative economy and also recognizes its value on the quality of life for the City.
- The City departments play an active role in supporting local businesses by expediting the permitting process and working with business owners to ensure that they have the necessary permits, licenses, etc.
- The City and the region as a whole, have capitalized on all that they have to offer in the form of entertainment and things to do, and market the Berkshire County as a “package”, including Tanglewood, Mass MOCA, the Colonial Theater, as well as, a variety of outdoor activities. They have perfected the art of selling themselves.
- The City has a great visual website full of information for locals and tourists.
- The BEDC funds a “project coordinator” position, which staffs and coordinates the creative economy for all of Berkshire County. This enables the communities, artists, and businesses to market themselves jointly and more cost-effectively than they could as individuals.
- The BEDC has pulled together an impressive amount of marketing materials that they distribute throughout the region.
- The City has taken advantage of neighboring communities being too expensive and has capitalized on making Pittsfield known as the “affordable” place to locate a business in their region.
- The local artists and galleries work energetically with the school system to involve the children in activities that they otherwise would not have contact.

What Could Be Better

- More artists' live/work spaces, as some areas are too expensive for artists to afford.
- Improve the streetscape of the main street as its current state is concrete sidewalks with little embellishment. The sidewalks are quite wide and would be able to support outdoor cafes, vendors, and events.
- Pittsfield has limited access to other major cities in the State and this is somewhat of a drawback.
- There are still many vacant storefronts on their main street.

What They Do That Could Work for Us

- Greater buy-in and support from City government.
- A full-time project coordinator for the creative economy.
- Develop plans, using the Berkshire Strategy Project, Blueprint and Creative Economy as guides.
- In order to attract business, tourism, homeowners, etc., we have to begin to financially support the marketing of the city and all of its assets.
- New Bedford could take advantage of its lower cost-of-living in comparison to neighboring communities.
- Streamline and expedite the permitting process.
- Create a more informative, in depth, engaging city website.

Follow-up

The Top Takeaways

- Pittsfield, and the Berkshire County, strongly believe in the staffing a full-time, fully funded "creative economy director" with the funding potentially coming from the Massachusetts Cultural Council.
- The Mayor of Pittsfield fully supports and actively promotes the creative economy as a way to engage and promote a broader business community. The creative economy is a way to express how proud they are of their City.
- The cities and towns in the Berkshire County work collectively to promote the creative economy because they realize the value added by acting as a collaborative.
- The marketing the creative economy "took the pit out of Pittsfield". The Berkshire EDC invests dollars into creating and distributing good marketing materials. Pittsfield changed their permitting, zoning and parking requirements in their downtown to promote and accommodate artist live/work spaces.
- Developed Berkshire Blueprint – a complete countywide evaluation of their economy (their economic and planning document), with a heavy emphasis on marketing and planning. The creative economy is called the "creative cluster" and is given equal weight with other development sectors i.e. manufacturing, hospitality.

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Explore the MCC funding procedures to ensure that the potential funding of a creative economy position would not be competing with other organizations.
- Promote creative businesses and recognize the value that they bring to the quality of life in our city, with the lead taken up by the City of New Bedford.
- Become a leader in southeastern MA by the City bringing together a regional collaboration of communities from Westport to Wareham while at the same time promoting collaboration amongst all of New Bedford.
- Invest more funding to better market the city to ourselves and others.
- Promote our downtown zoning, which allows for artist live/work space, and actively seek out creative businesses.

North Adams, MA
November 28, 2007

Population

14,681 (2000 US Census)

Government Structure

Strong mayoral form of government, elected every 2 years.

Who We Met

Mayor Barrett
Katherine Myers, Mass MOCA
Helena Fruscio, Project Coordinator BEDC
Rod Bunt, Director of Tourism and Cultural Development
Sharon and Ed Carson, Eclipse Mills

Visiting Team

Henry Mastey
Keri Cox
Jill Maclean
Joyce Goodman
Linda Johannesen
Derek Santos

Agenda

Meeting Location: Mass MOCA

1:00pm: Discussion with Mayor Barrett
Discussion Topic: Government's Role in the Creative Economy

1:30pm: Tour Mass MOCA
Guided by: Katherine Myers

2:00pm: Trolley Tour:
Guided by: Helena Fruscio, Project Coordinator BEDC
Rod Bunt, Director of Tourism and Cultural Development

Tour Stops: Eclipse Mills, Sharon and Ed Carson

3:00pm: Conclude Visit

General Observations

- Mass MOCA (Museum of Contemporary Art) is located in the former Sprague Mills complex.
- The Mayor enthusiastically supports the creative economy, sees himself as a spokesperson for the creative economy in the region and credits himself with achieving the opening of Mass MOCA.
- The Mayor is very supportive of the arts program in their school system and works aggressively with MOCA to bring the children there at least one day a year.
- The Mayor feels strongly that there should be activities and opportunities available to all citizens, whether it is arts, culture, athletics, etc.
- The Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (formerly North Adams State College) is located in the city.

- North Adams is an old mill town that had its economy hit incredibly hard during the 1980's.
- North Adams is a blue-collar city with the longest serving mayor in State history with almost 25 years of consecutive service.
- The population is approximately 15,000, while the population of Berkshire County is approximately 133,000.
- The Berkshire Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) acts as the EDC for all the towns and cities in the Berkshire County, rather than each individual community having their own. The communities recognize that they are stronger collectively since their individual populations are very small.
- The BEDC released *The Berkshire Blueprint*, an action plan intended to move the regional economy toward increased prosperity that preserves and maintains Berkshire County's quality of life and markets the Berkshire lifestyle to attract visitors, firms and entrepreneurs.
- *The Berkshire Strategy Project* provides a comprehensive evaluation of the entire regional economy with a baseline of current metrics and a detailed analysis of selected industry clusters; it also contains a prioritization of key areas of focus to increase the competitiveness of the region.
- *The Berkshire Creative Economy Project* focuses on the Creative cluster comprising nonprofit institutions, individual artists and commercial businesses that produce and distribute creative products and services. The Creative Economy Project identifies how the region can leverage its richness of cultural and artistic assets to help grow the regional economy.
- The BEDC funds a "project coordinator" position, which staffs and coordinates the creative economy for all of Berkshire County. This enables the communities, artists, and businesses to market themselves jointly and more cost-effectively than they could as individuals.
- North Adams Regional Hospital is also located in the city.
- Mount Greylock State Reservation, located within the city limits, is the highest point in Massachusetts and the first state park.

