



Culture Builds Community



Power of culture

[City of Salem - 'The Queen of the Block' by artist Mr. CenZ]



Lisa Simmons
*Community Initiative
Program Manager*

lisa.simmons@mass.gov



Carolyn Cole
*Special Projects Manager for
Advancement*

carolyn.cole@mass.gov



Sommers Smith
*Community Initiative
Program Officer*

Sommers.smith@mass.gov



Cheyenne Cohn-Postell
*Community Initiative
Program Officer*

[Cheyenne.cohn-
postell@mass.gov](mailto:Cheyenne.cohn-postell@mass.gov)

Agenda

1. **Introductory Overview of Mass Cultural Council** w. Lisa Simmons, Community Initiative Program Manager
2. **Creative Sector Impact** w. Carolyn Cole, Special Projects Manager for Advancement
3. **Funding & Local Partnership Opportunities** w. Sommers Smith, Community Initiative Program Officer and Carolyn Cole
4. **Featured Stories: Inspiration from Fellow Select Board Members** w. Cheyenne Cohn-Postell, Community Initiative Program Officer & Members from Orleans & Carlisle
5. **Additional Resources** w. Lisa Simmons
6. **Q&A**



Cummington Cultural District

Advancing the Cultural Sector

4

We are working to embed the arts more prominently within key sectors across the Commonwealth:



Health & Wellness through Creativity Panel
Event | October 2023

- Establishment of the **Governor's Cultural Policy Development Advisory Council** by Governor Healey through Executive Order
- Forging new relationships with **Secretaries and Agency heads** within the Healey-Driscoll Administration including the **STEM Advisory Council and the Inter-Agency Early Education and Child Care Task Force**.
- Partnering with the **Mass Office of Travel & Tourism (MOTT)** to strategically align our work – resulting in a new policy to **prioritize projects located in Cultural Districts**
- **Advocacy partnerships** with MASSCreative, Mass Humanities, and others to tell a strong story about the creative and cultural sector on Beacon Hill and across Massachusetts.



Impact of Creative Sector



[West Tisbury's Maley/Field Gallery Landscape Project]

Culture Spurs Economic Development

6



[New Bedford's Seaport Cultural District]

Arts and culture are essential for economic prosperity, innovation, creativity, and good health. The sector is key to a strong state economy.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, in 2022 arts and culture in Massachusetts:

- Generated \$28.6 billion in spending and economic activity
- Accounted for 4.1% of the state's gross domestic product (GDP)
- Supported 133,773 jobs

This puts us ahead of the construction industry, more than twice as big as transportation, and nearly as large as retail.

Culture Enhances Tourism

7



Arts and cultural attractions help drive tourism. The AEP6 study, conducted by Americans for the Arts found:

- **30%** of attendees to an average arts or cultural attraction traveled from **outside the region** to attend
- **77%** of them said the attraction was the **sole reason** for being in the area
- Those who travel for arts and culture **outspend locals by nearly double** on other event-related spending including restaurants, lodging, shopping, transportation, etc.

['First Fridays' - Vineyard Haven Harbor Cultural District]

Culture Creates Jobs

8

Mass Cultural Council's Cultural Facilities Fund provides major improvement grants to nonprofit cultural organizations and municipalities.

- Recipient organizations employ **2,957 full-time equivalents** representing **\$341 million** in wages and salaries
- The projects supported by these grants created **3,220 new jobs**
- These projects have employed nearly **37,000 architects, engineers, contractors, and construction workers**



[MASS MoCA, Solid Sound Festival]



Funding & Local Partnership Opportunities

[Barnstable Chalk Fest]



Mass Cultural Council Funding Opportunities

10

Cultural Facilities Fund (CFF)

Grants to support the acquisition, design, repair, rehabilitation, renovation, expansion, or construction of municipal cultural facilities. Grants range from \$7,000 to \$200,000. *(Current Deadline is December 19th!)*

Creative Experiences

NEW: Grants to organizations (including schools) to fund festivals, projects, residencies, and other cultural activities in the arts, humanities, and sciences. This program combines Festivals & Projects and Creative Projects for Schools into one program. *(Application opens March 2025)*



[Essex River Cultural District]

Mass Cultural Council Funding Opportunities cont.

11

Gaming Mitigation Fund

Two-year grants to Massachusetts nonprofit and municipal performing arts centers to spend on touring shows or touring artist fees. Grants have ranged from \$6,000 to \$200,000. *(Deadline to apply is January 9, 2025)*



Aquinnah Cultural Center:
Aquinnah Circle Cultural & Historic District

Operating Grants for Organizations

Multi-year, unrestricted operating grants to organizations that enrich Massachusetts' cultural life. Municipal cultural organizations that manage their own budget and have at least one full-time compensated administrative staff position dedicated solely to operation of the cultural entity are eligible.

