



CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION MEETING DECEMBER 2, 2025

ALPHARETTA CITY HALL
COMMUNITY ROOM
2 PARK PLAZA
5:30 PM

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **ROLL CALL**
3. **WORK SESSION ITEMS**
 - a. **Arts Alpharetta Lamp Post Project**
 - b. **Alpharetta Arts & Culture Master Plan**
4. **ITEMS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS**
5. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
6. **ADJOURNMENT**



STAFF REPORT

Department: Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services

Submitted By:

Meeting Date: December 2, 2025

AGENDA ITEM:

Arts Alpharetta Lamp Post Project

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

ITEM DESCRIPTION:

Arts Alpharetta Lamp Post Project

ATTACHMENTS:

1. ArtsAlpharettaLampPostProject_PROPOSAL_11.19.25
2. ArtsAlpharettaLampPostProject_BANNER LOCATIONS_11.19.25

Arts Alpharetta Lamp Post Gallery Project

Proposal for Funding Support

Prepared by:

Arts Alpharetta Board

Liz Alzona, Nancy Murphy, Ina Strick, Shelton Cochran

Nov 19, 2025



Purpose

The Arts Alpharetta Lamp Post Gallery Project seeks to transform select streets into vibrant, pedestrian-friendly art corridors by showcasing banners created by local artists. This initiative aligns with Arts Alpharetta's mission to enrich community life through art, increase walkability, and position Alpharetta as a regional hub for the arts.

Project Scope

- **Initial Run:** 41 banners (funded by Arts Alpharetta and ACVB final budget)
- **Multiple Locations:** Kimball Bridge Road & East Alpharetta
- **Criteria:** High visibility, walkability, and alignment with city initiatives east of GA-400.
- **Duration:** Aim for one year, like Midtown Alliance's model.

Project Model: Midtown Alliance's Art! Everywhere

Alpharetta's project is modeled after the highly successful Midtown Alliance *Art! Everywhere* program, recognized as the Southeast's largest outdoor art gallery.

- **2024 Results:**
 - 150 Unique Works!80 artists represented
 - Each banner cost approx. \$70 to print at 24" x 48" (two produced per design)
 - Total banners produced: 394 (\$197 x 2).
 - **Approximate 2024 hard costs: \$30K**
- **2025 Results:**
 - 200 Unique Works!150 artists represented
 - **Approximate 2025 hard costs : \$38K**
 - **They now have enough inventory to cover their entire footprint of 350 street banner locations and intend to rotate some of the artwork within the district a few times in this cycle.**
- **Artist Incentive:** At the end of the display period, artists were given their banners as keepsakes.
- **Promotion Materials:** Midtown Alliance produced robust support assets, which Alpharetta can adapt:
 - Certificates of commendation for featured artists
 - Featured artist graphics/badges for social and digital media
 - Judging deck/templates and open-call guidelines
 - Banner location logs and mapping for installation
 - Presentation materials for community partners

Alpharetta has permission to modify these materials for local use, saving resources and ensuring consistency.

Approval Pathway

- 1) **Decide Location**
 - a) Kimball Bridge between North Point Parkway and Waters Road
 - b) Encore Parkway
- 2) **Get approval for locations**
- 3) **Kim – workshop item to discuss with Morgan**
- 4) **Artwork Selection** – Open call for artists, juried selection process.
- 5) **Public Art Application & Review**
- 6) **CAC Cultural Art & Commission Meeting**
- 7) **City Commission Application** – Submit project proposal (finalized artwork). Include one mock-up for concept illustration to the city.
- 8) **Final Commission Approval** – Submit selected works for final confirmation.
- 9) **Production & Installation** – Work with chosen printer/installer; confirm specs (24” x 48” or 24” x 40” wind slits, brackets).

ACTIVITIES	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
Determine Gallery Location							
Culture Arts Workshop							
Call to Artists							
Public Art Application & Review							
Meeting with Council							
Banner Production							
Banner Installation							

Note: Please refer to addendum A for details

Open Call for Artists

- **Promotion Channels:** Arts Alpharetta website, social media, newsletters.
- **Guidelines:** Bold, high-contrast, legible designs visible from 15 feet above; suitable for pedestrians and drivers.
- **Theme:** No strict theme — focus on strong visuals and community representation.
- **Branding:** Incorporate templates with Arts Alpharetta, City of Alpharetta, and Awesome Alpharetta branding.

Benefits to Alpharetta Community

- **Walkability:** Banners enhance streetscapes, encouraging pedestrian exploration.
- **Cultural Identity:** Establish Alpharetta as a visible, art-forward city.
- **Artist Opportunities:** Provide local artists with a high-profile platform to showcase their work.
- **Community Pride:** Residents experience daily inspiration through accessible, large-scale public art.
- **Tourism & Economic Impact:** Banners serve as cultural attractions, complementing East Alpharetta and the Greenway corridor.



-
- **Mission Alignment:** Advances Arts Alpharetta's mission to connect people with art and enrich community life.

Cost Proposal:

Option	Banner Cost	Template Design	Artwork Insertion	Brackets Cost	Installation Cost	Total with Brackets includes (7.75% tax)
20 Banners (24"x48")	\$2,320	\$120	\$600	\$1,300	\$900	\$5,646

Calculation Notes

- At 20 banners (24" x 48"), the cost per banner is **\$116 each + \$65 brackets** each
- The longer length requires lamp post bracket hardware.
- **20 Banners (24" x 48" with brackets): \$5240 x 1.0775=\$5,646**

Maintenance Plan:

- **Monthly Inspections:** Arts Alpharetta will conduct a visual inspection of all installed banners once per month to check for wear, damage, fading, or missing banners.
- **Damage Reporting:** Arts Alpharetta will create a dedicated email contact (e.g., banners@artsalpharetta.org) posted on their website, allowing the public to easily report damaged or missing banners.
- **Replacement Schedule:** Any damaged or missing banners identified during inspections or public reports will be replaced or repaired to maintain the program’s professional appearance and integrity by Arts Alpharetta.
- **Documentation:** A simple log will be maintained to record inspection dates, findings, and actions taken for accountability and long-term tracking by Arts Alpharetta.

Project’s Vision and Goals:

Vision:

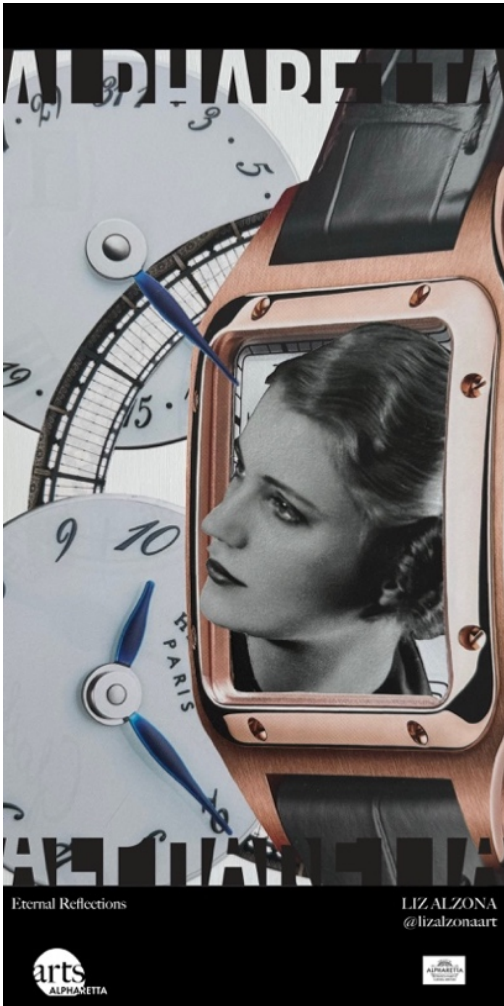
To expand and sustain the Alpharetta East Gallery as a vibrant, rotating public art program that enhances the city’s cultural landscape and brings art into community street spaces.

Annual Goals:

1. Continue growing the project each year by increasing the number of banners displayed throughout Alpharetta.
2. Rotate artwork regularly to feature new and diverse local and regional artists.
3. Maintain high-quality production standards for visual impact and durability.
4. Conduct monthly inspections and replace any damaged or missing banners as needed.
5. Collaborate with city departments to coordinate pole usage, permitting, and installation.
6. Promote the gallery through Arts Alpharetta’s website, social media, and press outreach.
7. Encourage public engagement by providing an accessible way to share feedback or report banner issues.
8. Build partnerships and sponsorships to support ongoing production, installation, and expansion.
9. Ensure consistent design and placement standards that align with Alpharetta’s streetscape and branding.

10. Strengthen Alpharetta's reputation as a thriving arts destination through this growing public art initiative.

Mockup of Potential Banner Design: Midtown Alliance and Shelton Cochran



Mockup of different sized banners in Alpharetta.



24" x 48" @ Rock Mill Park 24" x 40" @ Rock Mill Park **Scale:** Liz is 5" tall

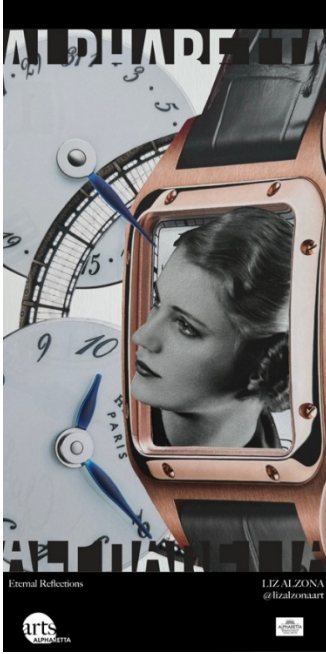
Comparison of 24" x 48" banners in Alpharetta & Midtown



24" x 48" Alpharetta

24" x 48" Midtown

Examples of a variety of potential artwork in Alpharetta template



Midtown Alliance's Outreach Materials:



We're hosting the Southeast's largest outdoor art gallery. And you can be part of it.



Midtown is Atlanta's heart of the arts. And our street banner program is a big point of pride.

Want to contribute your creative talents to Midtown's success + be part of something fun?

Submit your original artwork and we'll produce it on a street banner for everyone to see!

Get started at:

MidtownATL.com/Gallery

Examples:





Addendum A

ACTIVITIES	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
Determine Gallery Location							
Determine location							
Approval for locations							
Determine lamp post owner							
Get letter/statement of permission from lamp post owners							
Gather HOA contacts who might be interested in the locations							
Culture Arts Workshop							
Notify Morgan Rodgers							
Set as a workshop item for November							
A2O get all items to Kim							
Call to Artists							
Public Art Application & Review							
A2O to prepare draft application with finalized artwork							
Revise with Kim							
re-submit by March 1st for final approval							
Meeting with Council							
Kim to forward dates for meeting for end of March							
Prep for meeting - provide to Kim 2 weeks before meeting							
Banner Production							
Submit Art work							
Vendor - prints banners							
Vendor - banner delivery							
Banner Installation							
Vendor - provide banners to vendor							
Vendor - installs banners							

Arts Alpharetta Lamp Post Gallery Project

Lamp Post Designations and Banner Layout Plan
Kimball Bridge Road

Prepared by:

Arts Alpharetta Board

Liz Alzona, Nancy Murphy, Ina Strick, Shelton Cochran

Nov 19, 2025



Proposed Banner Placement Summary for Kimball Bridge Road

Our proposed banner installation begins at **North Point Parkway** and continues **east along Kimball Bridge Road** toward **Waters Road**, using the existing lamp posts documented in our inventory. The goal is to create a visually balanced, consistent installation that enhances the streetscape and is easy for drivers and pedestrians to enjoy.

1. North Point Parkway → Bridge (Both Sides of the Road)

In this section, where lamp posts exist on both the **north** and **south** sides of Kimball Bridge Road, we propose hanging banners on **every other lamp post**, alternating across the street as you travel east.

This staggered arrangement maintains rhythm and visibility without overwhelming the corridor. All banners will be oriented so the banner face is angled **toward and visible from the sidewalk**.

2. After the Bridge → Waters Road (North Side Only)

East of the bridge, lamp posts continue only along the **north side of Kimball Bridge Road**. In this section, we propose installing banners on **every other post**, beginning at **KB37** and continuing east until **Waters Road**.

This maintains continuity with the earlier alternating pattern while adapting to the change in roadway conditions.



Mockup courtesy of Shelton Cochran

Lamp Post Designations along Kimball Bridge Road
 North Point Parkway continuing east along Kimball Bridge Road

North Side	South Side
KB 63	KB 74
KB 62	KB 75
KB 61	KB 76
KB 60	KB 77
KB 59	KB 78
KB 58	KB 79
KB 57	KB 80
KB 56	KB 81
KB 55	KB 82
KB 54	KB 83
KB 53	KB 84
KB 52	KB 85
KB 51	KB 86
KB 50	KB 87
KB 49	KB 88 Large pole not included
New Prospect	Rock Mill Park
KB 44	KB 92
KB 43	KB 93
KB 42	KB 94
Greenway Entrance	
KB 41	KB 95
KB 40	KB 96
KB 39	KB 97
KB 38	KB 98
Bridge	Bridge
KB 37	
KB 36	
KB 35	
KB 34	
KB 33	
KB 34	
KB 33	
KB 32	
KB 31	
KB 30	
KB 34	
KB 29	
KB 28	
KB 27	
KB 26	
KB 25	
KB 24	
KB 23	
KB 22	
KB 21	
Fire House & Entrance to Greenway	
KB 29	
KB 19	
KB 18	
KB 17	
KB 16	
KB 15	
KB 14	
KB 13	
KB 12	
KB 11	
KB 10	
KB 9	
KB 8	
KB 7	
KB 6 Damaged, White Spray Paint	
KB 5	
Entrance To Waters Road Park	
KB 4	
KB 3	
KB 2	
KB 1	



STAFF REPORT

Department: Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services

Submitted By:

Meeting Date: December 2, 2025

AGENDA ITEM:

Alpharetta Arts & Culture Master Plan

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

ITEM DESCRIPTION:

Immediate Actions and Short Term (Pages 70-74)

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Alpharetta Arts & Culture Master Plan_FINAL 2025



City of Alpharetta Arts & Culture Master Plan



Acknowledgments



CITY OF ALPHARETTA ELECTED OFFICIALS

Jim Gilvin, Mayor
Donald Mitchell, Councilmember
Brian Will, Councilmember
Douglas J. DeRito, Councilmember
John Hipes, Councilmember
Fergal M. Brady, Councilmember
Dan Merkel, Councilmember & Mayor Pro Tem

CITY OF ALPHARETTA STAFF

Chris Lagerbloom, City Administrator
Morgan Rodgers, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services Director
Kurt Kirby, Senior Operations Project Manager
Kim Zane, Cultural Services Manager
Daniel Dominique, Cultural Services Operations Supervisor
Meghan Vilela, Cultural Services Supervisor
Zeal Parikh, Cultural Services Coordinator

TSW

Allison Stewart-Harris, AICP
Alanna Fairburn
Roxanne Raven

PURPOSE POSSIBLE

Elizabeth M. Low
Audrey Gámez
Susannah Darrow

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Long Term (5+ Years)*

Executive Summary

Over the past two decades, Alpharetta has grown and changed remarkably: once a small town on the outskirts of Atlanta, it is now a destination and regional job center in its own right. Arts and culture are playing a significant role in this transformation, evidenced by the enviable calendar of special events, a dedicated arts center, a history center, and a growing collection of public art.