What Works Well

- The City and the region as a whole, have capitalized on all that they have to offer in the form of entertainment and things to do, and market the Berkshire County as a "package", including Tanglewood, Mass MOCA, the Colonial Theater, as well as, a variety of outdoor activities. They have perfected the art of selling themselves.
- The BEDC has pulled together an impressive amount of marketing materials that they distribute throughout the region.
- The local artists work energetically with the school system to involve the children in activities that they otherwise would not have contact.
- There is an active network of creative artists and entrepreneurs who work closely with the Project Coordinator of BEDC

What Could Be Better

- North Adams has limited access to other major cities in the State and this is somewhat of a drawback.
- The City continues to battle their population loss, which began in the 80's with the recession.
- The City has a high dropout rate among high school students.
- The City continues to fight their image of a poor, underclass, high crime, post industrial city.

What They Do That Could Work for Us

- Achieve greater buy-in and support from City government for the creative economy.
- Have a full-time project coordinator for the creative economy.

- Develop plans, using the Berkshire Strategy Project, Blueprint and Creative Economy as guides.

Follow-up

The Top Takeaways

- Development of Mass MOCA, driven by a strong mayor, with the Mayor understanding that the creative economy was their only saving grace for the City.
- The reaction and perception of the bad economy in the 1980's was so devastating to the city that it led to the hospital and university changing their names to remove "North Adams" and any perceived connection.
- Strong emphasis on the relationship between k-12 schoolchildren and the creative economy, with several visits to Mass MOCA required some with families.
- During the past 10 years the emergence of the creative economy and creative class has really enhanced the quality of life for all citizens.
- Partnerships in the development of MOCA included the City, hospital, university and the private sector.

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Establish and sustain a greater emphasis on arts and creative skills in schools, as an avenue to keep children in school and fight the drop-out rate.
- Capitalize on the potential relationship that can be created between linking "creative skills" and schoolchildren with their families and creative businesses.
- Use the creative economy as the leading edge of marketing New Bedford's resurgence.
- Foster strong working partnerships between the City, establishments of higher education, local businesses, Chamber of Commerce, St. Luke's Hospital, and non-profit organizations.

Worcester, MA
December 4, 2007

Population

166,199 (US Census, 2006 American Community Survey Data)

Government Structure

Weak mayor form of government; City Council elected every 2 years, and elects a member to serve as Mayor and hires City Manager.

Who We Met

Erin Williams, Cultural Development Officer

Ellen Dunlap, Chair of the Worcester Cultural Coalition, President of the American Antiquarian Society

Mark Bilotta, CEO for Worcester College Consortium

Troy Siebels, Executive Director of the Hanover Theatre for Performing Arts

Visiting Team

Joyce Goodman

Deborah Hynes

Nilsa Garcia-Ray

Angela Johnston

Agenda

Meeting Location: 44 Front Street
Worcester, MA, 01608

9:30 am: Panel discussion

11:30am: Meeting with Troy Siebels
Executive Director of The Hanover Theatre for Performing Arts
(new performing arts center in construction)

12:30 pm: Lunch in the Canal District:
(up and coming entertainment area)
Block 5

1:30 pm: Driving tour

2:00 pm: Conclude Visit

General Observations

- Director of Economic Development and the Cultural Development Officer initiated the creative economy movement and continue to partner with city and cultural organizations.
- The Worcester Cultural Coalition, founded in 1999, is the unified voice of the 52 cultural organizations.
- A strong partnership with Worcester's 13 universities.
- Renovating a Performing Arts Theatre that is capable of attracting "Broadway" shows.
- 40% of higher education graduates remain in city. Work in education and health care fields. Provides Worcester with a young, educated population.
- Commuter rail access to Boston; Amtrak to Providence, RI.

- "City Square" is a public/private partnership for the redevelopment of the downtown, including a DIF, projected to stimulate \$563M.
- Revitalization of the downtown, with a mix of "mom and pop" establishments and smaller chain store, i.e. Starbucks.
- Ample on-street parking in conjunction with several structured parking garages.
- Many highway routes and major roads intersecting the downtown, making it difficult to access by car and foot.
- Convention center is centrally located and serves as an anchor for downtown. City is currently in the planning stage for a new hotel/convention/retail center across from City Hall.

What Works Well

- Worcester Cultural Coalition made proposal to city, city accepted proposal and "in roads" were created at City Hall.
- The Creative Economy is supported by the City Council.
- "Worcester Windows": a community Gallery program uses empty storefronts around the city common garden (in front of city hall) to promote new and established artists. Made great impression for first time visit.
- A shared Community calendar assists city, university and cultural event planners in scheduling. Prevents conflicts and assists in marketing.
- The "Woo" card offers bus service, discounts to cultural organizations and events to university students. Strong marketing efforts between city and universities.
- Created 8 distinct districts, with title and logo, used as a marketing tool.
- Funding from MA Cultural Council.

What Could be Better

- Connection between Convention Center and cultural organizations, businesses and restaurants.
- Wayfinding system (signage) providing a consistent visual to locate districts and cultural organizations/destinations needs improvement in some areas (they have a solid visual plan, funding strategies in development).
- Worcester Cultural Coalition to keep database information current to improve effectiveness of direct mail or email marketing campaigns.
- Locations of large health care "pods" that have café and parking. Poison to city foot traffic.

What They Do That Could Work for Us

- Make greater efforts to establish working relationships between the Arts Community and City officials and departments.
- Form a Cultural Coalition with one common voice that is the direct connection to city hall departments and state funding departments.
- Establish distinct districts, labeled in a modern way, for marketing purposes. Helps to create a consistent language as we sell the city to creative individuals/industries.
- Stronger partnerships with the universities and improved shuttle services for students.
- Greater partnership efforts with private sector.
- Retain and expand the educated citizenry.
- Improve and expand public transportation.

Follow-up

The Top Takeaways

- Lt. Governor Tim Murray, former Mayor of Worcester, was a champion for the city on Beacon Hill.

- The creative economy is supported by city council and city manager--Worcester Cultural Coalition.
- Colorful city logo used throughout downtown on signs, decals and artist designed "pillars" strategically located to orient visitors already underway-- Use of creative sign elements and traffic directional.
- The use of socialweb.net --the shared community calendar for city where separate calendars can be pulled out.
- Star on the Street-- art event on city streets organized by artists/performers
- Engagement of private sector in fundraising for renovation of downtown theatre-- name plaques on seats for \$10k donation.
- Funding and participation from seven higher education institutions in marketing city to students using the Woo Card.
- Worcester is the second largest city in Mass. with a multitude of cultural entities that can lead to mission confusion and overlap. The City has made efforts to bring these groups and organizations under one umbrella.
- Partnership with private sector have been developed and fostered.