(Applications open February 2025)

Local Cultural Council Program

12

The Local Cultural Council Program remains the most extensive volunteer-run cultural funding program in the nation! Investing in local arts and culture efforts for more than 44 years the program features:

- 329 LCCs serving all 351 MA cities and towns
- 2,400+ volunteers serve as LCC members statewide each year
- More than \$7.5 million in grants awarded last year

The LCC Program promotes local autonomy and decision-making. LCCs work with their municipalities to make decisions, Mass Cultural Council makes suggestions and provides guidance and support.

How LCC allocation amounts are determined:

- The state legislature provides the Agency with its annual budget in August
- The Agency plans its program budget which is approved by the [Governing Council](#)
- LCC allocations are based on the state's local aid formulas (based on population and equalized property values to provide low-income communities with relatively larger allocations).

Check out the [LCC Program's history](#) and [key milestones](#).

Cultural Districts Initiative

13



['La Cultura es Poder':
Holyoke Puerto Rican Cultural District]

Characteristics

- A geographical area in a city or town with a density of cultural facilities, activities, and assets.
- Navigable, compact and the center of cultural and economic activity.
- As each district forms it will reflect its community, therefore no two cultural districts are alike.

Goals

- Attract artists and cultural enterprises
- Encourage business and job development
- Establish the district as a tourist destination
- Preserve and reuse historic buildings
- Enhance property values
- Foster local cultural development

A Cultural District Designation is good for **10 years**.*

**All new applications for Cultural District designation are paused until FY26 as we internally review and redesign the program.*

Economic Impact of Cultural Districts

This year, our [58 cultural districts](#) will receive a total of \$870,000 in assistance to support development and sustainability efforts in their communities. ¹⁴

In FY24, Cultural Districts reported:

- An **829%** increase in visitation!
- Approx. **240 businesses/organizations** opened!
- **1.7 MILLION** visitors/attendees to cultural district events!

AFTA's AEP6 Study, in partnership with Springfield Cultural Partnership/Springfield Central Cultural District revealed that, in 2022, Springfield's nonprofit arts and culture industry:

- Generated **\$82.4 million** in economic activity
- Supported **1,483 jobs**
- Generated **\$15.3 million** in local, state, and federal government revenue.

Read our [recent blog](#) for more economic impact info!



Turners Falls Cultural District

In every division of [SMU DataArts's Top 40 Arts-Vibrant Communities](#) across the country in 2022, there existed at least one Massachusetts Cultural District.

Massachusetts State Funding

15

Primary state support for arts and culture comes through appropriations made to **Mass Cultural Council**. When combined with federal dollars from the NEA, this is the main public pot of funding for the sector each year and the primary source of funding for municipal initiatives, like the Local Cultural Council program and the Cultural Districts Initiative.

As resources allow, **we encourage you to supplement this funding** through your own municipal budgets or pursue other state programs that can be leveraged to support cultural programming including TIF, CPA, MDI, and more.

We welcome the opportunity to work together to build on this and discuss opportunities to create new revenue streams, recognizing that any local option tax requires legislative endorsement.



[Somerville Glass Artist Festival]

District Local Technical Assistance & Grant Assistance Program

Helping Cities and Towns Access Funding to Support More Creativity

16

State Opportunities

- Executive Office of Economic Development
 - Mass Downtown Initiative
 - Urban Agenda Grant Program
- Community Planning Grant Program (EOHLC)
- MassDevelopment
 - Underutilized Properties Program
 - Real Estate Services Technical Assistance
- Mass Gaming Commission
 - Community Planning Grants
 - Regional Agency Grant Program
 - Municipal Block Grant Program

Regional Planning Agencies: 13 across MA

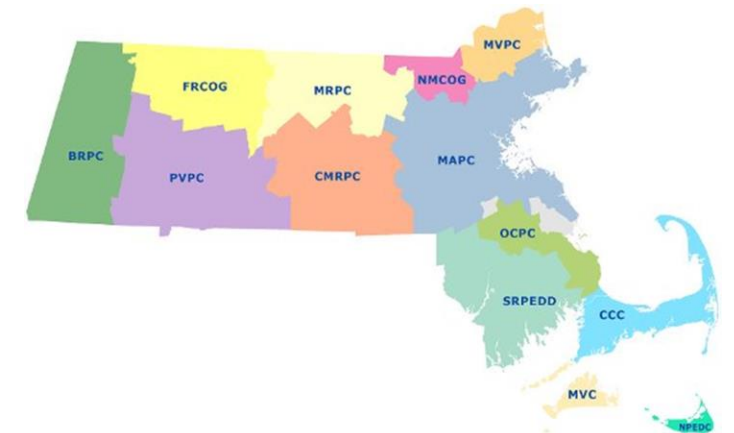
- Grant Assistance Program funds RPA staff to help municipalities apply for state and federal grants.
- Support municipalities with planning, data and mapping, and procurement
- Fund staff time through District Local Technical Assistance

Total Funding: \$2 Million across RPAs

Awarded in FY23 and Renewed for FY24 and FY25.