As arts and culture have grown, so has the need for a more defined plan—what is the vision for arts and culture in Alpharetta? And how do we best achieve it? The intent of this plan is to create a clear path forward for arts and culture to expand in an intentional manner.

Currently the City is very strong in certain aspects of the arts, notably in the visual arts opportunities provided at the Arts Center and a broad variety of music-based programming. Many arts and culture opportunities come from the City’s Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Services Department, and there is a rich network of partner organizations that contribute to the City’s growing arts scene.

ARTS & CULTURE GOALS

- **SPARK.** Will be integrated into the daily lives of the community
- **DISCOVER.** Will open doors to learning new skills, experiencing new cultures, and understanding topics in new ways
- **CONNECT.** Will provide opportunities for residents, business owners, and visitors to engage with each other and form connections
- **CREATE.** Will enrich public spaces by installing unique art and activating places with special events

Through this planning process, the community identified a need for more performing arts, a desire to focus on local art and artists, and more diversity both in terms of locations of art and representing the cultural diversity of Alpharetta. To best meet these needs, the City will focus on expanding the following:

- **Public Art:** art-infused infrastructure, murals, sculpture, nature-based art
- **Performing Arts:** music, theater, dance
- **Culture & Heritage:** events, museums & sites, tours, lectures & classes

To expand arts and culture in Alpharetta, this plan recommends seven overarching priority strategies shown in the box below.

PRIORITIES & STRATEGIES

- **Foster partnerships:** Foster a culture of partnership between private business, non-profits, and the public sector in arts and culture initiatives across the city.
- **Serve as a connector:** Facilitate connections between Alpharetta’s wide variety of historic, arts and cultural organizations.
- **Reflect the community:** Reflect Alpharetta’s diverse collection of cultural backgrounds, interests, and places in all aspects of arts and culture.
- **Boost economic development:** Capitalize on Alpharetta’s strong arts and culture climate to boost economic development.
- **Integrate into operational processes:** Further integrate arts and culture into projects and processes to create clear and transparent protocols.
- **Amplify marketing:** Boost public and private arts and culture activities with cohesive marketing and promotional tools.
- **Maintain character:** Utilize arts and culture to maintain Alpharetta’s character in the region, while evolving and connecting with its residents.

These seven priorities and strategies admittedly represent an enormous amount of effort, and will be implemented incrementally as the City and its partners have available resources. The plan identifies key actions to undertake in various timeframes: immediate actions within the next 12 months; short-term actions and initiations (1-2 years from now); medium-term actions (2-5 years from now); and long-term actions. Many of the recommended initiatives are organizational, and involve streamlining communications and working more effectively with partners. Others—most notably exploring the feasibility of a dedicated performing arts facility—will require a significant outlay of capital to achieve, and are long-term prospects.

Realizing Alpharetta’s vision for arts and culture will require a commitment of staff resources, strong partnerships, and reliable funding. Outside common funding sources for the arts include foundation grants, government grants, public-private partnerships, and corporate sponsorships. In the future, the City should consider a percent-for-art program that will help provide a more consistent funding stream.





1

Introduction

Purpose

Alpharetta is a special place—and one that has witnessed significant growth and change in the past twenty years. Award-winning developments like Avalon and the realization of the Downtown Alpharetta vision have catapulted the community into one of the most desirable places to live and work in the region. It is a hard-to-achieve mix of small-city character with big-city amenities and vitality.

Arts and culture are an increasingly important part of this vitality. The City of Alpharetta strives to be a leading cultural city within the region and a destination for arts and culture events. Achieving this goal will require building upon current strengths, continuing to bolster interest and participation in arts and culture, and growing opportunities for cultural organizations and workers to provide goods and services that can benefit the entire community. This plan:

- Establishes a strategic vision to cultivate Alpharetta’s cultural resources and invest in cultural amenities and activities equitably across the community, improving the quality of life of all Alpharetta residents
- Creates a tactical plan to make reaching those goals achievable
- Develops operational standards for the City of Alpharetta to execute arts and culture activities at the highest level while supporting innovative and inclusive cultural interests
- Drives economic growth by increasing opportunities for arts and culture workers and organizations, and businesses that benefit from increased arts activity
- Engages private business and individuals in support of arts and culture
- Identifies sustainable and reliable revenue to support arts and culture in Alpharetta
- Leverages the special elements of Alpharetta to cultivate a unique destination for arts and culture within the region





Elements of Alpharetta

Small-community feel...

Alpharetta's small-town roots are evident. Though it is no longer a rural community, aspects of small-town life remain, from equestrian and agricultural heritage, to a cozy downtown, and the family-friendly atmosphere.



FAMILY-FRIENDLY



PEOPLE-SCALED



RURAL HERITAGE

...with the perks of a city

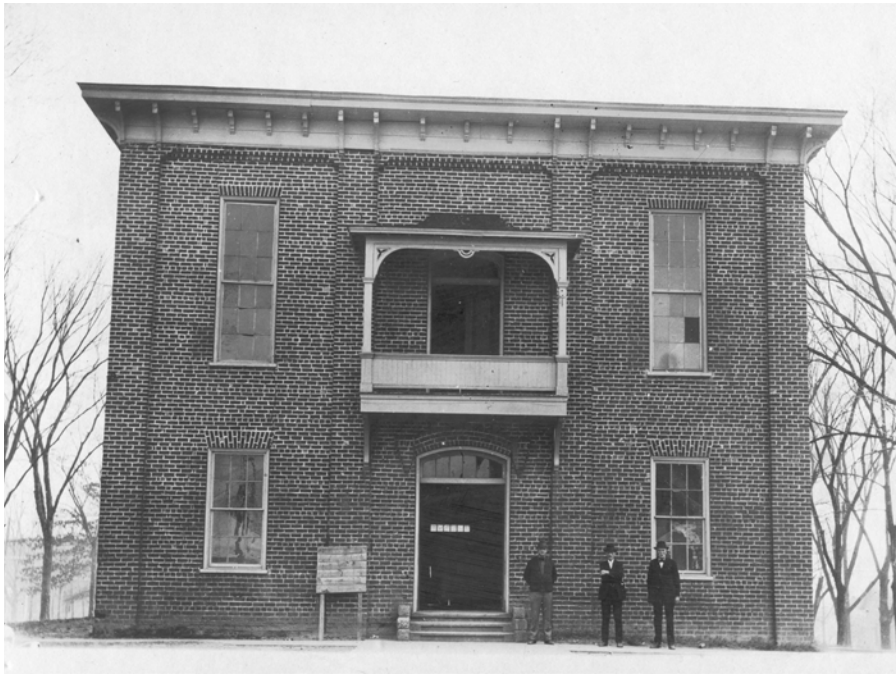
Though it's not a large community, Alpharetta is a vibrant city with activity all day and well into the evening. This is due in large part to its role as a dynamic job center for the region, with almost 90,000 people commuting to the city for work on top of its approximately 67,000 residents. These businesses have also helped to attract a remarkably diverse population, and contribute to a healthy tax base that supports high-quality amenities and infrastructure.



A Brief History

The Alpharetta of today has deep roots in the past. Once part of the Cherokee Nation, the City was incorporated in 1858 for the purpose of creating a county seat in the newly formed Milton County.

The new government had barely three years to become established when the Civil War began. Milton County sent two representatives to the secession convention in Milledgeville, then the Georgia state capital. These two men voted against secession but they were in the minority. Soon, residents raised five infantry companies, and soldiers went into battle. These troops fought in some of the war's most deadly engagements including Manassas, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Vicksburg, Chickamauga, and Atlanta.



Alpharetta's economy was cotton based for decades. Farmers grew cotton and downtown businesses opened to seed, fertilize, process, sell and ship the product. In 1901, the Webb Guano Warehouse opened for business in the landmark Cotton House building on Milton Avenue. At various times four gins operated in Alpharetta: two in Crabapple, one in Webb and Ocee, and one in the old Farm House community.

Most, if not all, of the existing downtown commercial buildings were built between 1902 and 1914. During this period, the cotton business flourished. In the 1920s and 1930s the cotton market was destroyed by the boll weevil, severe droughts and the Great Depression. Alpharetta's two banks closed, cotton brokers could no longer offer seed and fertilizer to farmers on credit, and the farmers barely survived.

To make ends meet, farmers shifted to livestock and truck farming in the 1930s and 1940s. The demand for food by U. S. troops during World War II led to the growth of the poultry business in much of North Georgia, including the Alpharetta area. The poultry industry provided local residents with a stable source of income for many years even long after the war ended. Two other developments provided jobs for Alpharettans commuting out of the city. The Bell Bomber Plant, now Lockheed Martin, opened in Marietta in 1943; then the General Motors Assembly Plant in Doraville began operations in 1947.

The opening of Georgia Highway 400 in the 1970s marked a major turning point for Alpharetta. With quick, direct access to Atlanta, Alpharetta became a more viable option for people to live in a great small town but work in the city. Large developments such as Windward in the 1980s drew more residents and businesses to the area. The high quality of life, proximity to Atlanta, and highly educated population spurred Alpharetta's transformation into a job center, particularly for the technology sector. Today, Alpharetta is a major regional activity center that boasts a large number of high-paying jobs, a vibrant downtown, quality schools, and beautiful neighborhoods.



State of Arts & Culture Today

The health and vitality of Alpharetta is mirrored in the current state of arts and culture in the community. Steadily growing over the past two decades, the City plays a leading role in providing arts and culture opportunities that is supported by a rich network of hands-on, committed partners.

CITY OF ALPHARETTA PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

In 2018 the City established Alpharetta Arts & Culture within its Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services Department. This division is the primary City provider of arts and culture opportunities today.

The main hub for arts in the City, the **Alpharetta Arts Center** opened in 2018 enabling children, teens, and adults to choose from a variety of ceramic, painting, drawing, sculpture, theater, music, and writing programming. Since its opening, the Alpharetta Arts Center has welcomed numerous community organizations to its black box theater and the terrace stage to present a diverse array of cultural offerings and performances. Programs include theatrical and dance performances, rehearsals, small-scale performances, dance and music recitals, artist talks, and demonstrations.

The City of Alpharetta has created the **Spotlight Community Stage**, an indoor location for a flexible space for cultural performances in North Point Mall that opened in spring 2025. The usage of the space is for a community stage and theater with a seating capacity up to 150 attendees. Usage will include but not limited to third-party rental applications, City programs (i.e.- Children’s Theater), and art leader groups like Arcadia Theater performances or the Alpharetta Symphony String Quartet.

There are two other City facilities of note: the Alpharetta & Old Milton County History Museum and the Future Farmers of America (FFA) Log Cabin. Like the Arts Center, the **Alpharetta & Old Milton County History Museum** also opened in 2018. It has a permanent collection of artifacts and interpretative displays which guide the viewer through a chronological timeline of Alpharetta’s past. The City

partners with the Alpharetta & Old Milton County Historical Society to help support the museum.

The **Future Farmers of America Log Cabin (FFA Log Cabin)** is a City-owned historic structure. In 1935, a group of students in the local FFA built a log cabin on the campus of the Old Milton High School. Their log cabin clubhouse quickly became a center of social life for the community hosting proms, weddings, and weekly square dances. Later the cabin became a favorite field trip destination for school children studying local history

The work of Alpharetta Arts & Culture extends beyond the four facilities to parks, downtown and any physical location where arts and culture can be infused. Staff is often working behind the scenes on multiple projects, such as the manhole murals along the Big Creek Greenway, or designing the dog park memorial tag sculpture at Webb Bridge Park. Initiatives also include non-physical projects, like publishing a series of online interactive Story Maps or managing the Music Match Program.



OTHER FACILITIES

Beyond the Alpharetta Arts Center, the Alpharetta & Old Milton County History Museum, and the FFA Log Cabin, the following facilities currently support arts and culture in the community.

- » Alpharetta Adult Activity Center
- » Alpharetta Library
- » Ameris Bank Amphitheater
- » Crabapple Arts Center
- » Innovation Academy Auditorium
- » Lionheart Cottage
- » Mansell House
- » Metropolitan Ballet Theater Studio
- » Preston Ridge Community Center
- » The Scene Art Gallery
- » Various places of worship and senior communities

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Alpharetta has a rich network of partner organizations that play an important role in arts and culture, including:

- **Arts Alpharetta** serves as curator for various public art exhibitions, volunteer recruitment, advisory in public art reviews, grant applications, funding support for receptions, and special programming. It also hosts a Plein air painting competition that draws artists across many experience levels from all around the Southeast, and provides free art kits for local schools.
- The **Alpharetta Arts Guild** supports the growth of local Georgia artists through showing and selling the art of 50-60 local artists at The Scene Art Gallery and Avalon. The Guild also provides free lectures, social activities, and low-cost classes for members and the local community.
- The **Alpharetta City Band** is a non-profit that brings together non-professional local musicians to perform at a variety of City events. It has

two primary groups: the Alpharetta City Band and Alpha Jazz and several smaller ensemble groups.

- The **Alpharetta Symphony** delivers high-quality orchestral performances and community engagement. It is committed to becoming a regional professional orchestra and steadily expanding its programs, increasing revenue, and bringing on more professional staff and musicians. The **Alpharetta Symphony Youth Orchestra (ASYO)** is the Alpharetta Symphony's orchestra comprised of young musicians.
- The **Arcadia Theater**, is an up-and-coming performing arts group producing high-quality theater.
- **Avalon** is a private entity that programs a wide variety of visual art, events, and performances at spaces throughout the Avalon development
- The **Chattahoochee Evening Stars Quilt Guild** provide a community for people who create art through the fiber arts with an emphasis on quilting.
- **Friends of the Alpharetta Library (FOTAL)** strongly supports the arts and culture through the volunteer-based bookstore at the library, monthly book sales, and other culture-based programming.
- The **Georgia Nature Photographers' Association** is a statewide organization with an Alpharetta chapter, which provides free nature photography courses and hosts field trips to site throughout the state and beyond.
- **Lionheart Life Center** offers opportunities for neurodiverse students and young adults to participate in the community, particularly through the arts.
- **Metropolitan Ballet Theater** is a pre-professional dance company focused on classical training, providing live performance opportunities to future dancers and patrons of the arts.

BUSINESSES IN ARTS AND CULTURE

In addition to the City and its many partners, several businesses in Alpharetta contribute to the arts and culture scene. This includes private galleries and many restaurants and bars that host live music and showcase local art.



2

Engagement

Engagement

One of the challenges in planning for arts and culture is that everyone has their own definitions of what art is. What is attractive? What types of art does the community want? What are the best ways to celebrate culture? These are questions that do not have easy answers.

As part of this process, the City posed these questions and more to the community through focus group interviews and surveys in the summer and fall of 2024. The aim was to identify what is already working well in terms of arts and culture in Alpharetta, what may be missing, and what the community wants to see going forward.

FOCUS GROUPS

The project team held 8 focus groups with 60 participants, and gathered an additional 43 responses through follow-up surveys. The discussions included a broad mix of stakeholders, such as elected officials, arts leaders, educators, and local business representatives. Each conversation included four recurring questions on Alpharetta's strengths and areas for improvement regarding arts and culture. These conversations offered valuable insights into Alpharetta's existing strengths and potential areas for growth in the arts.