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Advocate for full support and promotion by Mayor and City Council and the City must advocate for creative economy support on the state level.
- Form a Cultural Coalition with one common voice that is the direct connection to city hall departments and state funding departments.
- Strengthen partnerships with the universities and improved shuttle services for students.
- Establish distinct wayfinding system to make downtown easier to navigate.
- Establish a single source community calendar for cultural events.
- Improve partnership efforts with private sector.

Portsmouth, NH
Wednesday, December 5, 2007

Population

20,784 (2000 US Census)

Government Structure

Weak mayoral form of government; City Council elected every 2 years and the candidate for City Council who receives the largest number of votes at any election becomes Mayor. The City Council also appoints a City Manager (not a member).

Who We Met

Nancy Carmer, Economic Development Program Manager
Sue Cobler, Art Speak Coordinator (Portsmouth Cultural Commission)
Jane James, Art Speak Board Member
Paula Rais, Portsmouth Children's Museum
Celia Adams, N.H. Community Foundation
Judy Rigmont, NH State Council for the Arts
Robin McIntosh, Portsmouth Economic Development Council
Tom Cocchiario, Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce Cultural Tourism

Visiting Team

Jill Maclean
Sally Sapienza
Angela Johnston
Jessica Fernandes
Deborah Hynes

Agenda

Meeting Location: City Hall
1 Junkins Ave.
Portsmouth, NH 03801

10:00am: Panel discussion

Nancy Carmer, Economic Development Program Manager
Sue Cobler, Art Speak Coordinator (Portsmouth Cultural Commission)
Jane James, Art Speak Board Member
Paula Rais, Portsmouth Children's Museum
Celia Adams, N.H. Community Foundation
Judy Rigmont, NH State Council for the Arts
Robin McIntosh, Portsmouth Economic Development Council
Tom Cocchiario, Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce Cultural Tourism

11:45am: Lunch

12:45pm: Walking/Driving Tour of downtown Portsmouth (weather permitting)

2:00pm: Conclude Visit

General Observations

- City wide comprehensive master plan was recently completed and approved. This plan has a cultural plan as one of its components. The goals of the cultural plan are advanced by the Cultural Commission (Art-Speak).

- No efforts have been taken on a citywide “branding” campaign. This was a conscious decision.
- NH Charitable Foundation feels that the arts play an essential role in the quality of life in the community. The foundation strongly supports the artist community through unrestricted grants of \$30,000 for artists.
- Amtrak access in adjacent town and access to Boston via commuter rail is available from Newburyport, MA, which is a short drive from Portsmouth.
- City works w/residents to develop and enhance individual identities for neighborhoods with distinct benches, streetlights, trash barrels, etc.
- Downtown is arranged in a central spine, with many “mom & pop” restaurants and establishments with no noticeable vacancies. Most buildings are 2-3 stories with residential on upper floors. Mixed use zoning allows for such uses and this type of development is promoted.
- The downtown features many performing arts venues – bars, clubs, etc.

What Works Well

- The Mayor created a Blue Ribbon Task Force to map all of the cities assets and threats to the creative economy. This task force created a Cultural Plan with public meetings and focus groups as a key part of the planning effort.
- The Mayor is supportive of the creative economy, although in the past he didn’t completely “get it” he never opposed any efforts to enhance it.
- The Cultural Plan was adopted by the Planning Board, EDC & City Council which ensured buy-in for later needs i.e. funding, permitting support, and zoning reform.
- The Blue Ribbon Task Force interviewed possible candidates to serve on a Cultural Commission (Art-Speak), supported by the Mayor and City Council.
- Art-Speak consists of artists, lawyers, business owners, entrepreneurs, accountants, etc. Art-Speak is partially supported by city funds and is a quasi-public/private entity with 501c3 status. Art-Speak has a formal *written* agreement with the City, who must support it w/office space and funding for the full time coordinator. *NOTE: Manchester, NH cultural commission failed due to lack of city government buy in and support.*
- A Public Arts Ordinance was passed by City Council. The ordinance allows for a percentage of the annual budget to be put towards public art & municipal forums. The ordinance requires that all new development of municipal buildings (\$2 million to \$15 million dollar budgets) must dedicate 1% towards creation of public art; money in trust, administered by the city; important to educate community on the importance of art, and this fund is not taking funding from other public services.
- Art-Speak strives to promote understanding and respect amongst a variety of entities who traditionally would not partner with each other. For example, they brought together the working waterfront with artists and story tellers to present a play on the history of the waterfront.
- The Chamber of Commerce is very supportive of the creative economy and recognizes that it is the foundation for all business success. The Chamber views the creative economy as a magnet for a young, professional workforce.
- Downtown Business Association supports a school performing arts program by having students perform downtown. These performances attract students’ family and friends, thereby building clientele and customers.
- The City and the Chamber of Commerce are very supportive of art programs in the school system and strive to have artists work with students. The Economic Development Commission partnered with local galleries to have students photograph the city and uses the photographs in promotional and marketing material for the City.

What Could be Better

- Have not fully utilized a state program that allows artists and entrepreneurs with limited or no credit to team together to build credit.

- City feels that they need to build the “Portsmouth Buy Local” initiative to support local businesses, restaurants, bakeries, etc.
- City feels they need grants to improve artists’ skills in business, website creation, marketing, etc. in an effort to make artists more self sustaining.
- Art-Speak holds an annual public forum, but participation is low.
- Need to overcome “territorial attitude” with other regional towns.
- Housing costs for artists have risen to the point where they are moving out of Portsmouth and into mills and factories in the surrounding towns. Creating live/work spaces is being proposed by the City to help with this issue.
- The current wayfinding signage is inconsistent and too busy. The City is currently developing a wayfinding signage plan with an outside consultant.