Federal Opportunities

- National Endowment for the Arts & Humanities Grants
 - Our Town
 - Grants for Arts Projects
 - Public Humanities Grants



Local Stories - Partnerships

New Bedford

- New Bedford Economic Development Council + New Bedford Creative + New Bedford's Tourism Office
- New Bedford Arts, Culture and Tourism Fund

Bedford

- Bedford Cultural District's operations managed by the Town's Economic Development office
- Currently using CPA funds to develop a cultural performance venue

Lowell

- Canalway Cultural District managed by the City's CASE office, established by City ordinance
- Partner with Cultural Council and District, implementing creative projects and community events

Harwich

- Established and funded a Director of Cultural Affairs position
- Two designated Cultural Districts
- 'The 204': school-turned-cultural arts mixed-use municipal facility



Featured Stories

*Inspiration from
Fellow Selectboard Members*

[Arlington Porchfest]



Orleans, MA

Orleans became incorporated in 1797. The Nauset Tribe of the Wampanoag Nation were the indigenous people of this area.

POPULATION

Year-round residents: 6,419

Summer population: 19,000 (est)

LAND AND ROAD STATISTICS

Total Land Area: 13.94 sq miles

Miles of State Roads: 11 miles

Miles of Town Maintained roads: 54 Miles



Orleans Fourth of July Parade

Andrea Shaw Read, Select Board Member
Thomas DeSiervo, Director of Recreation
Amanda Converse, Economic Development Coordinator

Carlisle, MA

20

The Town of Carlisle was incorporated as a District on April 19, 1754, and as a Town on February 18, 1805



Town of Carlisle staff

POPULATION

Year-round residents: 5419

LAND AND ROAD STATISTICS

Total Land Area: 15.4 sq miles

Miles of Town roads: 55 Miles

Kate Reid, Select Board Member

Welcome to Carlisle!

21





ARPA to the rescue!

22

In the past, our Cultural Council was solely dependent on the approximately \$5,000 a year distributed to it by Mass Cultural Council.



**Mass
Cultural
Council**

A Very Creative Cultural Council





**Musicians experienced financial loss
and loss of opportunity.**



So what were the benefits of this for the community?

25

It supported the mental wellbeing of residents who felt shut in by the lockdown by giving them somewhere to safely emerge and share in an event.

It supported our artistic community residents who were shut out of their venues.

It introduced community artists and performers to the rest of the town who didn't know they were living among them!

I'd say the benefits are incalculable

26

By working with the Cultural Council, the Town gained benefits, and the Council benefited too.

Nobody knew who or what the Cultural Council even was before Covid, but after participating in their newly created Music Festival that was held concurrently with our annual Old Home Day celebration, everyone in town not only knew them, they appreciated them.



Stay Tuned!



Additional Resources



[Fenway Cultural District]

NEW Rural Municipalities Toolkit

massculturalcouncil.org/rural_toolkit

29

Rural communities across America received nearly \$60 million in state arts agency funding in a most recent fiscal years, the extent of which is even broader among those states with regranting or decentralization programs (*like Massachusetts's Local Cultural Council program!*).

Developed with support from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Economic Development – Rural Affairs (and crafted especially for Municipal users) you can find more information regarding these facts and figures, as well as:

- Local, State, Regional and National Resources
- Examples & Case Studies
- Toolkits & Publications

Follow the link above for creative resources and inspiration to support rural communities by harnessing the *Power of Culture!*

MassCulturalCouncil.org

30

- **Agency Dates** — Key dates for all Mass Cultural Council grant programs and events.
- **Blogs** — Our Power of Culture blog is your source for Agency and sector news and information, including **Opportunities & Resources for Cultural Organizations**. Visit **ArtSake** to check out our weekly **Artist Opportunities** roundup.
- **E-Newsletters** — Sign up to receive one – or all three! – of the Agency’s monthly newsletters: **Power of Culture**, **Artist News**, and **Community Initiative News**.
- **Grants Management System**— Register once, apply for funding all year.
- **HireCulture.org**— A free, online listing of employment opportunities in Massachusetts.



Thank you.

Engage with us @MassCultural