KEY FINDINGS

Current Strengths:

- » Alpharetta is a small city with big-city amenities
- » Strong offerings in music and visual arts
- » Community is active and engaged--there is real vibrancy
- » The Alpharetta Arts Center is a great asset
- » There are numerous arts organizations and City-sponsored arts events
- » There is increasing City support and investment in the arts
- » The arts community is inclusive and accessible

Areas for Improvement:

- » Need more/better options for performing arts facilities; this is reflected in the relative weakness of dance and theater opportunities
- » Improved coordination among arts organizations is a must, and so is clarifying the City's role in arts and culture
- » The community's diversity is not currently reflected in arts and culture opportunities
- » The "big" business community (major corporations with local offices) lacks involvement in Alpharetta's arts and culture

Identified Barriers:

- » Lack of transparent processes and dedicated funding for arts and culture
- » Limited facility options for performances and practices
- » Lack of a well-used, well-known central "repository" for arts information in the City

AN EMPHASIS ON THE LOCAL

One common theme throughout the engagement process was the community's desire for *local* arts and culture. For the purposes of Alpharetta's Arts & Culture Master Plan, local means...

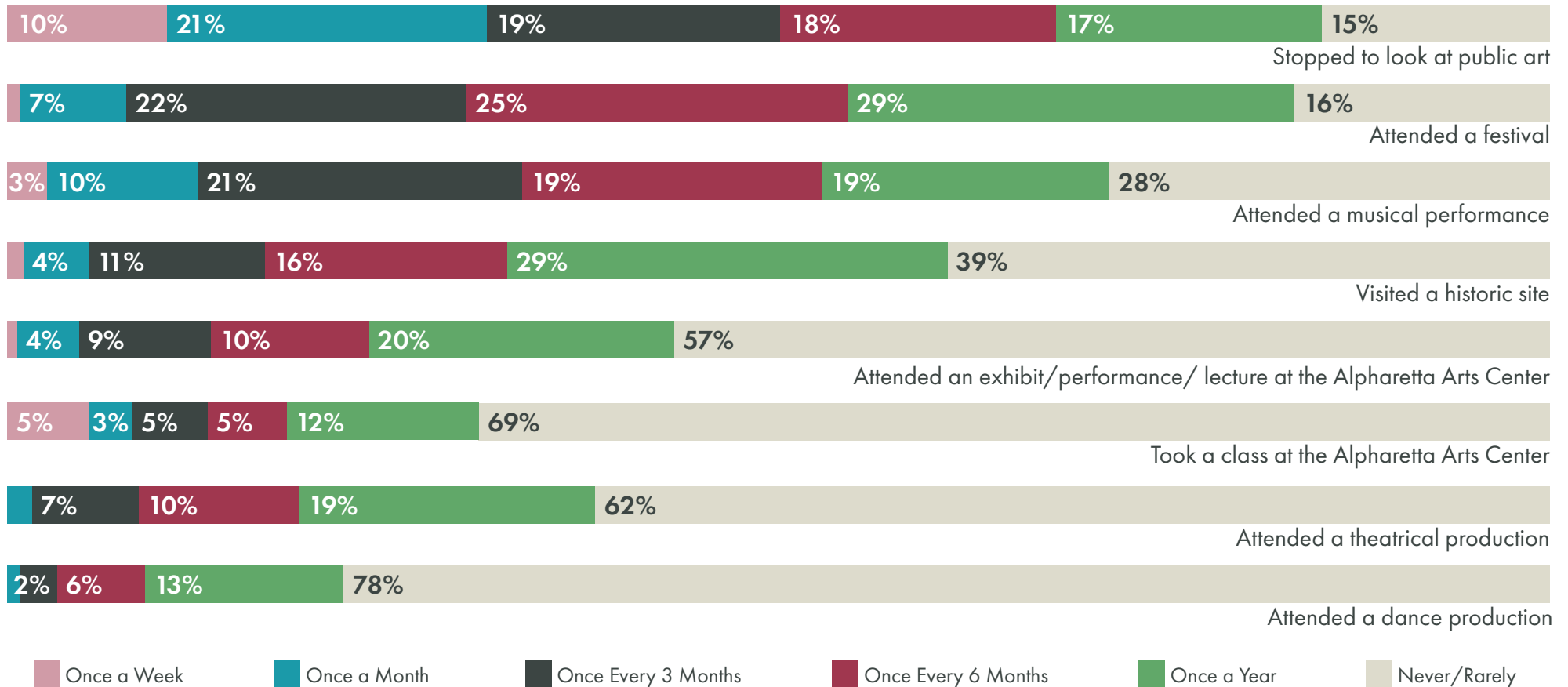
- » Serving local residents
- » Supporting local artists
- » Connecting people to Alpharetta as a place with a distinct culture and history
- » Integrating art into residents' and workers' daily lives and experiences

ONLINE SURVEY

In the fall of 2024, an online survey captured responses from 1,388 people. The majority are long-term residents of Alpharetta (57 percent) and fall between the ages of 40 and 79 (81 percent). More than half did not live with children (55 percent) and most identified as White (77 percent). The survey asked about arts participation, awareness of opportunities, preferred types and locations for art, what the City’s role should be, and support for funding.

Arts Participation: Survey respondents frequently engage with public art, attend festivals, and participate in musical performances, but less so in dance and theater. This is consistent with the focus group feedback regarding performing arts being a weakness currently in Alpharetta.

Survey Question: How often do you participate in these arts and culture activities in Alpharetta?



Engagement

Awareness and Marketing: City social media, email campaigns, and word-of-mouth are the primary ways respondents learn about arts and cultural events in Alpharetta. Many respondents suggested that improving marketing coordination would help increase awareness and engagement.

Preferred Art Types: People are most interested in performance and passive art experiences, as well as local art and visual art. Respondents were also enthusiastic about family-friendly and culturally representative art.

Location Preferences: Residents suggested expanding arts and culture opportunities beyond Downtown Alpharetta, especially in areas east of State Route 400, along trails, and in commercial areas.

City's Role in Arts Support: Most respondents believe the City should actively provide arts events, support arts funding, and coordinate efforts among local organizations. Respondents see the City as a partner, but not the primary funder and/or manager of future major arts facilities.

Funding. A little over half (58%) of respondents indicated that they would support a modest increase on their tax bill (less \$20/year) to fund arts; 31% said they would not support a modest increase; the remainder were not sure.

It should be noted that there is an aspect of "self-selection" to online surveys. In this case, the survey likely attracted people who are interested in the arts. Therefore, its findings--while informative--should be considered with caution. For example, the percentage of people supporting a tax increase is potentially skewed and does not necessarily represent the community as a whole.

MAJOR THEMES FROM ENGAGEMENT

Several important themes emerged from the engagement process, which will help shape the future of Alpharetta's arts and culture:

- » **Facilities Gap:** The community highlighted the need for more performance venues and more general, dedicated spaces for the arts.
- » **Vision and Coordination:** There is a strong desire for a clear, cohesive vision for arts and culture, paired with better coordination between the City and arts organizations.
- » **Equitable Access:** Expanding access to arts opportunities across all parts of the City is important, particularly in areas outside of downtown.
- » **Business and Community Engagement:** There is untapped potential to engage local businesses and residents more effectively in supporting the arts.
- » **Cultural Diversity:** Respondents stressed the importance of ensuring that Alpharetta's public art and events reflect the diversity of its population.





3



Arts & Culture Vision

Overall Vision

Alpharetta’s vision for arts and culture goes far beyond a scattering of sculptures and one-off events. Instead, **the vision is to integrate arts and culture into the places where people spend their daily lives:** lining the sidewalks and roadways people travel down, enhancing the parks residents visit, and enlivening the spaces people frequent. Through arts and culture, the goals are to:

- **SPARK.** *Will be integrated into the daily lives of the community.*
- **DISCOVER.** *Will open doors to learning new skills, experiencing new cultures, and understanding topics in new ways.*
- **CONNECT.** *Will provide opportunities for residents, business owners, and visitors to engage with each other and form connections.*
- **CREATE.** *Will enrich public spaces from installing unique art to activating places with special events.*

GREAT PLACES

Although arts and culture can be at home anywhere in Alpharetta, there are specific areas envisioned as arts and culture hubs: downtown, eastern Alpharetta (particularly around the North Point area), parks, and Avalon.

Downtown is already a vibrant center for arts and culture. Between public art installations along the Alpha Loop, the Alpharetta Arts Center, a diverse music scene, and several special events throughout the year, downtown is—and will remain—the core of the arts in Alpharetta.

The **east side** of Alpharetta (east of State Route 400) is currently lacking arts and culture opportunities. There is a strong desire to better serve this area moving forward, with significant opportunities to leverage the Big Creek Greenway and the North Point Mall redevelopment into hubs for arts and culture experiences. One example of how this is already occurring is the founding of the Spotlight Community Stage, which will help fill the gap for performing arts spaces in the coming years.

Alpharetta has a high-quality system of **parks** located throughout the city. Because the Recreation, Parks & Culture Department has agency over these properties, they can be considered “low-hanging fruit” as locations for enhancing arts and culture opportunities throughout Alpharetta.

Additionally, **Avalon** is a major regional destination with a strong arts and culture component. These offerings are provided by a private entity and are not detailed in this plan, but the City recognizes the role Avalon plays in enhancing arts and culture opportunities in Alpharetta.

FOCAL TYPES OF ARTS & CULTURE

In these hubs, there is a focus on three main types of arts and culture opportunities

- » Public Art
- » Performing Arts
- » Culture and Heritage

Public Art Vision

Public art of all genres can serve many purposes. It can exist for pure beautification of surroundings; contribute to unique community design that solves infrastructure challenges; enhance a sense of purpose within a given space; provide opportunities for reflection and emotional connection; and spotlight a community's authentic cultural identities.

Alpharetta's vision initially focuses on four main types of public art: art-infused infrastructure, murals, sculpture, and nature-based art.

ART-INFUSED INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure is everywhere, and can be a fantastic canvas for art and placemaking. This form of art transforms functional structures into creative expressions that enhance the environment. Most often it involves decorating structural elements of built landscapes, such as crosswalks, fences, pedestrian plazas, bridges, or underpasses. Examples of this currently in Alpharetta are the series of images adorning the elevated manholes along the Big Creek Greenway and the Crosswalks in Parks Program.

The vision is to integrate arts and culture early into City infrastructure projects so that it is baked into the design, ideally in ways that do not just "decorate" the infrastructure but enhance its functionality. Examples could include projects that help slow traffic (like asphalt painting) on streets where speeding is an issue, or using artistic lighting to illuminate dark underpasses that feel unsafe. The key is to involve arts and culture staff early in infrastructure projects to help identify potential opportunities, rather than trying to add art on later as an afterthought.

MURALS

Murals are a powerful form of public art that transform ordinary spaces into vibrant expressions of culture, history, and community. Often large-scale and highly visible—but sometimes also used to brighten small spaces--murals can reflect local identity, and celebrate heritage making them accessible to everyone, regardless of background. They have the unique ability to brighten built environments and turn neglected areas into great places.

Through initiatives like the Crosswalks in Parks Program, murals have begun to emerge throughout Alpharetta, adding both artistic appeal and functional elements to public spaces. Additionally, the City has partnered with the Alpha Loop Foundation, Arts Alpharetta, and the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) to expand mural projects along the Alpha Loop.

The vision is to continue to expand the presence of murals throughout Alpharetta—particularly in the main arts and culture hubs—with an emphasis on providing local artists with opportunities to display their work and tell the story of the community's culture and heritage.

SCULPTURES

Public sculptures can symbolize cultural values, commemorate historical events, or spark conversations. These three-dimensional works can range from abstract to representational in style, and can encourage a more interactive experience by inviting people to move around and explore them from different angles. Having sculpture in public places can help make art more accessible, turning everyday spaces into free galleries. Public sculpture can be permanent or temporary, placed alone as a striking focal point in public spaces, or grouped together into sculpture walks or art corridors.

Alpharetta currently has three main types of sculptures: permanent City-owned, permanent privately owned, and on-loan public art sculptures. There are over 30 sculptures located across the city, with many housed in Alpharetta's parks. They range in type from traditional memorial sculptures to abstract, stand-alone pieces.

The specific vision for sculpture in Alpharetta is to add more pieces in the city, with a focus on sculpture that interacts with and reflects its location and the heritage of Alpharetta. Because of their (somewhat) portable nature, sculpture offers opportunities to experiment with temporary pieces—these can be opportunities to try out more unconventional pieces and to place art in unexpected places.

NATURE-BASED ART

Nature-based art uses the natural environment for both materials and inspiration, engaging with the landscape to create works that celebrate and highlight the beauty of the outdoors. These installations can incorporate living elements like plants, trees, or water, or use natural materials like wood, stone, and earth to create site-specific works. Whether temporary or permanent, this type of art tends to foster a sense of harmony between people and nature.

Most of Alpharetta's current nature-based art is in its parks. Although there are few pieces that are made of natural materials, many murals, sculptures, and crosswalks have nature-based themes and content. The vision is to create more art using living elements, enhancing the City's parks to become nature's art galleries.

ART-INFUSED INFRASTRUCTURE



MURALS



SCULPTURES



NATURED-BASED ART



Performing Arts Vision

Performing arts can be powerful in building vibrancy, love of place, and belonging into the fabric of a community. Alpharetta already has a strong identity around music, but there is a desire in the community to integrate other types of performance into the City's identity in a more robust way.

Alpharetta's vision for performing arts focuses on three main types: music, theater, and dance.

MUSIC

Local concerts, street performances, and music festivals can provide opportunities for both established and emerging musicians, enriching Alpharetta's cultural life. These performances often reflect the unique identity and diversity of the community, and are arguably one of the most inclusive and accessible forms of art. Music can become a vital part of everyday life, transforming public spaces, and creating moments of connection among residents and visitors alike.

Music is one of the biggest strengths of Alpharetta's arts and culture scene today. From having community art pianos placed at parks, to the City's Music Match Program that oversees daily live music performances, music is alive and well. In addition to pops of music in daily life, there are several larger annual music events such as Wire & Wood and Home by Dark. Several non-City organizations—including Alpharetta Symphony, Alpharetta Symphony Youth Orchestra, Alpharetta City Band, the Arcadia Theater, Friends of the Alpharetta Library, and Alpharetta Arts Guild—further enrich music in Alpharetta through their programs, events, and facilities.

The specific vision for music in Alpharetta is simple: amp it up! In addition to continuing the many existing successful music programs and initiatives, music's presence in the community will grow through its integration with other art forms, performances in unique spaces, and exploration of diverse cultural experiences of music. A key element of this vision is the expansion of the number and types of venues and facilities that can support a variety of performance types.

THEATER

Theater can serve as a vital cultural hub, providing opportunities for local talent to showcase their skills and for audiences to experience live performances that reflect both universal themes and local stories. Community theaters often become gathering places where people of all ages and backgrounds can engage with the arts in an intimate setting. These productions can range from classic plays to experimental works, offering diverse experiences and fostering creative expression.