What They Do That Could Work for Us

- Map the City’s assets and use the authentic identity of your city. Incorporate a cultural plan into master plan, use data from NEFA and Americans for the Arts to support planning and implementation.
- It is important to demonstrate the economic returns on an arts investment for the business community, for which the New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) has a tool on their *Counting on Culture* website (www.necd.org) to determine how much art investment.
- Seek grant support from state government and private foundations.
- Important to have incubator space for artists and entrepreneurs.
- Work more with the city’s youth, specifically involving the school system, in public arts projects and programs.
- Actively recruit members of the School Department to participate in the creative economy.
- Market our creative economy to its fullest potential, possibly by using the *American for the Arts* survey as a tool.
- Plan to have WiFi in all downtown public spaces and local parks to foster use by younger citizens
- Create and maintain a “cultural calendar”.
- The City and the Chamber of Commerce actively sought out and involved the local media to ensure their buy-in and “good press” on projects.
- Use “study circles” to facilitate neighborhood input and support, and to generate ideas in planning process; see www.studycircles.org for training; a highly effective mechanism.
- Wayfinding for the city is necessary and cooperative marketing should be encouraged.

Follow-up

The Top Takeaways

- Strong partnerships between artists, businesses, Chamber, charitable foundations, their EDC, school system and municipal government. There is strong City Council and Mayoral support of the creative economy.
- Art-Speak is a 501c3 organization that has a written agreement with the municipality. The City provides a full-time staff person and office space, while Art-Speak is responsible for the funding of programming, marketing, etc. A broad, diverse board of “t-shirts and suits” serves the widest possible definition of creative economy.
- A recently completed citywide master plan calling for a cultural plan for which the Mayor created a task force to carry out, including the mapping of all the city’s assets and threats to creative economy. The City consciously chose and outside consultant to develop the cultural plan to facilitate neighborhood input and participation.

- The City recognizes that creative economy has spurred gentrification, making it difficult for artists to remain in the city. In response, the City is actively planning development of artist neighborhoods, recognizing and appreciating the value that is added to the quality of life by maintaining a creative class.
- The City rezoned the downtown to allow for mixed-use zoning, with retail on the ground floor, offices on the second floor and residential on the upper floors. This creates vibrancy and nightlife after the 9-to-5 businesses close.
- The City created a Public Art Ordinance to aid in the funding for public arts, such as “art in the park”. The City views this as a viable way of keeping artist employed and maintaining art in forefront of community.
- The historic architecture in the downtown is seen as a valuable asset that sets Portsmouth apart from other communities. The City makes retail work with their architecture and prohibits the razing these structures. The size and style of the architecture ensures that “big box” retail will remain on the outskirts of the city, allowing the downtown to keeps its’ unique flavor, accommodate “mom and pop” establishments and attract niche shoppers and clients.
- Art is used as a method to “break down barriers” between artists/creative class and the working class, such as the shipyard folks. For example, private organizations partnered to bring together the theater, artists and the fishermen to create a living history through stage and story telling, which was a huge success.

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Create strong partnerships amongst all entities, including city government, non-profits, creative venues, school system and higher education establishments. New Bedford needs a “champion” to lead this effort.
- Fund and support a full-time staff person to coordinate, promote, market and establish strong working relationships within the creative economy.
- Promote and market our mixed-use zoning and downtown overlay district, which allows for artist live/work space.
- Investigate a public arts ordinance to sustain art in the city.
- Partner with existing festivals and events to promote the city’s eclectic mix of history and culture as a way to bridge different sectors of our community.
- *Something else to consider: New Bedford should plan now for the impacts that the creative economy may have on affordability and recognize that by sustaining a creative class the city will maintain the vibe and quality of life that we’re looking for.*

**Visiting Team Day Trip Lowell, MA
December 11, 2007**

Population

90,897 (US Census, 2006 American Community Survey Data)

Government Structure

Weak mayoral form of government; City Council elected every 2 years, elects a member to serve as Mayor and appoints a City Manager (not a member).

Who We Met

Mayor Bill Martin

Theresa Park, Director Economic
Development

John DeAngelis, Earth Realty

Maxine Farkas

Ashlee Welz-Smith (Studio #520)

Jim Mertes, President Alpha Imaging
Technologies

Bernie Lynch, City Manager

Adam Baacke, City Planning manager

Jim Cook, Executive Director, The Lowell
Plan

LZ Nunn, COOL Executive Director

Jerry Beck, UMass Lowell

Stacie Hargis, UMass Lowell

Cheryl Rayner, UMass Lowell

Gigi Thibideau, UMass Lowell

Dave Robinson, UMass Lowell

Peter Aucella, Deputy Superintendent NPS

Visiting Team

Derek Santos
Andrew Simpson
Jill Maclean
Nilsa Garcia-Ray
Celeste Bernado

Agenda

Meeting Location:	Textile Museum
10:00am:	Textile Museum mill tour with introduction by Mayor Bill Martin
10:30am:	Artist Studios Tour Western Avenue Artists Studios
11:00am:	Creative Economy Sector Business Alpha Imaging Technologies
11:30 am:	Municipal Government's Role in Creative Economy Mayor's Reception Room
12:30pm: 2:00pm:	Lunch & Public-Private Partnership in Creative Economy Institution's Roles in Creative Economy Revolving Museum
3:00pm:	NPS' Role in Creative Economy National Park Visitor's Center
4:00pm:	Conclude Visit

General Observations

- The broadest possible definition of the "creative economy" is used by City officials and includes; traditional arts/culture, software development, graphic design, computer gaming, sound recording, etc.
- The creative economy has strong support from City Council, City Manager and the Mayor.
- The Mayor "gets it" and is a strong advocate for always being open-minded, fully utilizing your city's assets, and fully embracing historic preservation. He also believes the creative economy is more about the creative class than only traditional artists.
- The City and the EDC actively recruit artists to the live, work and display in the city.
- In its general philosophy of the creative economy, Lowell has embraced Richard Florida's theories on urban renewal and the Creative Class. According to Adam Baacke from the City's Planning office, this strategy has proven successful. Attracting the creative class has led to an increase in retail with a success rate of 66% (average is <50%).
- Key organizations in Lowell's cultural community include MRT, New England Quilt Museum, American Textile History Museum, Lowell Memorial Auditorium, Tsongas Arena, Whistler House Museum, Lowell National Historic Park, Brush Gallery, Revolving Museum and UMASS-Lowell.
- Lowell officials are thinking along regionally for Creative Economy development. One of the proposed goals of the Mt. Auburn report

commissioned by the Lowell Plan is to create a Merrimack Valley Cultural Corridor of which Lowell will be a part.