Most theater opportunities in Alpharetta are provided by non-profit or private organizations as opposed to the City itself. The City's longest-standing theater partnership is with a local community group, ACT1 Theater, which originally began as an outreach of Alpharetta Presbyterian Church and was the main partner for Shakespeare in the Park and other Alpharetta Arts Center Black Box Productions. Arcadia Theater, an emergent, independent theater company that builds on the 30 years of experience of ACT1 Theater will now be the main community theater group in Alpharetta. The City Center Players is another theater group that regularly partners with the Alpharetta Arts Center to offer children's theater productions, classes, and summer camps. Most recently, the Spotlight Community Stage is a new partnership between the City and North Point Mall. During the planning and creation of the Spotlight Community Stage, it became apparent that there is a strong desire from the community for a mid-size performance space.

Looking ahead, the vision for theater in Alpharetta is to embrace this art form more fully—primarily through the improvement of available spaces that can comfortably accommodate the growing number of theater groups. Access to a high-quality, sizable performing arts facility with dedicated space for theater programming will be key to this art form flourishing in Alpharetta.

MUSIC



THEATER



DANCE



DANCE

Dance can be a dynamic form of self-expression and community building, offering a range of performances and classes that engage people of all ages and backgrounds. Local dance groups often blend traditional and contemporary styles, reflecting both the global influences and unique cultural heritage of the area. Dance events, whether professional performances or community-driven initiatives, can transform public spaces and create vibrant, shared experiences. Dance helps to cultivate creativity, bring attention to local talent, and create opportunities for individuals to connect with each other through movement.

Opportunities to experience dance in Alpharetta are growing. The City frequently partners with the Metropolitan Ballet Theatre, which hosts an annual event on the Alpharetta Arts Center Terrace. The City occasionally provides free rehearsal space at the Preston Ridge Facility, a partnership with the YMCA. Additionally, the Recreation Services Division offers a youth dance program, catering to children ages 3–7. While this program introduces dance for young residents, the City recognizes the need to expand offerings and support for dance initiatives.

The vision for dance in Alpharetta is to expand access to this art form, both in terms of viewing dance and participating in it. Like theater, the key to achieving this vision is the availability of a high-quality facility for performances, practice, and administration space for dance organizations.





Culture & Heritage Vision

Alpharetta is proud of the many cultures represented by residents and its historical heritage. The City of Alpharetta supports cultivating its past, present, and future to benefit all of its citizens, and is actively pursuing opportunities to better celebrate its diversity through engaging programs and experiences.

Moving forward, the vision for culture and heritage in Alpharetta hinges on four main types of opportunities: events, museums and sites, tours, and lectures and classes.

EVENTS

Events play a crucial role in bringing the community together, fostering a sense of belonging, and celebrating local culture. Whether it's a seasonal festival, a farmers' market, a street fair, or a live performance, events create opportunities for residents to connect and engage with one another. They also attract visitors, boosting the local economy and showcasing the unique character of the City. Events often reflect the area's history, traditions, and creative spirit, making them integral to the community's identity and vitality.

Special events are one of the hallmarks of Alpharetta's current arts and culture offerings. The City is a major provider of these events, ranging from major events like the Taste of Alpharetta to smaller happenings such as launching gallery exhibits at the Arts Center. Additionally, there are many events that the City does not directly host or sponsor, but serve as a supporting partner. Many other organizations host special events. These include the Alpharetta Symphony, Chattahoochee Evening Stars Quilt Guild, Friends of the Alpharetta Library, Alpharetta Arts Guild, Alpharetta City Band, Arts Alpharetta, Alpharetta Symphony Youth Orchestra. The Alpharetta Business Association's Farmers Market is also a consistent venue for local artists and farmers to bring their creations and products to customers.

The vision for events in Alpharetta is to continue expanding their breadth and diversity. Primarily, the City is looking to partner with other organizations to support and promote their events--particularly those that celebrate cultural diversity and help tell the story of Alpharetta's heritage.

MUSEUMS & SITES

Museums and historic sites offer valuable glimpses into local culture, heritage, and history, helping preserve the unique stories of the community. These spaces provide educational experiences for residents and visitors alike, fostering a deeper understanding of the past while highlighting the City's identity. Local museums often feature exhibits on regional art, industry, or history, while historical sites may preserve landmarks that reflect key moments in the area's development. Together, they play a critical role in shaping--and understanding--the community.

The primary museums and cultural sites in Alpharetta are the Alpharetta & Old Milton County History Museum, Silos Park, and the FFA Log Cabin, all of which showcase various aspects of the community's history and culture. Additionally, the Mansell House is a Queen Anne-style home built in 1912 that is available for special event rentals. The Alpharetta & Old Milton Historical Society is a major partner in making history accessible to the community. Beyond sites focused on history, there are five art galleries that feature rotating exhibitions throughout the year.

A vision for museums and sites is a bit trickier than other forms of arts and culture: it is not feasible to "create" new historic sites and resources, at least in a way that prioritizes authenticity. Instead, the vision focuses on increased programming and interpretation, including expanding the locations where history can be interpreted. For example, hosting a historic foodways workshop at Old Rucker Farm as a joint event that marries the City's agriculture efforts with celebrating heritage.

EVENTS



MUSEUM & SITES



TOURS



LECTURES & CLASSES



TOURS

Tours offer an engaging way to explore the unique history, architecture, and cultural landmarks of a City and help visitors and residents discover hidden gems and learn about Alpharetta's past. Tours often highlight an area's distinctive neighborhoods, historic sites, and artistic hubs, offering an authentic perspective of life in the City. For residents, these tours can also deepen their appreciation for their hometown and provide new insights into familiar places. Combining tours with digital tools and emerging technologies can offer added immersion and interactivity with places.

The City currently offers three self-guided tours: Art Walk, History Walk, and the Alpha Loop Sip and Stroll. However, people can request a docent for an in-person tour. Other organizations in the City also provide tours, such as the Georgia Nature Photographers' Association.

The vision for tours is to expand opportunities to explore Alpharetta, particularly in terms of lesser-visited locations and exploration of new themes. This could include tours that dive into local restaurants, experiencing the growing South Asian community's heritage, or creating self-guided geocaching "trails" built around specific eras or people of Alpharetta's history.

LECTURES & CLASSES

Lectures and classes provide opportunities for lifelong learning, personal growth, and community engagement. Local libraries and centers of arts, education, and culture often host events that bring experts, authors, or thought leaders to share knowledge on a variety of topics, from history and science to arts and philosophy. Art classes offer residents a chance to explore their creativity and develop new skills in a supportive setting, making the arts accessible to people of all ages and skill levels. These educational offerings not only stimulate intellectual curiosity but also encourage connections between residents, helping to strengthen community ties.

The City offers several lectures and classes related to the arts, with the Arts Center serving as the hub. The vast majority of these classes are visual arts instruction, tailored to a range of different age groups. Another major provider is the Alpharetta Library, which hosts several lectures and classes throughout the year. Other organizations that provide arts- and culture-related classes and lectures include the Chattahoochee Evening Stars Quilt Guild, FOTAL, the Arcadia Theater, the Georgia Nature Photographers Association, the Alpharetta Symphony, Alpharetta Arts Guild, Lionheart Life Center, Metropolitan Ballet Theatre, Inc., Arts Alpharetta, and the Alpharetta Symphony Youth Orchestra.

Into the future, the vision is for both the City and its partner organizations to continue providing a wealth of lectures and classes. This would also include educational opportunities to support artists with training on topics like branding and marketing and financial strategies for creative businesses. These can be further bolstered by having a single arts and culture educational portal where all opportunities are posted on a City-wide calendar, and encouraging joint events that mix arts and culture disciplines in innovative ways unique to Alpharetta.





4

Strategies & Recommendations

Our Path Forward

KEY STRATEGIES

The purpose of this plan is to meet the community's arts and culture needs and chart the path for reaching the City's vision for a more cohesive approach to arts and culture. One key to achieving this is to provide **a series of clear, interrelated strategies** that the City and its partners can pursue incrementally over time as resources are available. These strategies—detailed below—will help create an environment where arts and cultural **initiatives can evolve, expand, and adapt to the community's changing needs.**

To move forward, the Arts & Culture Master Plan recommends seven overarching priorities and strategies:

- **Foster partnerships:** Foster a culture of partnership between private business, non-profits, and the public sector in arts and culture initiatives across the city.
- **Serve as a connector:** Facilitate connections between Alpharetta's wide variety of historic, arts and cultural organizations.
- **Reflect the community:** Reflect Alpharetta's diverse collection of cultural backgrounds, interests, and places in all aspects of arts and culture.
- **Boost economic development:** Capitalize on Alpharetta's strong arts and culture climate to boost economic development.
- **Integrate into operational processes:** Further integrate arts and culture into projects and processes to create clear and transparent protocols.
- **Amplify marketing:** Boost public and private arts and culture activities with cohesive marketing and promotional tools.
- **Maintain character:** Utilize arts and culture to maintain Alpharetta's character in the region, while evolving and connecting with its residents.

1.



Foster Partnerships



Foster a culture of partnership between private business, non-profits, and the public sector in arts and culture initiatives across the City. Alpharetta’s robust business community and network of non-profit organizations offer myriad opportunities for partnership to boost engagement with effectiveness of, and prospective funding for the City’s arts and culture initiatives. There is an opportunity to create pathways for businesses to plug into mutually beneficial relationships with the arts and culture sector, helping create more business opportunities in Alpharetta, more opportunities to participate in arts and culture, and help develop and celebrate local artists.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Encourage giving to the arts and culture sector to benefit the community. Pursue fundraising partnerships and generate resources for the City of Alpharetta’s arts and culture priorities. As outlined in the Funding section, funding mechanisms for arts and culture activities include foundation grants, corporate sponsorships, and corporate and individual donations. In addition to providing much-needed budget for these projects, they also afford the opportunity to connect Alpharetta’s many corporations and nonprofit organizations to the community with direct impact.

- » **Identify an existing arts umbrella organization which the City can support more robustly and given the charge to fundraise for and administer some City-sponsored initiatives as well as provide funding resources for local organizations.** A partnership with an anchor nonprofit organization is also a frequent requirement for many grant opportunities, so fostering a seamless relationship will serve Alpharetta well on many fronts.
- » Create and maintain a catalog of sponsorship opportunities for City events. Consider working with an outside consultant to pitch these sponsorships and manage their administration.

FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED:

Create pathways for companies to learn more about opportunities to participate in the arts (space sharing, new tenants, residency programs, new partnerships, knowledge sharing, skill development, etc.). While some very enterprising organizations might come to the City with concepts, typically companies need to be presented with ideas of how they might support and participate in arts and culture activities. Being able to articulate these ideas in the context of corporate goals (i.e., cost savings, social responsibility, employee engagement, and environmental stewardship) will help advance these opportunities further.

- » Create and maintain lists of arts and culture needs and ways corporations can plug in, such as space sharing, renting to arts and culture organizations, residency programs, new partnerships, knowledge sharing, skill development, and volunteering. Equip Economic Development staff with this information and work with civic partners (Alpharetta Business Association, Toastmasters, Rotary Club, etc.) to spread the word.
- » Identify new and existing corporate partners and highlight their involvement to the business community and city at large; spotlighting these businesses can strengthen these relationships.

Provide financial support when feasible for arts and culture projects, programs, and happenings. Funding is a major need for all arts and culture organizations serving Alpharetta. Unfortunately, there is no single easy funding source to meet these needs. Instead, the City and its partners will need to pursue multiple opportunities in parallel:

- » Support arts organizations in building internal capacity so that they can increase fundraising for partner organizations and the Arts Center.
- » Consider a marketing campaign to businesses that promotes the benefits of increasing employee's exposure to creativity (increased employee retention, increased employee morale, increased revenue, etc.) and promoting corporate civic participation.
- » Consider collective marketing efforts to drive awareness of the benefits of giving to partner organizations and other arts organizations by highlighting their stories and contributions to the community. Collectively featuring these initiatives during high-profile giving periods such as Arts and Humanities Month (October), Giving Tuesday, winter holidays, or Georgia Gives Day would be especially impactful.
- » Seek grant funding to support arts and culture in Alpharetta from foundations and government funders, particularly those who have opportunities to build a relationship and multi-year support. Doing so may help leverage these relationships to the entire community and spur other institutional giving.
- » Consider multi-organization public partnerships for catalytic or ambitious projects that would help leverage larger institutional investment in the community, such as placemaking projects or large scale development. This is a key area for Alpharetta's Department of Community Development to provide leadership.
- » Advocate for a small amount of funding from the City's General Fund to start a pilot microgrant program. Piloting this type of program for small arts organizations and/or businesses could start with an initial outlay of just \$10K-\$20K, achieving real impact with a \$500-\$1000 investment per business. Recipients could use these funds for small capacity building, business development projects, or artistic production projects.

FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED:

Support pipelines for pre-professional and emerging artists to build careers in the arts. To keep Alpharetta’s arts ecosystem thriving and local, the City and its partners need to create visible pathways for students and emerging artists to become involved in the creative community and see viable long-term options in Alpharetta.

- » Encourage involvement in arts and culture infrastructure: include artists, especially students, in the planning and selection of public arts-related events. Consider creating student and/or resident art competitions for City-sponsored designs, such as annual event posters and City-wide collateral.
- » Hold a roundtable discussion with local arts educators and principals to explore ways to facilitate arts engagement with schools. Share City event calendars and potential partnership opportunities with arts educators as far in advance as possible. Provide tickets to or help facilitate field trips to arts programs.
- » Create opportunities for networking and skill building: partner with nonprofit organizations or individual artists to host professional development skills-building workshops for artists. Offer workshops for any open public calls to help local artists understand what they need to consider. Consider providing an online toolkit of resources such as a list of local entrepreneurship business development programs (like SCORE, SBA), and artist development organizations. Local organizations include South Arts, Georgia Lawyers for the Arts, Georgia Council for the Arts, and Art is King. National organizations include Creative Capital, Springboard for the Arts, Center for Cultural Power, Artists U, and The Field.
- » Create specific City-sponsored events or juried exhibitions for students or emerging artists. Reserve exhibition space in City buildings for students. Devote a public or publicly accessible mural space for rotating student artwork such as this program in Deerfield, IL, which annually places artwork on the prominent wall of a private building and also serves as a teaching opportunity for the high school visual arts program.
- » Work with the region’s cultural institutions (such as the High Museum, the Alliance Theatre, the Center for Puppetry Arts, and the Atlanta Opera) to have staff or visiting artists present to Art Center students (youth and adult).
- » Develop opportunities for teens exploring career paths, including Teen Nights, a teen volunteer program, or a pre-professional club for kids interested in the arts similar to Aurora Theatre’s Teen Nation program.

Identify and form networks for collaboration with civic organizations such as the Alpha Loop Foundation, Arts Alpharetta, and more. Alpharetta has a wealth of capable and interested individuals invested in the strength and vibrancy of their community. Creating structured pathways for collaboration with civic organizations can yield additional bandwidth and community engagement through both staff administration and volunteer bases.

- » Work with City staff and community leaders to explore areas where these organizations can make an impact and provide a value-add to existing City efforts. In addition to opening funding opportunities as mentioned above, this may include cataloging Alpharetta’s arts assets and resources, maintaining lists of cultural organizations, etc.
- » Financial support for these organizations is necessary to achieve the desired results, but could alleviate some of the need to allocate additional City staff in the short term.

Serve As a Connector



Facilitate connections between Alpharetta’s wide variety of historic, arts, and cultural organizations. The City of Alpharetta is well poised to leverage its position within the community as a nexus for arts and culture organizations to connect with one another—a commonly stated need during this planning process. By creating channels for connection and cross-pollination amongst the arts and culture community, Alpharetta can help support organizations’ growth capacity, push boundaries, and be more effective at achieving the community’s vision for arts and culture priorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Share opportunities for public arts and culture activities with local artists and arts organizations. Information-sharing is key to connection. Stakeholders in the arts and culture community cited their desire to know more about what one another and the City are doing in this space.

- » Work to ensure that the City distributes RFPs and other calls for collaboration to a diverse audience. Ensure that databases include representatives from all of Alpharetta’s cultural communities and include statements within the calls themselves that encourage participation.
- » Add a portal on the arts and culture area of the City’s website specifically for those working in the space (or, eventually, on the website of the arts umbrella organization the City partners with, as mentioned above) to collect and share calendars of events (as far out into the future as possible), RFPs, calls for artists, appropriate City contact information, and the aforementioned list of arts and culture organizations serving Alpharetta.
- » Send regular communications of arts and culture happenings/opportunities to subscribers. This does not need to be overly designed or cumbersome to produce; there are several readily available communications platforms that can help. The key goal is regular, sustained outreach and information sharing.
 - Content could include City-sponsored events and opportunities, spotlight City arts and culture happenings, and—importantly—community submissions of events, news, RFPs, and other opportunities. Set criteria for inclusion in the newsletter, which would not imply endorsement by the City. See the City of Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs monthly newsletter as an example.
 - Create a subscriber base by sending an initial issue of the newsletter to organizations and individuals already partnering with the City on arts and culture activities, inviting them to share with their networks. Place a subscribe link on the City’s website, include in staff email signatures, and promote amongst the arts and culture community as appropriate.

Offer conduits for arts and culture organizations to connect with each other, the City, and other businesses who would benefit from proximity to arts and culture activity. Stakeholders across disciplines are yearning for structured opportunities to convene and collaborate. Intentional and inclusive gatherings create opportunities for artists, cultural organizations of all sizes, non-arts community organizations, and commercial interests to connect and converse. These result in important creative synergies, greater organizational support, and provide the aggregate effect needed for the community to advocate for itself.

- » Create regular, intentional convenings such as quarterly information-gathering roundtables, workshops, meet-and-greets or town halls with key City personnel, and simple networking gatherings for the arts and culture community. Having a specific topic or focus for each event can provide structure and generate interest in attendance. For example, workshop topics could include marketing and promotion (a stated need by many stakeholders), approaching real estate and space needs, or how to work with the City on events.

Create a task force for performing arts organizations to connect with each other and the City to help address space constraints, boost programming for theater and dance, and co-promote burgeoning new programs. This task force could eventually turn into a body that can help administer a future performing arts center.



Reflect the Community



Reflect Alpharetta’s cultural backgrounds, interests, and places in all aspects of arts and culture. Although Alpharetta already features enviable arts and cultural resources, residents and other stakeholders noted that resources are not distributed evenly across the full geography of the City. In a similar vein, the community appreciates—and wants more—offerings that reflect distinct cultures, ethnicities, and traditions. These assets can make space feel more vibrant and inclusive by helping to define space and unique neighborhood characteristics, driving economic development, connection to place, and desire to be in Alpharetta.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Distribute the City’s arts and culture resources across Alpharetta. Expanding Alpharetta’s arts and culture assets and resources more broadly demonstrates the importance of all Alpharettans, and provides more and different opportunities to expand offerings and styles. The City should site new public art installations with the intention of including more areas and efforts should be made to identify ways to incorporate other forms of arts and culture across Alpharetta.

- » Consider a more detailed planning effort for each of the identified arts and culture hubs: downtown, North Point, Avalon, and parks. A deliverable for this process could include an interactive map with locations identified for new public art and historical markers; existing and potential venues; and a more detailed inventory of programmed gatherings, lectures, classes, and workshops in these hubs. The study should consider empty commercial spaces, religious or educational institutions, municipal spaces, and non-traditional locations for performances and shows such as building courtyards, empty lots, and unused commercial or light industrial spaces.
- » Encourage arts and culture organizations to consider sites in all hubs for events, performances, and installations and provide greater support for happenings in under-utilized areas.
- » In future capital park projects, work with artists to evaluate opportunities for creating more usable outdoor venues and the needed infrastructure (electricity, shelter, etc.) to support potential events, as well as consult on site design elements that could support public art opportunities.
- » Utilize municipal buildings and City-owned grounds to host performances and exhibitions. The City can couple this with other existing activities like the Street Art Fest or the Paint the Town Plein Art Event to increase interest and draw people into civic buildings. When appropriate, the City can match themes of exhibitions or performances to locations that would amplify the tone of the work on display. For instance, the City could sponsor an art-based exhibition about water or experiences with water at a Watershed Management location. These types of projects tend to be enjoyable for employees who look forward to seeing the work and also to promote civic engagement by bringing people into city buildings to engage in dialogue with one another.

REFLECT THE COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED:

Identify community goals where arts and culture can support greater awareness, efficacy, or engage hard-to-reach audiences. Arts and culture are uniquely suited to raise awareness and address challenges of all types from safety, public health, environmental awareness—even keeping people informed and engaged in an area under construction. Working with artists brings a design-minded approach and a fresh perspective. Examples:

- » Work with socially engaged artists to connect with hard-to-reach segments of the population around specific issues of interest through artistic activations.
- » Increase pedestrian safety through painted crosswalks or artistic wayfinding.
- » Murals on park sidewalks to encourage wellness.
- » Artistic benches or bus stops or kinetic installations that encourage seniors to be more active.
- » Educational art installations or murals alongside municipal projects that teach core principles of conservation, watershed, history, etc.
- » Painted storm drains encourage residents to dispose of waste properly.

Identify “high impact/high reward” locations to invest in art-infused infrastructure, using arts and culture to help define spaces. Incorporating art into infrastructure provides more opportunities for vibrancy and community connectedness, often providing maximum impact without much additional expense. Public art and cultural zones can also create gateways into the City and neighborhoods and help foster a sense of identity. Examples of using arts and culture as “gateway” elements into neighborhoods around Alpharetta and/or major roadway entrances to the City could include:

- » Utilize small-scale art projects to infuse a sense of identity into the arts and culture hubs, and neighborhoods that desire it. This can offer opportunities for local artists to get a “first start” on public art projects.
- » Consider a signature sculptural element that the City could replicate in different hubs and painted to reflect each hub’s individual character (e.g., Cows in Houston).
- » Lean into Alpharetta’s “Music City” identity by integrating artwork with the theme of music or sound.
- » Install musical benches (e.g., Dallas teetertotters).
- » Create temporary installations yearly with the theme of sound or music that highlight Alpharetta’s relationship with music. This could coincide with a currently occurring music festival.
- » Sound or light installations in places where it would enhance vibrancy, especially where public safety is a concern.
- » Murals that highlight local music history.
- » Sculpture that defines space suitable for public performance (i.e., Coopers Alley in Chattanooga).
- » Utilize temporary or ephemeral installations to “try on” art styles, such as a lighting installation on City Hall that changes monthly or quarterly (e.g., Chicago’s Art on the Mart) or installations tied to holidays (e.g., Norcross’ Valentine’s Day hearts).

REFLECT THE COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED:

Create a clear process for cultural groups to host their events at City facilities and use engagement channels to distribute this widely. The City, organizations, and stakeholders agree on a desire to integrate more of Alpharetta’s cultures, ethnicities, and traditions into events held in the City. While the City’s capacity for producing events is at its current limit, there is opportunity to provide more navigational support for groups seeking to host their own events in Alpharetta. The City needs to define and share these resources and processes.

- » Create an internal working group and consider assembling an outside taskforce to evaluate:
 - The types of ways for groups to participate in events in Alpharetta, including participating in or partnering on existing City-planned or City-sponsored events, producing events with some City resources, or hosting their own wholly produced events on City property.
 - The resources (funding, space, equipment, staffing, etc.) that the City can devote to outside events
 - Any parameters for the content of events that organizations hold on City property or with City support
- » Set clear roles and responsibilities within City departments for the execution of these events and transparent protocols for consideration. At a minimum, create an easily accessible and simple form for organizations to submit, but consider establishing a “concierge” service to provide hands-on assistance.
- » If there are events that the City is seeking to add to its own calendar without increasing its own staff burden, utilize the network of arts and culture organizations and convenings mentioned above to disseminate an RFP for the event production.



Boost Economic Development



Capitalize on Alpharetta’s strong arts and culture opportunities to boost economic development. Arts and culture make good business sense, and support Alpharetta’s role as an economic powerhouse. Investing in the arts and culture industry creates an inviting, innovative environment that can drive economic impact to local complementary businesses such as hospitality, retail, restaurants, and technology. Additionally, when the arts and businesses partner, it increases economic activity. While Alpharetta has a good start on harnessing arts and culture to activate economic development, collaborative and transparent processes will make these efforts much more efficient and impactful. The goal should be to create win-win partnerships for development, businesses, and arts and culture.

HOW DO PRIVATE DEVELOPERS AND OTHER BUSINESSES BENEFIT FROM ARTS & CULTURE?

Arts and culture are big business.

- » The most recent estimates by the Bureau of Economic Analysis and the National Association of State Arts Agencies find that arts and culture generated \$31.5 billion to Georgia’s economy, more than utilities or agriculture and forestry. (Source: National Association of State Arts Organizations)
- » In Georgia, spending by non-profit arts and culture audiences generated a total of \$84.9 million in tax revenues for state and local government. (Source: Arts and Economic Prosperity VI)
- » The average non-profit arts event in Georgia generates direct and indirect related spending per person of \$32.77 for local attendees and \$76.43 for non-local attendees. (Source: Arts and Economic Prosperity VI)

Art attracts workforce talent.

- » From Americans for the Arts 2023 *Americans Speak Out About the Arts* Survey, “Half of people with a college degree (49 percent)—a majority of Millennials (52 percent) and Gen X (54 percent)—say they would strongly consider the arts when deciding where to move for a job.”
- » The same study cites that 79% of Americans believe “Arts and culture is ‘important to their community’s businesses, economy, and local jobs.’”
- » The arts stimulate positive company culture and conversation, foster employee well-being, and inspire a healthier work environment through unique and meaningful experiences for human connection. (Source: *Why Partner With the Arts?* by the pARTnership Movement, Americans for the Arts)

Including the arts in private development increases property values, drives interest in properties, and contributes to placemaking.

- » By thoughtfully curating work that reflects the community and/or location, developers immediately communicate to patrons the “vibe” of a place and increase attachment to a place.
- » Artwork provides a marketing incentive for tenants and customers. Distinctive pieces can generate publicity and make businesses memorable amongst their competitors.
- » Art-based events help cultivate a sense of place and community, particularly in newer developments with stories that are just beginning.

HOW DO PRIVATE DEVELOPERS AND OTHER BUSINESSES BENEFIT FROM ARTS & CULTURE? (CONTINUED)

- » Public art can drive interest in properties. A mural painted along a downtown alleyway in Norcross prompted Social Fox Brewing to choose a specific location and even helped name their business—providing even more connection to the space.

Art can signal that the developer cares about the City.

- » By including work that contributes to the local cultural identity, businesses show that they support and participate in their communities. From the above-referenced Americans for the Arts survey, “67% of Americans say ‘the arts unify our communities regardless of age, race, and ethnicity’ and 62% agree that the arts ‘helps me understand other cultures better.’”

Public art reduces crime. Researchers at the University of Cincinnati found a 28% reduction in violent crime in areas where murals surrounded mixed use development compared to an increase in violent crime City-wide during the same period (2010-2018).

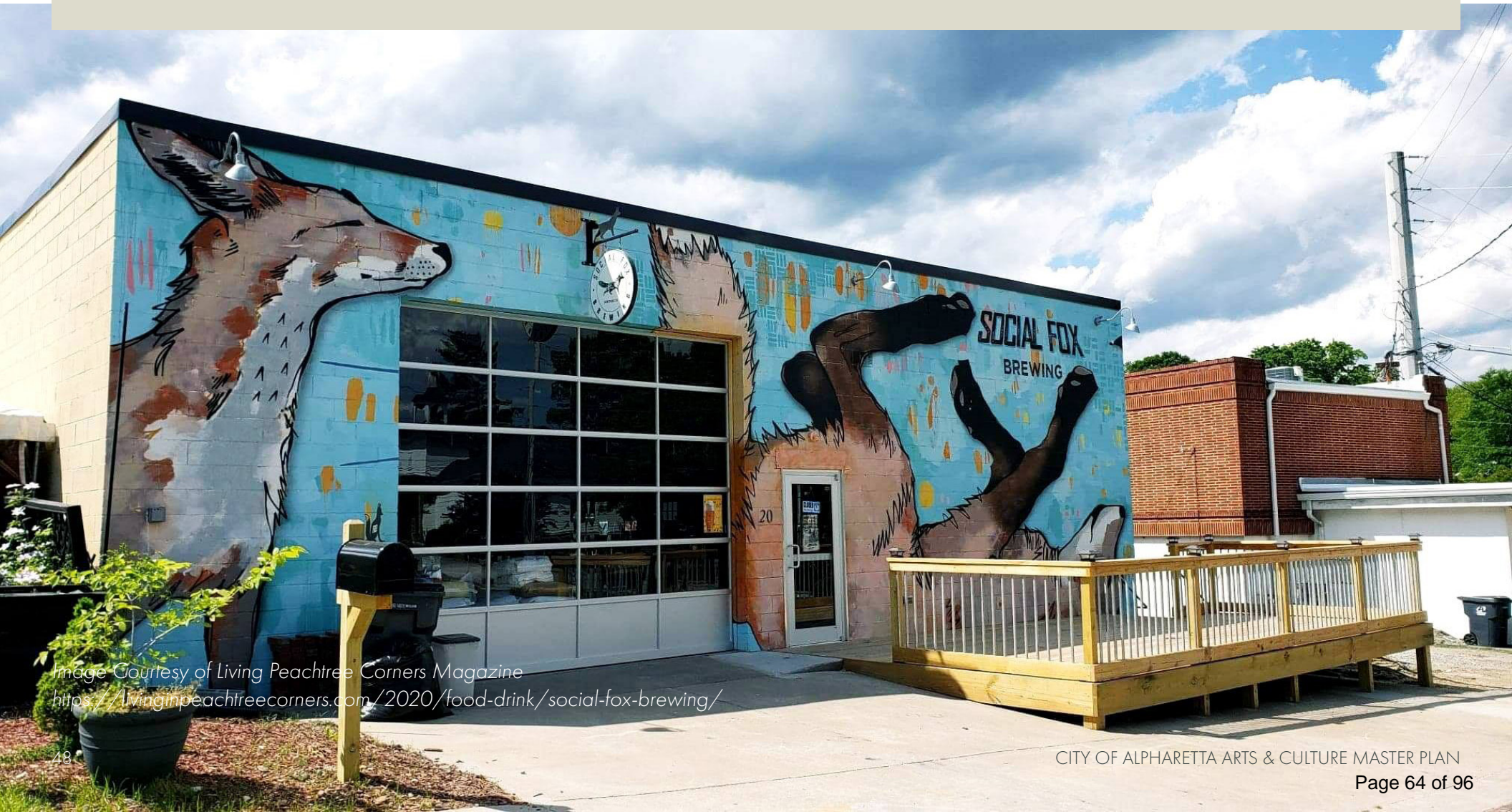


Image Courtesy of Living Peachtree Corners Magazine
<https://livingpeachtreecorners.com/2020/food-drink/social-fox-brewing/>