- City Council has a standing subcommittee on culture & subcommittee w/UMASS Lowell
- The Cultural Office of Lowell (COOL) is run out of city hall and \$100,000 of its operating budget is city funded with other funding coming from grants and private foundations. COOL is nonprofit 501c3. COOL encourages participation in the creative economy through the coordination and cooperation between city government, cultural development organizations, cultural institutions, universities, artists and developers.
- The downtown has an Arts Overlay District, which allows for artists work spaces and they are currently working on zoning for live/work spaces.
- Development of a Cultural Plan (City of World Cultures) with actionable recommendations is widely supported by the cultural and policy community in Lowell. This plan cost \$100,000 is will be staffed with a part time position in an effort towards proactively driving the implementation of the plans recommendations.
- City strongly supports partnerships with the Lowell Plan, UMASS Lowell, COOL, libraries, school system, NPS
- Lowell works very closely with developers through the permitting and review process to ensure successful projects. *It should be noted that only the first few developers of the mills needed city incentives.*
- Not all mill redevelopment is high end. All levels of redevelopment are encouraged and have taken place to ensure that every user group (especially artists) can be served.
- Lowell is very similar to New Bedford in terms of population, Universities and a National Park Service presence in the downtown. *It should be noted that the operating budget and staff size is nearly 10 times that of New Bedford Whaling NHP.*
- Zoning was changed to allow for desired uses, and parking requirements were lifted to enhance development within the downtown. Mixed-use development is encouraged.
- Strong Director of Planning who oversees a 40 person planning staff that consists of the City Planning Department, which includes 12 planners, the Office of Housing and Community Development, and the Economic Development Commission. One of the planners on staff is the Downtown Planning Coordinator.
- The Lowell Plan – founded in 1973; funded by private and public sources and is evolving from a philanthropic to an earned income/ROI focused organization
- Lowell is served by commuter rail/public transportation to Boston.

What Works Well

- Lowell through its self promotion as a “cool city” has been able to fill 2.6 million sq ft of space in the city which was lying vacant in 2000. The city has also seen 30 new retailers in the downtown area which enjoy about a 66% success rate.
- The City has pointed to a number of specific “wins” such as the Ayer Lofts revitalization and the recent decision by Motorola to relocate their New England operations in the City (500-600 new jobs initially). The Motorola win was specifically attributed to the cultural economy and the unique quality of life that sector has brought to the City. Lowell “pitched” access to a quality workforce, unique cultural events, semi-pro baseball games and won the business against other city’s of comparable size and cost.
- A comprehensive master plan was completed in 2003, with an overarching theme that the creative class is the leading component in economic development.

- Single city-wide cultural promotional organization – COOL (refer to general observations).
- In the past, Lowell was a single engine (technology companies) economy, and when they failed, so did the city's economy. City officials have done very well in creating a much more diverse economy with the creative class as its core driver.
- Actively bring students downtown for events similar to AHA!
- Lowell does a very good job of embracing and capitalizing on its culturally diverse population.
- Nationally recognized Folk Festival supported strongly by the National Park.
- The Planning & Development office actively recruits developers to renovate historic mills.

What Could be Better

- Quality of education (High School graduation, Arts in Schools).
- Infrastructure, blight, and crime are still problems.
- There is a feeling that the artists have been left out the success of Lowell and affordable spaces are not ready available, but that is improving.
- City is working on strengthening their office of tourism, culture, marketing and special events.
- One of the obstacles to the current success mentioned during our visit was a negative image of downtown Lowell left over from the 1960s, 70s and 80s. Representatives from UMASS-Lowell commented that parents of students warn their children not to go downtown – that it is not safe.
- Business acumen of artists and funding were also mentioned as impediments to success.
- In 2006 a number of cultural organizations in the city ran into financial difficulty and approached the Lowell Plan for help.
- Not all groups see eye-to-eye. The City needed 3rd-party objective recommendations from someone like Mt. Auburn to get consensus approval.
- There are no galleries in the City and not a lot of opportunities to sell art. Western Avenue Studios will be opening a cooperative gallery in 2008 to help rectify this situation.
- Additional issues for Lowell as identified by the Mt Auburn Report are Signage, Traffic Patterns, Hotel, Downtown Business District and Education (specifically business education for cultural enterprises)

What They Do that Could Work for Us

- Fund and staff an organization similar to COOL as an offshoot of the NBEDC which can be an advocate for cultural events and activities in the City and promote them to a broader audience.
- Private non-profit group positioned as an advocate for arts and cultural economy coordinates and promotes cultural activities across the city and is responsible for coordination, funding and PR.
- Create "World Culture" outreach program which develops cultural exchanges with sister cities.
- Brand City's Cultural Activities (AHA! is a great start)
- Support and promote Festivals (Feast, Waterfront Festival, Chowder Festival) as marketing opportunities for the City as Lowell does with Folk Festival
- Work to promote the City's cultural events to regional, national and international media
- Promote success of artists loft/workspace projects in the City
- Strengthen ties with UMASS Dartmouth in the areas of collaboration/partnerships, outreach, and transportation with Dartmouth campus
- Develop Master and Neighborhood Plans
- Develop Downtown Hotel

- Commuter Rail to Boston

Follow-up

Top Takeaways

- Community embraces good planning whether it is a current master plan or a cultural plan. They are willing to invest the money upfront for longer term goals. A good effort is made to have everyone at the table to define a common community vision for all major stakeholders by using outside professionals to neutralize agendas.
- The City has succeeded at building partnerships and maintaining coordination and collaboration with higher education. For example, UMASS Lowell professors created special events to attract students downtown.
- A community wide, culturally based website is maintained by COOL, who is respected by all creative entities to carry out this responsibility in a fair and attractive way.
- The City was able to win the business of Motorola Company because of the perception that Lowell offers a vibrant and diverse quality of life for their employees, which is supported by the creative class, in addition to public transportation and quick access to Boston.
- The City Office of Planning and Economic Development understands the need for a diverse economic base, due to past history, which they do not want to repeat. The creative class assists this effort to diversify their economy. The City actively goes after developers and makes development easier and “does not throw up obstacles”.
- Lowell’s has created a downtown overlay district much like New Bedford’s; however, they brand it as an “arts overlay district” which aids in the promotion of their city.
- The Lowell Folk Festival is their one major event that happens on a national stage contributing to the positive perception of the city, not only by tourists but by residents as well.