BOOST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

Promote arts and culture businesses, programs, and/or events that coincide with City initiatives and placemaking. Attendance at arts events and happenings generates additional spending and more time spent by residents in commercial areas and by non-residents within the community at large. Thus, an investment in boosting arts and culture businesses (galleries, art supply stores, class providers), programs, and events is an investment in the overall economic health of Alpharetta. (See also Strategy #6 Amplify Marketing)

Evaluate opportunities for incentives/tax breaks for artists and art-related businesses. Tax opportunities can incentivize arts-related development and business within the community, building vibrancy and economic growth. Tools to consider include:

- » **Property tax credits** for creating artist workspace or housing. The City can layer these with other real estate incentives, such as Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC).
- » Creation of **cultural districts** can help with marketing cultural and historical locations in close proximity. With this tool, the City can choose exactly whether the cultural district is simply a marketing or neighborhood designation or whether other incentives are also included. By formally defining a cultural district, the City can include any variety of common incentives to help bring vibrancy to a location through encouraging artists and arts organizations to cluster there. Common incentives include lowered or waived property taxes; waived sales tax for purchase of tickets and art products; reduced or waived costs for artists to occupy space if they commit to a certain time period of occupancy; use of already available tax tools such as LIHTC to develop affordable housing with some set aside for artists; and more. Some communities use these designations to create “open container” zones to attract businesses and visitors, though these can be controversial. The Atlanta Midtown Arts District is an example of a district in which there are no formal government incentives, but local arts organizations and businesses utilize the moniker for marketing purposes and to encourage other business owners to include arts production or artists in residents within their developments. The City can layer these incentives with other existing designations.
- » **Tax Allocation Districts (TADs)** to fund development or redevelopment. This tool is best utilized when paired with a public-private partnership opportunity, and can help develop properties anchored around cultural facilities that include other mixed-use or for hard-to-develop locations that could be suitable for arts work uses. Recently the TAD for the North Point area dissolved because of disappointing returns, but it is still a tool to consider as the market continues to evolve.
- » **Better support for arts businesses and organizations** to take advantage of existing incentives for real estate development and economic development through current or future Alpharetta Economic Development programs.
 - Create a downloadable information sheet (ex., “Development Opportunities for Arts Organizations and Arts-Related Businesses”) on the Economic Development’s website and promote this to the arts and culture community.
 - Have Economic Development and Community Development staff lead an arts community convening or workshop (see Foster Partnerships, page 43) on development and real estate opportunities.
 - Work with other nonprofit partners experienced in working with private landlords to provide artist workspaces to help landlords understand and prepare for working with artists.

BOOST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED:

Create a tool kit for developers to show how the integration of arts and culture into their projects can boost economic engagement. Property development is often a numbers-driven enterprise with tight margins, and perceived “extras” like public art and other cultural integration often are not priorities. Clearly demonstrating to developers the impact of arts and cultural integration into their projects may help improve and expand these important elements. Including a toolkit as part of the suite of Economic Development materials and planning website can give developers clear direction. A toolkit could include:

- » Statistics showing how the inclusion of arts and culture can boost economic engagement with properties by both tenants and customers
- » Offer examples of different types of successful arts and culture inclusions, such as sculptures, murals, community meeting and maker spaces, interactive art elements, dedicated outdoor performance spaces, etc.
- » An overview of the public art process for private development projects; see Strategy #7-1

City planners should also be proactive in identifying elements of new development and redevelopment projects that could be ripe candidates for inclusion of arts and culture. Consider identifying specific opportunities and proactively reaching out to property owners and developers to gauge their interest in integrating arts and culture opportunities into their projects, even if only in the short term.

- » Identify spaces within growing commercial centers for studios, workspaces, arts retail, and artists-in-residence of all media. A good example of this already occurring is at North Point Mall, where new arts facilities are taking root as part of ongoing plans for redevelopment.
- » Unused commercial and industrial space can be ideal for film production, fabrication, studio space, and other types of arts work.
- » Produce temporary art exhibitions at commercial locations with vacancies to increase vibrancy and encourage interest in the area. This could be a series or a group of pieces by a single artist.

Leverage arts and culture happenings as unique selling points in targeted marketing campaigns to attract tourists seeking cultural experiences. Arts events and vibrant commercial areas are tourism drivers; intentionally including these in tourism marketing campaigns will help cement Alpharetta’s identity in this area. City communications staff should connect regularly with Alpharetta Convention and Visitor Bureau’s staff to understand upcoming promotional campaigns and explore how to plug in Alpharetta’s arts and culture opportunities into the messaging. A simple project is to create and maintain an easily accessible repository of captioned images for ready use by tourism agencies and the media. Consider future surveying at arts and cultural events and performances to understand the audience base and where they are coming from to pinpoint key messages.

STRATEGY 5 Integrate into Operational Processes



Further integrate arts and culture into projects and processes to create clear and transparent protocols. When deployed with strategic purpose in projects, arts and culture can enhance goals for safety, transportation, economic development, connecting with hard-to reach sectors of the community. Considering arts and culture as a lens in major planning efforts from the onset of projects can make them more effective, more cost-efficient, and more impactful. Current capacity may need to expand over time to meet the need for high-quality impact as Alpharetta integrates arts and culture into more priority areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Establish a clear process for private development to incorporate arts and culture in new or redeveloped capital projects. The process for private development projects to contribute to public art is not currently explicit in the City's code. Usually when a developer provides a piece of public art, it is because the City places a condition on the development's recommendation. In this situation, the developer must then work with City staff to create a public art plan, and then go in front of the Cultural Arts Commission for recommendation.

Although this has resulted in an increased amount of public art, the process is imperfect and results are mixed. Requiring an additional approval for development adds time (and uncertainty) to projects, which often represents a hit to the project's financials. Developers also must identify and procure the art themselves. For most developers this is very difficult, as public art is not a typical area of expertise nor are most developers plugged into local and regional artist networks. Because of this, the art that comes out of this process is not always the quality and the type of art the community would like to see. Additionally, because the art comes about as a condition, it starts later in the process—much of the foundational design and programming is already established, and there are few opportunities to really integrate art into the project meaningfully.

In consultation with the City Attorney, Alpharetta should explore developing a better process for adding public art through private development. This new process should reduce the uncertainty around whether a development will be required to provide art, and the City can structure it in a way that results in better quality pieces. The City may wish to explore the following:

- » Rather than requiring art as a condition, consider modifying the code of ordinances to indicate when and where the City requires public art. This provides the development community with a clear expectation from the beginning, and is an opportunity to integrate arts and culture elements into early design work. Two "triggers" for an art requirement could include:
 - **Size/intensity of the project.** Consider requiring art for projects that are above a certain square footage, such as 20,000 square feet.

INTEGRATE INTO OPERATIONAL PROCESSES RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED:

Continued. ...

- **Location** (recommended). Consider requiring art in all non-single family projects located in arts and culture hubs identified in this Arts & Culture Master Plan; this would apply to Downtown Alpharetta and North Point, as a private entity manages Avalon and parks have a public process for their capital improvements. The City already has specialized code provisions for Downtown and North Point, so there is precedent for requiring high quality design and an existing framework for requiring special considerations.
- » If a project does “trigger” the public art requirement, consider providing developers with two options for meeting it:
 - **Option 1:** Work with the developer to integrate art into the project at the earliest stage possible. This could include an initial art plan that the City requires as part of a project’s initial submittal package. The process could be similar to how it works now, with the developer working with both City staff and other arts community leaders as advisors in the process.
 - » For this option, consider establishing a point-based system in the code for meeting the public art requirement. For example, public art that is comparatively “easy” to do, such as a mural on the side of the building, may be worth 2 points whereas art integrated into infrastructure may be worth 5 points. The intent would be to provide developers with a menu of options for meeting a total number of art points. The total required could vary as well based on a project’s size and/or location.
 - » Additionally, the City should consider developing a document with clear design guidelines and direction for developers. These guidelines should include recommendations on foot/area ratios, public space amenities and illumination, artist compensation and selection criteria, and project and artwork selection criteria (fabrication, safety, artist vision, and maintenance considerations). This document should also:
 - Identify the City’s specific values or priorities that they would like to amplify through the program; this should include referencing this Arts & Culture Master Plan for Alpharetta’s overall vision and the focus public art types.
 - Clarify duties and responsibilities where more than one committee or board may have jurisdiction over or may advise the art aspect of the project. (what group is doing what, where in the process are there potential for dependencies between committees/boards, etc.)
 - Provide examples of different types of work and what demonstrates high quality. Provide examples of what the City would not approve and include an explanation of why.
 - Share that while the City does not endorse or sponsor use of specific artists or consultants, if more customized advisement is sought, the City could hire public art consultants to support the project.
 - Consider creating a website or webpage linked to both the Arts and Culture and Planning webpages as a portal to host information about this process.
 - **Option 2.** Provide a “fee-in-lieu of” option, similar to how the City offers a fee-in-lieu of option for parking in Downtown Alpharetta. In this scenario, developers could opt out of providing art on their own site and instead pay into a designated City-managed fund. The fund would have stipulations on how/where the City could spend funds to ensure there is a rational “nexus” between the fee a developer is providing and a benefit that the site receives.
 - A designated City-managed fund should cover public art procurement, maintenance, curation, and administration so that the City can use fees flexibly to support both strategic priorities for public art and procurement of public art.

Should the City choose to update its code to require art in certain projects, it is important that the requirements are reasonable. The goal is to not deter or bog down development, but to layer in art as a value add for all parties.

INTEGRATE INTO OPERATIONAL PROCESSES RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED:

Integrate arts and culture as part of the standard process for new and updated infrastructure and planning projects. The City should require consideration of arts and cultural in its plans and initiatives. Rather than departments layering it in after projects are planned, including arts and culture from the start signals that it is a municipal priority; yields more integrated, impactful, and often more cost-effective inclusion; and also potentially unlocks budget dollars for arts-related project elements in placemaking.

- » Include arts and culture as a standard element in future comprehensive plan updates.
- » Develop and refine over time a workflow for project types and levels and the inclusion of arts and culture experts to review plans and make suggestions. Depending on the type and complexity of various projects, this may draw from existing City arts staff, a roster of community partners or artists, or a hired consultant. Consider and set standards for types of projects that the Cultural Arts Commission would need to vet.

Plan for the future hiring of an additional staff member to administer arts and culture initiatives and boost engagement within the arts and culture community. Current Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services staff are already producing a vast amount of programming and coordination with other City departments. To achieve the levels of community connection that is desired--and deeper, sustained integration of arts and culture into economic development and City planning processes--the City will need more staff and specific expertise. The City should begin to make plans for the addition of one or more staff members in the years ahead. Eventually, a dedicated arts administrator will also be able to manage funding opportunities and network with regional peers for idea-sharing in project ideas and funding and partnership opportunities. Until there is support and funding to expand in-house staff, there are ways to expand the arts and cultural capacity:

- » Hiring outside consultants to perform some arts administration duties and create workflows and annual calendars; outside consultants are also an excellent option for “one-off” projects that require more technical expertise and/or access to specialized data sources
- » Consider a paid internship program. Interns are well-suited for discrete projects such as the cataloging of existing assets, development of a maintenance plan, etc. Area arts administration programs that could yield candidates include:
 - Augusta University, Certificate, Arts Administration
 - Georgia State University, B.I.S. Arts Administration
 - SCAD, MA Creative Business Leadership

Amplify Marketing



Boost public and private arts and culture activities with cohesive marketing and promotional tools. Community members described a desire to make finding information about available programs, events, and resources easier. In addition, local arts and culture organizations expressed a need for assistance with marketing and promotion. By leveraging all activity across the community, Alpharetta can better market its activities to residents, workers, and those from surrounding communities to enhance economic impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Work with an organization such as the Alpharetta Convention & Visitors Bureau or an arts and culture organization to create an online arts and culture hub with a searchable and contributory calendar of events, with maps, lists of local resources, etc. The public and Alpharetta's arts and cultural organizations desire a go-to resource that shares more in-depth information on arts and culture events, happenings, and sites.

- » Set sights on creating, maintaining, and sharing a comprehensive, searchable calendar of arts and culture events and happenings in Alpharetta. The calendar should be categorized by type and location and ideally offer the ability for users to export events to their personal calendars or subscribe to categories. The calendar should be in an easy-to-find location on the City website and be accessible via QR codes located on information kiosks and bulletin boards. For example, see Roswell365.com.
- » Using the current Public Art Story Map as a starting point, promote interaction with public art, historical sites, and other cultural assets to create a comprehensive, searchable map that people can use to explore and interact with the City's assets virtually, create walking tours, set meeting points, and create educational curricula. People can also use the map for interactive promotions such as scavenger hunts and passport promotions.

AMPLIFY MARKETING RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED:

Continue to use the City's existing channels to promote and market the City's own and partnered arts and culture programs and events. Alpharetta's residents are already tuned into the City's existing communications; therefore, the City amplifying and focusing attention on arts and culture should yield more engagement and give Alpharetta's cultural institutions a sought-after boost.

- » Send a regular communication about arts and culture opportunities as described above.
- » Intentionally include less talked-about arts and culture types in marketing, especially theater and dance.
- » Develop and maintain a social media communications calendar for coordinated and differentiated content across various channels. Tell Alpharetta's arts and culture story through the lenses of various stakeholder types: residents, artists, performers, and educators. Incorporate more inclusion of community organizations and resident artists via strategies like partnered posts and takeovers. Consider expanding social media presence to additional platforms to take advantage of the reach to younger adults as patrons and emerging professionals. Creative use of social media is a terrific pathway to involve teenage volunteers and interns.
- » Consider the use of annual (or biannual) themes to connect all types of City's arts and culture offerings with those from the community. These can tie into or complement broader City initiatives or the City can source ideas from the community. Themes can offer built-in opportunities for creative endeavors across all art types and even historical look-backs at how these concepts or ideals shaped in Alpharetta in previous times.

Create an Alpharetta arts and culture marketing toolkit for organizations to employ. Make it easy for organizations to talk about and promote their place within Alpharetta's arts and culture community. Include an easily accessible document with messaging about the City of Alpharetta and its arts and culture vision and identity. Create and maintain a repository of pre-approved, downloadable captioned images to make it turnkey for entities like Economic Development, the Alpharetta Convention and Visitors Bureau, and community organizations to include photos of Alpharetta's arts and culture assets and offerings.



Maintain Character



Utilize arts and culture to maintain Alpharetta’s character in the region, while evolving and connecting with its residents. Alpharetta has abundant resources, culturally diverse residents, and unique amenities to offer. By identifying and preserving the character that makes the City unique, Alpharetta can harness what makes it distinctive to drive economic growth and vibrancy.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Define Alpharetta’s arts and culture identity. Creating a more detailed document that defines what Alpharetta’s arts and culture identity is—and is not—will equip the City with consistent messaging and provide parameters for planners, developers, artists, culture bearers, and other participants in Alpharetta’s arts and culture scene. Although this Arts & Culture Master Plan is a start, there is a need to establish art guidelines, the kinds of art (media, format, style, etc.) accepted and not accepted, and how Alpharetta wants to define local art.