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Develop an entity that serves the umbrella function of COOL, which is City supported and funded with responsibilities to advocate, support and market creative economy efforts. *Can AHA! serve this function? Can the city capitalize on AHA! as an established brand?*
- Employ a person who reports to Mayor or NBEDC. This person is self-motivated, “bridge-builder” with direct experience and/or education in the arts and not just an administrator.
- Explore and develop strong working partnerships with higher educational institutions such as UMASS and BCC. Work collectively to better market each other, while capitalizing on what each bring to the table to aid the other.
- Work with higher educational institutions to capture graduates and aggressively pursue keeping them in the region.
- Change the name of New Bedford’s downtown overlay district to promote and market it to the creative class.
- Cultivate and establish Summerfest and/or the Working Waterfront Festival on the national stage to boost the perception of New Bedford for tourists and residents alike.

Portland, ME
December 12, 2007

Population

64,249 (2000 US Census)

Government Structure

Weak mayor form of government; City Council elected in 3-year staggered terms, elects a member to serve as Mayor each year and appoints City Manager (not a member).

Who We Met

Jan Beitzer,

James Cohen, former mayor, launched summit on Creative Economy in ME

Dave Marshall, City Councilor and artist, Co-chair Creative Economy Steering Committee

Lee Urban, Director of Planning and Development

Nelle Hanig, Business Development Representative, member of CE Task Force

Alex Yagelman, Planning Division Director

Visiting Team

Derek Santos

Kathryn Duff

Sally Sapienza

Kristin Decas

Agenda

Meeting Location: 549 Congress St.
Portland, ME

11:30am: Tour of Portland's Downtown District with Jan Beitzer
Location: 549 Congress St.
Portland, ME

12:30pm: Lunch

1:30pm: Meeting in City Hall with Creative Economy leaders

James Cohen, former mayor, launched summit on Creative Economy in ME

City Councilor, co-chair CE steering committee

Dave Marshall, City Councilor and artist, Co-chair CE Steering committee

Lee Urban, Director of Planning and Development

Nelle Hanig, Business Development Representative, member of CE Task Force

Alex Yagelman, Planning Division Director

3:00pm: Conclude Visit

General Observations

- They have made no effort to define the creative economy—"you know it when you see it."
- There is a Business Improvement District for DT Portland that has been in existence since 1992. This BID has an \$850,000 annual operating budget,

- includes 484 properties and funds marketing, cleanliness, and physical improvements for the BID district.
- The BID publishes a citywide Arts Guide in collaboration with other institutions.
 - The BID also has "ambassador guides" 7 days a week during the tourist season that help visitors and meet every cruise ship.
 - Efforts to promote and grow the creative economy enjoy a high level of buy-in from the Mayor and City Council. While the level of funding commitment does vary (although they are trying to stabilize this), it is clearly understood as a key economic tool for downtown.
 - Portland has a CE steering committee and has recently held a CE Summit. The associated planning documents were prepared in-house. When asked how they coordinate their efforts city officials stated that they are in the midst of having that debate, but there is NO debate as to the value of if they should but merely exactly how will it be structured (will it be a non-profit, come out of the city managers office, etc.).
 - There is a strong view that their efforts cannot be wholly managed by the city and not totally without city involvement. It must be a partnership.
 - The Tourism board (CCVB) is very much a partner.
 - Portland, much like Lowell, has embraced Richard Florida's theories on urban renewal and the Creative Class.
 - Portland's downtown layout is very similar to New Bedford; however urban renewal did impact their historic street network. While their historic downtown is separated from the waterfront it is only by a street (similar to County Street) and not a highway.
 - Portland is considered an active commercial Port and home to several maritime commercial operations. Their big operations are cruise and cargo (only 30 fishing boats --- many of ME boats are coming to New Bedford because we have the infrastructure and are close to the open fishing areas). The City has done a good job in clustering the various activities along waterfront so that the mixed uses do not interfere with commercial operations of the port.
 - A condominium complex was built protruding into the Port...a practice the City ended with amended zoning laws.
 - The Maine College of Art is fairly equal to our UMass CVPA.
 - Portland has a *First Fridays* event that is very similar to AHA! This event has a \$250,000 annual impact on the local economy.
 - Rents in DT Portland are high and a newly forming Studio District adjacent to the DT is more affordable for artists.
 - State Theatre is a building that house fairly low cost spaces (not class A) for all kinds of small business that is generally focused on creative businesses. This development serves as a private incubator, and fills the need for "rougher space" in DT Portland.
 - Planning and Development department has 45 staff members with 14 dedicated planners.
 - They are developing arts districts that create a sense of place and capitalize on Portland's strong history with the visual arts. An arts district plan is being developed (\$60,000).

What Works Well

- BID District for DT provides needed funding and staffing for marketing, physical improvements, and visitor services.
- City officials "get it" and place a great deal of value on the impact the CE has on current success and future growth.
- They take advantage of historic downtown and strong tourist economy.
- The presence of the Maine College of Art in the downtown, and the partnerships has been very good for the downtown.

What Could be Better

- They have a continuing problem with graffiti and nuisance minor crime in the DT. The BID Director said "We need a beat cop!"
- Their success has brought gentrification that has displaced artists. Officials advised us to guard against this.
- Funding for staff and programming needs to be managed consistently. Creating a sustainable structure is still a challenge.
- There is a poor public transportation system. Buses do not run on Sundays or after 8pm.
- Negative (local) press is a problem.

What They Do That Could Work for Us

- Implement a BID district as a dedicated source of revenue for marketing and district improvements.
- Strengthen partnerships amongst all stakeholders.
- Promote the development of affordable (rougher) spaces in addition to high-end projects.

Vis Follow-up

The Top Takeaways

- Although Portland is nearly identical to New Bedford statistically, their perception is much better. They have done a very good job at marketing, which may be tied to the superb State of Maine marketing program.
- Portland has held a creative economy summit and has established a steering committee. They have done a significant amount on self-study, planning, and asset identification. However, they recognize that they need to build better partnerships and collaborations or else they feel that it will all fall apart; they are at a crossroads.
- Portland knows that they need to staff the creative economy, and know that it cannot totally be the city, or totally outside the city, but have yet to finalize a framework.
- Portland's downtown BID (business overlay district) actively promotes the arts, maintains an arts calendar, and recognizes the importance of sustaining a creative class and fostering public art in the downtown.
- The City has a strong partnership with higher educational institutions and there is a strong student presence in the downtown.
- Portland is also dealing with gentrification and is trying to promote a new arts district adjacent to the fully established downtown.
- The municipal planning staff seems to be driving the creative economy discussion. The City, the BID, and Tourism are separate and they understand the lack of synergy that is a result of this separation and are working on a more cohesive partnership.