Alpharetta’s unique history should be celebrated as a key element of its arts and culture core identity and should be included in the vision and identity documents as well as in marketing toolkits.

- » Ensure that Alpharetta’s diverse cultural backgrounds and interests is reflected in all aspects of arts and culture through historic organizations, heritage organizations, and any other culturally specific organization.
- » Consider ways to incorporate historical stories, traditions, and events into new public art, art showcases, or works of performing art.
- » Ensure the City includes historical sites when cataloging arts and cultural assets. Place markers with QR codes at these locations to enable viewing of historical photographs of these locations where possible.
- » Intentionally include members of Chattahoochee Evening Stars Quilt Guild and similar heritage craft groups in meetings to help preserve this part of Alpharetta’s history and ensure they are actively part of telling the community’s story.

Promote Alpharetta’s arts and culture identity locally, regionally, and nationally. Keeping arts and culture in the forefront as Alpharetta grows will help solidify its reputation as a vibrant, diverse City with a small-town feel. The City can achieve this in small and large ways from signaling arts and culture’s primacy with its consistent inclusion in City language and images to facilitating connections between businesses and local organizations to amplify the impact of arts and culture. A great starting point is leveraging Alpharetta’s strength in music through development and creation of a Music City Plan (see pages 57-59).

MAINTAIN CHARACTER RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED:

Create a plan to digitize, maintain, curate, and promote public arts and cultural resources. An essential part of maximizing the City's resources is understanding all of the available assets and how best to deploy them. A comprehensive catalog of public art (current and past, permanent and temporary) and the City's arts and cultural resources, as well as a maintained list of arts and cultural organizations serving Alpharetta will become an essential resource for arts and culture stakeholders as well as a platform for programming and promotion.

Public Art (current and past, permanent and temporary) is a key component of a comprehensive catalog of the City's arts and cultural resources. This catalog should become an essential resource for arts and culture stakeholders as well as a platform for programming and promotion.

- » The catalog should include comprehensive information on each artwork. Ensure that each artwork has informational signage with a QR code linking to its page in the catalog.
- » Create and periodically update a plan for the preventative and ongoing maintenance of all artworks, including ready resources for responsive repair or cleaning and the budget for these activities. An up-to-date catalog also ensures complete insurance coverage. Develop or update policies for acquisition and deaccession. Work with an arts consultant as needed.
- » Consider the creation of a public trust fund for public art that would allow corporations and individuals to make contributions. The trust could be utilized in perpetuity to fund the maintenance and acquisition of public art for Alpharetta.
- » Expand the Public Art Story Map to include a broader collection of arts and culture assets. This can serve as a database for the City and partner organizations the ability to easily reference assets for publicity, make connections with artworks and resources, and create programming such as art walks or interactive activations.

Explore ways to build on the success of the Arts Center. Alpharetta's Art Center is an enviable asset and is already well-utilized with varied programming and classes. The City may need to make some modifications with pricing to sustain growth and remain competitive.

- » Consider a new membership model that would enable more competitive pricing for non-residents
- » Engage with an outside consultant to conduct a study on pricing for residents vs. non-residents as well as work to identify opportunities to expand marketing in and around Alpharetta. Consider a membership model.
- » Internally or with a consultant, consider implementation of a sponsorship program of the Arts Center programming and facilities and a partnership program to connect patrons with promotions or discounts.
- » As part of the push to identify additional locations for arts and culture in under-utilized areas of Alpharetta, consider a satellite location of the Arts Center with different offerings, such as a membership-based maker space and associated classes. In particular, consider expanding arts and cultural opportunities at Preston Ridge Community Center and other facilities on the east side of Alpharetta.
- » Offer extended facility hours for groups seeking to use the Arts Center for lectures and meet-ups.
- » Consider development of a Culture City Pass that bundles an Arts Center membership with other popular City services and programs

Revise and implement the Alpharetta Music City strategy. Development and implementation of this type of model will cultivate a sense of place that enhances Alpharetta's Music City identity and connect businesses who benefit from increased arts activity with local arts organizations to help better coordinate arts activity and economic impact.

MAINTAIN CHARACTER RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED:

Address the need for a Performing Arts Facility. A breadth of arts and culture organizations in Alpharetta feel the facilities gap, most notably for the performing arts. The gap is particularly acute for spaces for performance, rehearsal, storage, education, and administration, and is as a key issue limiting the growth of many organizations. The City should engage an outside consultant to conduct a feasibility study to understand the needs of a performing arts facility and make recommendations for an appropriate size, amenities, and possible locations. A study should incorporate references to past studies (such as previous studies conducted by the Alpharetta Convention and Visitors Bureau) and include all City staff, partner organizations, and local businesses. Major considerations will include budget, programming models and potential partnerships with neighboring communities. Creative solutions will be necessary to satisfy the current needs of these organizations while planning for future growth.

- » Establish the aforementioned task force of performing arts organizations and set a regular, sustained meeting schedule with a dedicated City staff liaison. This move is a key signal to these organizations that Alpharetta recognizes the acute needs of this sector and should provoke goodwill and fellow cooperation and innovation.
- » Conduct an audit of existing public and private facilities in Alpharetta that performing arts organizations could be use. Consider non-traditional spaces, space-sharing, and locations in adjacent municipalities.
- » Serve as a facilitator between performing arts organizations and property owners (including other municipalities) as the City explores creative options.

WHAT IS A “MUSIC CITY”?

“Music City” isn’t simply a self description. In short, Music Cities aren’t just places where there is a lot of live music, but areas where active placemaking occurs to enhance the benefits of proximity to the music economy to build vibrancy, economic growth, social benefits, and prosperity across the entire City.

According to IFPI, *“A Music City, by its simplest definition, is a place with a vibrant music economy. There is growing recognition among governments and other stakeholders that Music Cities can deliver significant economic, employment, cultural and social benefits.”* In their 2020 report *The Mastering of A Music City*, IFPI highlights key elements of a Music City, which include:

- » *Artists and musicians*
- » *A thriving music scene*
- » *Access to spaces and places*
- » *A receptive and engaged audience*
- » *Record labels and other music-related businesses.*
- » *It is also important to have multi-level government support, a broader City infrastructure conducive to the sector, and music education programs.”*

Some examples of Music Cities include large, well-known music centers like Austin, TX and Nashville, TN, but also smaller cities like Denton, TX, and Chattanooga, TN, Olympia, WA and Eau Claire, WI.

WHY SHOULD ALPHARETTA BE A MUSIC CITY?

Alpharetta already enjoys a strong reputation for having great live music. This distinction is a differentiating factor for Alpharetta amongst other North Atlanta Metro cities. By building upon this reputation through planning and placemaking efforts and partnering with the local music community to capitalize on existing assets, all Alpharettans stand to benefit from an enhanced local economy, music tourism, increased access to arts and culture opportunities, job creation, and living in an even more dynamic community.

HOW DOES ALPHARETTA BECOME A MUSIC CITY?

Music Cities vary widely in the strategies that they have pursued to achieve success, so it will be crucial for Alpharetta to identify the plans that best help the City achieve both arts and culture and broader economic and social goals to achieve the best outcomes. Based on field research from reports like *The Mastering of A Music City*, and analysis of feedback from interested parties, the planning team recommends the following strategies:

- » Convene interested parties in an interactive and ongoing process to better understand the policy and social environment affecting the music industry in Alpharetta.
- » Create an advisory board of interested parties that can provide a link between City government and the Alpharetta music community.
- » In partnership with the local music community, identify needed policy goals, possible hurdles, and barriers to access. Consider investment in a music census study or other research to inform policy decisions.
- » Consider establishing a music officer within City government that can address music related concerns in the community and issues and provide recommendations to City council and the mayor's office on policy.
- » Inventory existing music assets and identify assets from which to build and gaps in the music ecosystem. Assets can include: available commercial music work and practice space, live performance venues (number, size and audience served), music education programs, music events and festivals, music businesses located in and nearby Alpharetta, historic music assets, recording facilities, professional and pre-professional music opportunities.
- » Create or update a Music City plan for Alpharetta that not only includes recommendations and goals for increasing economic development, but policy and planning recommendations which support developing a music and musician-friendly environment City-wide.
- » With music community partners and the Alpharetta Convention and Visitor's Bureau, develop a plan for music tourism in Alpharetta.
- » Identify audience and economic development goals specific to cultivating the local music industry. Identify existing programs in economic development and community development that the music community could access more easily, along with the need to tailor information or outreach to attract more music industry participation. Add gaps identified from the music asset inventory to priorities for economic development in Alpharetta.





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Funding

Funding

There is a variety of innovative ways to fund arts and culture in Alpharetta. Long term, the City should consider providing funding support to a dedicated arts and cultural organization as it provides to other initiatives such as Tech Alpharetta. This sort of dedicated, consistent funding stream would be transformative for arts and culture in the city.

In the short to medium term, staff and partners and generate funding using multiple approaches. The City will need to create a roadmap to allocate these funds in dynamic ways to execute the seven major strategies of this Arts & Culture Master Plan.

FUNDING TYPES

Foundation Grants

Some foundations grant to municipalities, particularly to fund catalytic and cross-sector projects in arts and culture that can benefit communities in multiple ways. Additionally, funding also exists to support historic and cultural preservation for cities like Alpharetta. Cross-sector foundation grants may be appropriate for projects where arts and culture partners with other sectors to achieve broad community goals, such as improved public health or safer walking infrastructure.

Additionally, some Foundation grants may require partnership with local nonprofits, artists, or other cross-sector partnerships. The City may also choose to work with a nonprofit partner such as Arts Alpharetta on grants for other advantages such as simplification of grants management.

Below are some examples of the types of grants available to cities like Alpharetta:

- » **Bloomberg Philanthropies** (Asphalt Art) - Bloomberg provides opportunities for cities to apply for grants to make transportation and pedestrian infrastructure safer through arts improvements.
- » **Project for Public Spaces** (Placemaking Grants for Public Spaces) - Project

for Public Spaces provides grants and technical assistance for placemaking.

Government Grants

Governments provide grants that can help support cultural activities, renovation or acquisition of new arts facilities, or cross-sector collaboration with artists or arts organizations. Increasing grant seeking capacity could help Alpharetta generate new sources of revenue from these opportunities. Federal grants typically provide the largest awards, but also require the most resources for grant management, while smaller county or state grants may be helpful for smaller artistic projects. Alpharetta should consider whether opportunities for grants are appropriate for the amount of time and resources needed for grant seeking and grant management and plan to propose projects accordingly.

- » The **National Endowment for the Arts** and **National Endowment for the Humanities** offer multiple grants to which cities may apply for a wide range of creative purposes.
- » **Georgia Council for the Arts** offers Bridge and Arts Project grants to which cities can apply. These are smaller grants than those made by federal agencies.
- » **Fulton County** provides grants through Contracts for Services to cities, and Alpharetta has successfully won funding previously for arts and culture programs.
- » **South Arts**, the regional arts agency, offers cross-sector arts grants for which municipalities can be eligible if applying in partnership with a nonprofit organization or artist.

Public-Private Partnership

Broadly speaking, public-private partnerships are collaborations between public entities, such as cities and nonprofit organizations with private entities, like non-profit organizations, corporations, and individuals. Public-private partnerships can be structured in many different ways depending on needs to accomplish goals that a jurisdiction cannot achieve alone. Cities can use public-private partnerships for large multi-year projects or catalytic projects that require collaboration with the private sector to achieve needed goals. Other



cities have utilized public-private partnerships to create art, produce public performances and install exhibitions in government buildings. Additionally, they have successfully raised corporate resources to update arts facilities in order to reach city-wide energy conservation goals while combining public, private and nonprofit resources. These actions have resulted in the funding of construction of new arts facilities while matching corporate and public funds to produce public art experiences for the entire community.

Examples of successful public-private partnerships include:

- » Central Atlanta Progress uses a public-private partnership with the City of Atlanta and media companies to fund arts and culture in Downtown Atlanta through revenue-sharing agreements and partnerships with media companies and property owners.
- » Bethlehem, PA redeveloped a 10-acre industrial site into a vibrant dedicated arts site with multiple festivals and events year-round through the establishment of a Tax Increment Financing(TIF) district to fund the project.
- » The City of Minneapolis partnered with Downtown landlords to subsidize rents and fill vacant storefronts with artists and arts businesses to increase vibrancy.

Corporate Sponsorships and Donations

More and more, cities are utilizing corporate donations and corporate sponsorship to achieve public goals while achieving corporate goals for social responsibility and help expose employees to opportunities for creativity. A “Friends of” group could structure sponsorship and donation opportunities around designated initiatives such as capital campaigns, naming rights, or helping to create endowments or trusts that can fund new facilities or ongoing maintenance of public art.

In order to be successful and generate needed revenue, this “Friends of” group would need to develop a compelling statement of need along with a plan for marketing the fundraising campaign to potential donors. Campaigns can also target cultivation of corporate or individual volunteerism and in-kind gifts. Event sponsorship opportunities, such as for festivals or large productions, offer an incentive for more “eyes on the brand” to local businesses, as well as an opportunity to show community participation is a priority.

Funding

Using corporate sponsorships and donations in a public setting could include:

- » Establishing a **public trust** can allow corporations and individuals to donate to trusts that fund acquisition and maintenance of public art such as the City of Suwanee's Public Art Capital Campaign that allows corporations, small businesses, and individuals to be a part of the City's acquisition of new public art for the Town Center Park Expansion Project.
- » A **sponsorship program** of the Arts Center, including naming rights of the building, classrooms and spaces, programming and even equipment.
- » **Buy-a-brick campaigns** to fund capital projects.

Percent-for-Art

Percent-for-Art programs are highly effective in providing a steady opportunity to fund arts and culture within cities. Percent-for-art programs work by utilizing a percentage (typically .1%) of total spending on new capital projects to fund art or to pay into a fund that can pay for public art or other City-produced arts and culture activities.

There are two main types of percent-for art programs: private development percent-for-art programs and public development percent-for-art programs. Programs can be voluntary or mandatory, and may also have a threshold for minimum capital expenditure or exclusions for specific types of capital spending. These program can have flexible structures, and the City could design it to meet specific goals.

- » **Private development percent-for-art programs:** In these programs, private developers participate in contributions to percent-for-art funds whenever they build new developments. Some cities opt for voluntary participation while others, like LA, have made participation mandatory. (Mandatory participation generates more public art for the community. However, communities must take care to ensure that the expenditures for arts and culture do not discourage development.) Many programs also either encourage or require developers to meet with a public art council or to

work with a City-approved public art consultant to ensure that developers understand the benefits both they and the community receive through the program as well have access to expertise to help them choose quality art activations that will complement their development. Clear expectations are vital to help developers and businesses navigate the program.

- » **Public development percent-for-art programs:** Some cities have a percent-for-art requirement for capital outlay projects, usually .1% to 1% is incorporated to pay for public art. These programs are highly effective at generating public art for communities, particularly since it's an opportunity for including public art at the beginning of each project. Public art can be incorporated into the project itself (such as art-infused infrastructure or as an adornment) or the budget allotment can be paid into a fund that pays for public art in other locations if a suitable project for the current capital outlay is not available.
- » This database for model ordinances from other places offers many examples: <https://explore.publicartarchive.org/papd-database>



Fees for Service

Fees for service include any fees generated by offering art-making, art events, or art activities to the public. These include facility rental fees, class tuition, service fees, ticket fees, and any other fees charged for quid-pro-quo exchange of services or goods. Cities like Alpharetta often subsidize these fees from the true market rate to make community resources affordable and equitable, however these fees can provide important sources of regular cashflow.

- » Increasing enrollment, rentals, attendance will increase revenue.
- » COVID-19 impacted service fees and participation for the City of Alpharetta just like most other arts organizations, and the Art Center continues to meet or exceed budgeted goals for fees and participation.
- » Consider offering additional programs or services as demand increases to increase revenue if capacity is available.
- » Through partnership with other arts service organizations, Alpharetta could extend workshops or professional development opportunities to its artist community without having to develop a new curriculum from scratch to meet the need.
- » In addition to budgeted General Funds, grants can help offset program costs from market rates. Soliciting corporate sponsorships can also help offset market rates and further expose corporate employees to more creative offerings in the community.

Funding

Bonds

Bonds are a method commonly utilized to pay for capital projects whereby municipalities sell local bonds to fund project construction.

By including public art, beautification, or art-infused infrastructure in project plans from the very beginning, Alpharetta can use these public funds to pay for art as part of the project. By including art in capital outlays, Alpharetta not only increases the overall amount of art residents have access to, but the City can plan for types of art that will contribute to the goals of the project.

Tax Revenue

Property taxes and sales taxes generate the majority of Alpharetta's tax revenue, with a small amount also generated from Hotel/Motel Tax revenue. Property Tax and Sales Tax revenue goes into the General Fund, which is the primary fund for the City's budget. The 8% Hotel/Motel occupancy tax revenue is split between the City of Alpharetta (37.5%), debt service on the Alpharetta Convention Center (18.75%), and the Alpharetta Convention and Visitors Bureau (43.75%). The City's portion of the revenue is transferred from the Hotel/Motel Tax Fund to the General Fund after satisfying expenditures to ACVB and convention center debt service. Public surveying during this planning process indicated that there could be support for a modest tax increase to support arts and culture in Alpharetta.

TADs

Tax Allocation Districts (TADs), called Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts in other parts of the country, allow for bonds to be sold that would be repaid utilizing future anticipated tax payments to allow financing of current development projects. This option is popular for vacant, blighted, or mostly unused properties to be redeveloped into future projects. Communities have successfully used this option to redevelop projects for arts and culture that include anchor organizations, which can encourage arts and culture activity in the area. They often require public-private partnership and legislation to designate the

TAD. There are potential downsides if tax revenue shifts significantly from what was anticipated after the state approves a TAD or if communication with the community about the purpose and activities around the TAD project are not seen as transparent. If the North Point TAD returns in the future, this could be a viable funding source for art projects in eastern Alpharetta.

Other Government Programs and Tax Credits

Some government programs allow inclusion of arts and culture projects when utilizing the grant or tax funding for another purpose, or have specific provisions for artists (such as the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)). It is important to be aware of these opportunities if the goal is to be creative in funding future projects for the City of Alpharetta. The City can layer these credits into direct funding or other opportunities that the City chooses to pursue directly to increase the feasibility of the project.





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Action Plans

Immediate Actions (Next 12 Months)

To implement the Arts & Culture Master Plan, the City should begin with tasks that signal immediate momentum to stakeholders, along with key actions that will serve as the foundation for the rest of the plan.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS	POTENTIAL LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COST	POTENTIAL \$ SOURCE	STRATEGY
<p>Create an initial schedule for arts and culture convenings. Signal readiness to engage with the arts and culture community by scheduling an initial set of convenings, such as networking opportunities or listening sessions. The City should plan future events based on the group’s feedback and interest areas.</p>	Recreation, Parks & Culture staff	Arts and culture organizations, arts educators, arts-related businesses, cultural and historic heritage organizations	Staff Time	N/A	3
<p>Identify a lead arts and culture non-profit group for fundraising. Many key elements of the Master Plan rely on a more robust partnership with an organization with capacity to fundraise. Work with the organization to determine its current and future capacity, identify areas that require more support from the City and/or community partners, and lay the groundwork for increasing staff and resources. Consider working with an outside consultant to develop a strategic plan for the organization’s elevated role in the City’s future arts ecosystem.</p>	Recreation, Parks & Culture staff, arts and culture non-profit	Outside consultant	Additional funds needed	City of Alpharetta: General Fund; arts and culture non-profit: donations, earned revenue, capacity building grants	2

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS	POTENTIAL LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COST	POTENTIAL \$ SOURCE	STRATEGY
<p>Define Alpharetta’s arts and culture identity. A clear, articulated identity for Alpharetta’s arts and culture is a foundational step for execution of the Master plan. Establish a project lead and timeline, involving an outside consultant as needed, to create a document defining what Alpharetta’s arts and culture identity is—and is not—to equip the City with essential messaging language and provide parameters for planners, developers, artists, culture bearers, and other participants in Alpharetta’s Arts & Culture scene.</p>	Recreation, Parks & Culture staff and City Communications staff	Alpharetta CVB, Economic Development staff, arts and culture organizations; potential outside consultant	Additional funds needed	General Fund (could be incorporated into normal marketing costs)	7
<p>Create a plan to catalog, maintain, curate, and promote public arts and cultural resources. An essential part of maximizing the City’s resources is understanding all of the available assets and how best to deploy them. Establish a project lead and timeline, involving an outside consultant as needed, to create a plan for the comprehensive documentation of Alpharetta’s public art (current and past, permanent and temporary), the City’s arts and cultural resources, as well as a maintained list of arts and cultural organizations serving Alpharetta. This could also be a project for a summer intern.</p>	Recreation, Parks & Culture Staff	Potential outside consultant	Additional funds needed	General Fund	7

Short Term (1-2 Years)

In 1-2 years, the City should embark on critical planning tasks that will form the foundation of the Master Plan, including forming a performing arts task force, conducting a feasibility study for a Performing Arts Center, establishing clear processes, developing a communications and marketing plan, and exploring opportunities to build on the success of the Arts Center.

SHORT TERM TASKS	POTENTIAL LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COST	POTENTIAL \$ SOURCE	STRATEGY
<p>Establish a clear process for private development to contribute to arts and culture in Alpharetta. Establish a timeline and assign a project lead to work with the City Attorney. Once finalized, the City should adopt the new process into the code of ordinances (if applicable) and accompanied by a developer toolkit outlining requirements, approval procedures, and guidelines for incorporating art into projects.</p>	Community Development staff	Cultural Arts Commission, Recreation, Parks & Culture staff, arts and culture non-profit	Staff Time	N/A	1, 5
<p>Establish a Performing Arts Task Force. Create a taskforce for performing arts organizations to connect with each other and the City to help address immediate space constraints, boost programming for theater and dance, and co-promote burgeoning new programs. The task force could also become the steering committee for the Performing Arts Center feasibility study. As part of the vetting process, City personnel should meet with neighboring North Fulton jurisdictions to explore the potential for a combined facility.</p>	Recreation, Parks & Culture staff (to start task force)	Performing arts organizations, Community Development staff, Economic Development staff, City of Milton, City of Roswell, City of Johns Creek	Additional funds needed for feasibility study	General Fund	3, 7

SHORT TERM TASKS	POTENTIAL LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COST	POTENTIAL \$ SOURCE	STRATEGY
<p>Establish process for arts and culture integration in new and updated Public Works projects. With the support of Community Development staff, begin meeting with Public Works staff to determine opportunities for integrating arts and culture early in capital projects. These discussions should identify the types of projects that are candidates for arts and culture components, any proposed projects of this type, identification of a pilot project for integrating arts and culture in the early phases of programming and design, and the identification of a staff person to represent the arts on the pilot project team.</p>	<p>Department of Public Works staff, Community Development staff</p>	<p>Recreation, Parks and Culture staff, Cultural Arts Commission</p>	<p>Staff Time</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>Create a plan to address communications and marketing needs. Integrated marketing and promotion of arts and culture activities will provide support across this plan’s strategies. Create a coordinated plan to streamline the work and avoid duplicating the creation of assets, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional/editorial calendar • Monthly arts and culture email + submission form • Creation of arts and culture online hub (for public and for artists and organizations) • Create promotional toolkits for Economic Development, Alpharetta Convention & Visitors Bureau, use by organizations, etc. 	<p>Recreation, Parks & Culture staff</p>	<p>Alpharetta CVB, arts and culture non-profit, Economic Development staff, outside consultant</p>	<p>Additional funds needed</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>1, 6</p>

SHORT TERM TASKS	POTENTIAL LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COST	POTENTIAL \$ SOURCE	STRATEGY
<p>Create a clear process for cultural groups to host their events within the City. Establish a project lead, working group and timeline to evaluate the types of ways for groups to participate in events in Alpharetta, resources that can be devoted to outside events, and any parameters for the content of events that organizations host on City property or with City support. Set clear roles and responsibilities within City departments for the execution of these events and transparent protocols for consideration and create an easily-accessible and simple form for organizations to submit.</p>	Recreation, Parks & Culture staff	Arts and culture organizations	Staff Time	N/A	4
<p>Explore ways to build on the success of the Arts Center. Establish a project lead, working group and timeline to evaluate near- and long-term options for sustaining the growth of the Arts Center, including possible modification of programming, pricing and hours, implementation of a sponsorship program, and a possible satellite location.</p>	Recreation, Parks & Culture staff	Arts and culture organizations	Staff Time	N/A	7
<p>Create pathways for companies to learn more about opportunities to participate in the arts (space sharing, new tenants, residency programs, new partnerships, knowledge sharing, skill development, etc.).</p>	Economic Development staff	Recreation, Parks & Culture staff; businesses	Estimated cost to be determined	N/A	2

Medium Term (2-5 Years)

Medium-term priorities include the addition of a staff member, establishing a clear path for the Performing Arts Center, fully integrating new policies and processes, updating previously existing plans, and deepening marketing and communications.

MEDIUM TERM TASKS	POTENTIAL LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COST	POTENTIAL \$ SOURCE	STRATEGY
<p>Add a staff member. Hire an additional staff member to administer arts and culture initiatives and boost engagement within the arts and culture community. Consider this role being part of the Economic Development Department to reflect the focus of arts and culture as an economic development tool, and help encourage collaboration with Recreation, Parks, and Culture staff.</p>	<p>City Administration, Economic Development staff</p>	<p>Recreation, Parks & Culture Staff</p>	<p>Salary equivalent to Pay Grade 310</p>	<p>General Fund</p>	<p>5</p>

MEDIUM TERM TASKS	POTENTIAL LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COST	POTENTIAL \$ SOURCE	STRATEGY
<p>Pursue funding for Performing Arts facility.</p> <p>Assuming the feasibility study supports a Performing Arts Center, it will likely take multiple years to acquire funding and identify a plan for operations. As part of this process, the City should also begin to lay the groundwork by identifying and acquiring a site (as needed), gathering sponsorships, and solidifying partnerships. To secure the most beneficial funding for Alpharetta’s taxpayers, the City should also define an ideal sustainable operations plan for the facility, including whether the City or an external operator will manage it, which will then help determine the optimal timeline for forming partnerships to leverage funding opportunities like grants or philanthropic donations during construction.</p>	<p>City Administration, Economic Development (new staff person)</p>	<p>Recreation, Parks & Culture staff, Community Development staff, arts and culture organizations, Performing Arts Task Force</p>	<p>Estimated costs to be determined</p>	<p>General Fund; City Land Donation (if appropriate); Tax Credits; Philanthropy; Corporate Investment; Private Donations; potential bond</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>Participate in update of the City’s Parks, Recreation, & Culture Master Plan. The City’s master plan for its parks system is due for a 10-year update in 2028. Because parks are one of the four major recommended arts and culture hubs, this process is the ideal opportunity to plan for art in parks in greater detail, with a particular focus on nature-based art and art-based play opportunities for children.</p>	<p>Recreation, Parks & Culture staff</p>	<p>Outside consultant</p>	<p>Estimated costs to be determined</p>	<p>General Fund</p>	<p>4, 5</p>

MEDIUM TERM TASKS	POTENTIAL LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COST	POTENTIAL \$ SOURCE	STRATEGY
<p>Update LCI Plans for Downtown Alpharetta and North Point Area. The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) provides planning funding and technical support to jurisdictions through its Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) program. This program supports the development of multi-modal transportation, smart land use planning, and enhancing quality of life through placemaking. Both Downtown Alpharetta and North Point are already designated LCI areas; when the time comes to update each area’s plan, there should be a concerted effort to layer in more detail on how these areas will grow as arts and culture hubs, with specific recommendations for locations for art, preferred types, and potential place-based themes for this art to explore. At a minimum this should include arts and culture asset and resource inventories and opportunity maps for more arts and culture.</p>	Community Development staff	Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), Recreation, Parks & Culture staff	Estimated costs to be determined; City responsible for 20% match of LCI funds	General Fund	4, 5
<p>Update and implement Music City plan. Fully develop and implement a Music City Model to activate and amplify this key element of Alpharetta’s community and economy.</p>	Recreation, Parks & Culture staff or Economic Development staff	Potential outside consultant	Estimated costs to be determined	General Fund	7
<p>Evaluate opportunities for incentives/tax breaks for artists, art-related businesses, and for businesses incorporating arts and culture into their developments.</p>	Economic Development staff	Recreation, Parks and Cultural Services staff	Economic Development Staff Time	N/A	1

MEDIUM TERM TASKS	POTENTIAL LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COST	POTENTIAL \$ SOURCE	STRATEGY
<p>Implement partnership and sponsorship programs. Building on partnership with an umbrella organization and deepened connections made through ongoing regular convenings, develop and implement partnership and sponsorship programs with the business and arts and culture communities. The City can use sponsorships raise funds for specific funds, art installations or initiatives, or programs in general, such as the Arts Center.</p>	Economic Development staff (new staff person)	Arts organizations, businesses	Staff Time	N/A	2
<p>Deepen well-integrated marketing programs. The communication and marketing plan developed in the short term should be well-integrated and ready for the next level, including items such as data-driven segmentation, crowd-sourced content and engagement and a mobile app.</p>	Economic Development staff (new staff person)	Alpharetta CVB, arts organizations, Recreation, Parks & Culture staff	TBD	General Fund	6, 7
<p>Support pipelines for pre-professional and emerging artists to build careers in the arts. Lighter lifts to start with include hosting a roundtable discussion with artists and starting juried events for students and emerging artists.</p>	Recreation, Arts & Culture staff	Schools, arts organizations	Staff	N/A	2

Long Term (5+ Years)

By this stage, processes and plans should be fully integrated, and the City should be at the implementation stage for the following:

- » Construction of additional arts and cultural facilities
- » Arts and culture projects identified in LCI Plan updates
- » Arts and culture projects identified in the Parks, Recreation & Culture Master Plan
- » Music City plan

Beyond these capital projects, it is difficult to anticipate the priorities that will be five years into the future. Funding opportunities and priorities in arts and culture can change rapidly and are often vulnerable to political shifts. In five years, this Arts & Culture Master Plan should be updated to include:

- » Additional detail on Alpharetta's arts and culture identity
- » Updated arts and culture focal types, as needed
- » Revised strategies and priorities
- » A report of accomplishments, including an evaluation of the efficacy of these actions and their results
- » An updated action plan, including an assessment/evaluation of tasks done to date and their impacts