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Invest and fund the promotion and marketing of New Bedford, to change our perception, for tourists and residents alike.
- Support and implement more planning efforts and charettes that provide an outlet for community participation and provide a direction for the City to take.
- Research the possibility of creating a BID in downtown New Bedford.
- Build and maintain strong partnerships with higher education institutions.
- Plan for gentrification and establish a sound plan to combat this potential future problem.

Reference Material

(available from the New Bedford Economic Development Council)

Overview

New England Foundation for the Arts

- The Creative Economy: A New Definition, November 2007 Full report
- The Creative Economy: A New Definition, November 2007 Highlights

Aspirant City Documents

1. Lowell

Mt. Auburn Report June 2007 - Lowell Cultural Economy strategic directions (full report to be released in the Fall of 2007).

2. Providence/Pawtucket

Providence is a Creative Hub

Pawtucket's Arts & Entertainment Initiative: An Economic Engine Bringing New Life, Vitality to the City

The ABCs of Creating a Customer Friendly Arts District

Arts panel gets pep talk: A cultural affairs officer spells out the ABCs of creating an artist-friendly community

3. Pittsfield/North Adams (Berkshires)

The Berkshire Creative Economy Report

Berkshire Creative Economy Council Working Groups Summary

4. Portland, Maine

Portland's Creative Economy Summit 2006

The Creative Economy in Maine: Maine Arts Commission (full report)

The Creative Economy in Maine: Maine Arts Commission (summary)

The Creative Economy: 'cutting through the noise'

Maine's Creative Economy: Maine State Government Resources for Communities

5. Portsmouth, New Hampshire

Community Life and the Arts: Portsmouth, NH Cultural Plan

6. Worcester, Massachusetts

Cultural Districts, Heritage Areas, Tourism and Branding: If you Name it, Will They Come? -- Worcester as a Case Study

Other Locations

- Boston's Creative Economy
- A Statewide Conference: the Innovation Agenda – Growing the Creative Economy in Massachusetts, (May 2006 Salem, MA)

General

- The Role of Higher Education in Linking the Arts, Culture and Economic Development
- Patrick/Murray Transition: Creative Economy Working Group
- New England Council: Initiatives – Creative Economy
- Arts and Economic Prosperity, Americans for the Arts
- Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society



Creative Economy Task Force



1. Welcome!

2. Overview & Expectations

3. Aspirant Cities Presentations

4. Discussion & Consensus Building

5. Wrap Up

A quick look at the Creative Economy in New Bedford

Industry Sector Analysis draft report submitted by HR&A includes a quantitative analysis of the impact of the creative economy in New Bedford.

This analysis demonstrated that the creative economy is not an incidental contributor to the city, but a significant generator for economic growth.

Final report due this spring.



A quick look at the Creative Economy in New Bedford

New Bedford has a significantly high proportion of workers (nearly 3%) employed in the CE. The national average is 1.62% and the state average is 2.58%

The CE employees nearly 1400 workers with an annual compensation of \$48M.

The mean salary is \$38,166 for CE workers, compared to \$26,032 for seafood processing and \$30,350 for textiles.



Aspirant Cities Presentations

In about six weeks 21 task force members...
visited 8 cities in 4 states,
met with 56 host city representatives, including 4
Mayors,
developed detailed day trip reports,
Held follow-up meetings and developed 44
recommendations for full task force discussion

...and drank 68 cans of Diet Coke!



Portsmouth, NH

12.5.07

Population

20,784

Who We Met

Nancy Carmer, Economic Development Program Manager

Sue Cobler, Art Speak Coordinator (Portsmouth Cultural Commission)

Jane James, Art Speak Board Member

Paula Rais, Portsmouth Children's Museum

Celia Adams, N.H. Community Foundation

Judy Rigmont, NH State Council for the Arts

Robin McIntosh, Portsmouth Economic Development Council

Tom Cocchiaro, Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce Cultural Tourism

Visiting Team

Jill Maclean

Sally Sapienza

Angela Johnston

Jessica Fernandes

Deborah Hynes



Portsmouth, NH 12.5.07

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Create strong partnerships amongst all entities, including city government, non-profits, creative venues, school system and higher education establishments. New Bedford needs a “champion” to lead this effort.
- Fund and support a full-time staff person to coordinate, promote, market and establish strong working relationships within the creative economy.
- Promote and market our mixed-use zoning and downtown overlay district, which allows for artist live/work space.
- Investigate a public arts ordinance to sustain art in the city.
- Partner with existing festivals and events to promote the city’s eclectic mix of history and culture as a way to bridge different sectors of our community.

Something else to consider: New Bedford should plan now for the impacts that the creative economy may have on affordability and recognize that by sustaining a creative class the city will maintain the vibe and quality of life that we’re looking for.



Providence, RI

11.15.07

Population

170,435

Who We Met

Dan Baudouin, Executive Director Providence Foundation

Thom Dellar, Director of Planning & Development

Cliff Wood, City Councillor

Clay Rockerfeller, Steelyard

Umberto (Bert) Creca, AS220

Donald W. King, Artistic Director Providence Black Repertory Company

John Sinnott, Struever Bros. Eccles & Rouse, Inc.

Visiting Team

Liz Isherwood

Deborah Hynes

Catherine Rollins

Matthew Morrissey

Derek Santos



Providence, RI 11.15.07

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Target developers as a group for outreach and partnership.
- Advocate for an uncapped state historic preservation tax credit for Massachusetts gateway cities.
- Encourage developers of historic mills to proactively partner with cultural/creative groups and organizations such as “Your Theater” as a potential tenants.
- Promote and facilitate an effort, led by the City of New Bedford, to bring “t-shirts and ties” together on mutually beneficial projects.
- Proactively take a roll (the City) to ensure that all potential partners, both large and small, are involved and no one is excluded.
- Foster greater collaboration amongst all stakeholders.



Pawtucket, RI

11.15.07

Population

76,396

Who We Met

Michael Cassidy, Director of Planning
Herbert Weiss, Economic and Cultural Affairs Officer
The Rhode Island Foundation

Visiting Team

Deborah Hynes
Catherine Rollins
Anne Louro
Jill Maclean
Derek Santos



Pawtucket, RI 11.15.07

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Embrace and aggressively promote New Bedford's affordability, abundance of mill space, and its appealing location between Boston and Providence.
- Strive to work as a cohesive and efficient municipal government in order to provide the most effective service to potential developers, artists, etc.
- Employ and fully fund a full-time City of New Bedford staff person, dedicated to the promotion, marketing, and coordination of creative economy activities.
- Recognize that New Bedford has many cultural and creative events that have a positive impact on the city and provide a sense of vibrancy.
- Support any efforts to sustain and strengthen these events because they have the ability to promote New Bedford as a creative, festive and, "cool city" not only to tourists, but to residents as well.

Something else to consider – there could be an opportunity with South Coast Development Partnership (as a Mayoral priority) specifically for funding of marketing campaigns and additional studies.



Pittsfield, MA

11.28.07

Population

45,793

Who We Met

Mayor James Ruberto

Tyler Fairbanks, Berkshire Economic Development Council

Helena Fruscio, Project Coordinator of Berkshire Creative,

Megan Whilden, Director Pittsfield Cultural Development

David Fleming, Colonial Theatre

Stuart Chase, Berkshire Museum Shop

Peter Dudek, Storefront Artist Project

Crispina French, Crispina Design Workshop

Leslie Ferris, Ferrin Gallery

Visiting Team

Henry Mastey

Linda Johannesen

Keri Cox

Jill Maclean

Joyce Goodman

Derek Santos



Pittsfield, MA

11.28.07

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Promote our downtown zoning, which allows for artist live/work space, and actively seek out creative businesses.
- Explore the MCC funding procedures to ensure that the potential funding of a creative economy position would not be competing with other organizations.
- Promote creative businesses and recognize the value that they bring to the quality of life in our city, with the lead taken up by the City of New Bedford.
- Become a leader in southeastern MA by the City bringing together a regional collaboration of communities from Westport to Wareham while at the same time promoting collaboration amongst all of New Bedford.
- Invest more funding to better market the city to ourselves and others.



North Adams, MA

11.28.07

Population

14,681

Who We Met

Mayor Barrett

Katherine Myers, Mass. Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA)

Helena Fruscio, Berkshire Economic Development Council

Rod Bunt, Director of Tourism and Cultural Development

Sharon and Ed Carson, Eclipse Mills

Visiting Team

Henry Mastey

Linda Johannesen

Keri Cox

Jill Maclean

Joyce Goodman

Derek Santos



North Adams, MA 11.28.07

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Establish and sustain a greater emphasis on arts and creative skills in schools, as an avenue to keep children in school and fight the drop-out rate.
- Capitalize on the potential relationship that can be created between linking “creative skills” and schoolchildren with their families and creative businesses.
- Use the creative economy as the leading edge of marketing New Bedford’s resurgence.
- Foster strong working partnerships between the City, establishments of higher education, local businesses, Chamber of Commerce, St. Luke’s Hospital, and non-profit organizations.



Worcester, MA

12.4.07

Population

166,199

Who We Met

Erin Williams, Cultural Development Officer

Ellen Dunlap, Chair of the Worcester Cultural Coalition, President of the American Antiquarian Society

Mark Bilotta, CEO for Worcester College Consortium

Troy Siebels, Executive Director of the Hanover Theatre for Performing Arts

Visiting Team

Nilsa Garcia-Ray

Deborah Hynes

Joyce Goodman

Angela Johnston



Worcester, MA

12.4.07

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Advocate for full support and promotion by Mayor and City Council and the City must advocate for creative economy support on the state level.
- Form a Cultural Coalition with one common voice that is the direct connection to city hall departments and state funding departments.
- Strengthen partnerships with the universities and improved shuttle services for students.
- Establish distinct wayfinding system to make downtown easier to navigate.
- Establish a single source community calendar for cultural events. Improve partnership efforts with private sector.





Lowell, MA

12.11.07

Population

90,897

Who We Met

Mayor Bill Martin
Theresa Park, Director Economic Development
Bernie Lynch, City Manager
Jim Cook, Executive Director, The Lowell Plan
LZ Nunn, COOL Executive Director John
DeAngelis, Earth Realty
Maxine Farkas
Ashlee Welz-Smith (Studio #520)
Jim Mertes, President Alpha Imaging Technologies
Adam Baacke, City Planning manager
Jerry Beck, UMass Lowell
Stacie Hargis, UMass Lowell
Cheryl Rayner, UMass Lowell
Gigi Thibideau, UMass Lowell
Dave Robinson, UMass Lowell
Peter Aucella, Deputy Superintendent NPS

Visiting Team

Andrew Simpson
Jill Maclean
Nilsa Garcia-Ray
Celeste Bernado
Derek Santos

Lowell, MA 12.11.07

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Develop an entity that serves the umbrella function of COOL, which is City supported and funded with responsibilities to advocate, support and market creative economy efforts.
- Employ a person who reports to Mayor or NBEDC. This person is self-motivated, “bridge-builder” with direct experience and/or education in the arts and not just an administrator.
- Explore and develop strong working partnerships with higher educational institutions such as UMASS and BCC. Work collectively to better market each other, while capitalizing on what each bring to the table to aid the other.
- Work with higher educational institutions to capture graduates and aggressively pursue keeping them in the region.
- Change the name of New Bedford’s downtown overlay district to promote and market it to the creative class.
- Cultivate and establish Summerfest and/or the Working Waterfront Festival on the national stage to boost the perception of New Bedford for tourists and residents.



Portland, ME

12.12.07

Population

64,249

Who We Met

Jan Beitzer, Executive Director Portland's Downtown District

James Cohen, former mayor, launched summit on Creative Economy

Lee Urban, Director of Planning and Development

Dave Marshall, City Councilor and artist, Co-chair Creative Economy Steering Committee

Nelle Hanig, Business Development Representative, member of CE Task Force

Alex Yagelman, Planning Division Director

Visiting Team

Kathryn Duff

Sally Sapienza

Kristin Decas

Derek Santos



Portland, ME 12.12.07

Recommendations for Task Force Discussion

- Invest and fund the promotion and marketing of New Bedford, to change our perception, for internal and external marketing.
- Support and implement more planning efforts and charettes that provide an outlet for community participation and provide a direction for the City to take.
- Research the possibility of creating a BID in downtown New Bedford.
- Build and maintain strong partnerships with higher education institutions.
- Plan for gentrification and establish a sound plan to combat this potential future problem.



Discussion & Consensus Building

Bring together individual goals and recommendations



Wrap up

Lets review and discuss the next steps





Thank You!