

# DC CULTURAL PLAN



## Community Conversation Summary Northwest Quadrant: October 18, 2016

**GALA Hispanic Theater, 3333 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW**


*Hosted by the DC Office of Planning, in Partnership  
with the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities*





# OVERHEARD IN NORTHWEST DC

## Quotes from participants



**“Use small and medium size institutions as vehicles for community access and conversation”**

**“The city should be helping current businesses and tenants stay where they are to help retain traditional black culture”**

**“Space is different for different artists and cultural organizers. It’s more than inside rooms, stages and parks. It’s spaces like sidewalks, alleyways, and the middle of the street”**



**“Mobile arts and cultural trucks with performers, art materials, resources and educators could be deployed into high traffic areas and parks in all eight wards”**

**“Include designated, committed, quality arts space in all Department of Parks and Recreation and library facilities going forward”**

**“It is important to find a middle ground for opposing perspectives to break down economic and social barriers”**

# NW Quadrant Community Conversation

## on the DC Cultural Plan

**ATTENDANCE:** Approximately **110 participants**, representing a mix of community members across the District, including residents, individual creatives, members of arts and humanities organizations, students and District officials.

**WHAT:** In partnership with the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, the Office of Planning led facilitated group conversations on issues related to cultural development, preservation, production, expression, and consumption.

Through an event-wide “Aspiration Station” for big ideas and facilitated small group discussions, participants shared their reflections on the challenges they currently experience related to culture in the District, and provided their ideas and solutions to address these concerns.

**SO WHAT?** At each station, trained facilitators from the Office of Planning, the Commission on the Arts and Humanities, key stakeholder organizations, and HR&A advisors and bcWORKSHOP led participants in a conversation about:

- **DC Culture:** What is DC’s cultural identity, and how can we strengthen access to that culture?
- **Cultural Space:** How can more sustainable performance, production and creative living space be created across the District?
- **Partnerships:** How do partnerships support culture, and how can existing and new partnerships in the District be supported?
- **Cultural Entrepreneurship:** What is needed to support and expand cultural entrepreneurship?



# THE ASPIRATION STATION

What's your "big idea" for culture?



## MAJOR TAKEAWAYS

**A clearinghouse with upcoming events, resources and networking information for creatives—an “IdeaPlex DC”**

**Improved access to public space for creative performance, production and expression**

**Increased support for affordable and accessible performance and production space**

# CULTURAL IDENTITY

What does DC culture mean to you? How do we define DC's cultural identity?



## ICE BREAKER QUESTION: WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST CULTURAL MEMORY?

- “Howard University children’s theatre”
- “9:30 Club”
- “Watergate concerts”
- “Drumming circle”
- “AdMo music venues”
- “Go-go performances”
- “Spit Dat street performances”
- “Smithsonian”



# CULTURAL IDENTITY

What does DC culture mean to you? How do we define DC's cultural identity?

## KEY CONCERNS

- Lack of **availability and affordability of space** for creative expression and experimentation
- Large, well-established organizations have **disproportionate access to funding and resources**
- The transitory nature of DC population perpetuates **lack of understanding of local history, culture and heritage**
- **Displacement** of African American residents, institutions and multi-cultural spaces

## SOLUTION IDEAS

- **Create a center for arts innovation** to support creative experimentation and new work
- **Require developers** to include **artist studio/production space** in new development
- **Adapt impact metrics and portfolio requirements** to make grants accessible to small arts organizations
- **Engage youth and new residents** in conversations to discuss and learn about local **history and heritage**
- **Craft multi-disciplinary solutions** that also address affordable housing and arts education

# CULTURAL SPACE

What types of spaces do you need to live, work and perform in the District?



## ICE BREAKER QUESTION: WHAT CREATIVE SPACES WORK WELL IN THE DISTRICT?

- “Dance Place”
- “Fab Lab at MLK Library”
- “GALA Hispanic Theatre”
- “Woolly Mammoth”
- “Harmon Theatre”

# CULTURAL SPACE

What types of spaces do you need to live, work and perform in the District?

## KEY CONCERNS

- **Affordability of** housing and production space
- Difficult navigation of **agency permitting processes**
- **Access to District** and **federal** public space for performance and programming
- Loose **definition of “arts space”** in inclusionary zoning
- Lack of **permanent** performance and production space

## SOLUTION IDEAS

- Create free, designated, quality arts space in all **parks and libraries facilities**
- **Expand allowable uses in public spaces** (like parking spaces) for creatives
- Develop clear, navigable **government processes** for accessing space, funding, and partnerships
- **Differentiate** types of **arts uses** specified in **inclusionary zoning**
- **Include local arts community** at the beginning and throughout **development processes**



# PARTNERSHIPS

How do we leverage partnerships to enhance cultural programming, participation and access?



## ICE BREAKER QUESTION: WHAT COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU ENVISION A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP?

- “Community”
- “Value added”
- “Equal”
- “Funding”
- “Variety”
- “Sharing resources”
- “Win-win”
- “Innovation”
- “Realistic expectations”

# PARTNERSHIPS

How do we leverage partnerships to enhance cultural programming, participation and access?

## KEY CONCERNS

- **Awareness of resources** for existing events and capacity building
- Need for **overhead funding** for new, individual organizations
- **Disconnect** between local DC organizations and federal institutions
- **Difficulty of partnering with public schools** and with other educational institutions

## SOLUTION IDEAS

- **Create online and physical places** where **networks** can be created, expertise utilized and ideas exchanged
- Establish an **Arts Trust Fund**
- Partner with **national organizations** to provide opportunities for **local pilot projects**
- Institutionalize and **prioritize arts and culture in schools**
- Use **local** organizations dedicated to history and heritage **as instructional vehicles in schools**



# CULTURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

How can we better support cultural businesses during start-up, production, programming, presentation and participation?



## ICE BREAKER QUESTION: WHAT DO YOU NEED TO GROW A START-UP CREATIVE BUSINESS?

- “Affordable work spaces”
- “Information and idea exchange”
- “Network of accountants and suppliers”
- “Mediation between residents and performance venues”
- “Tax and revenue information”
- “Funding outside of grants”

# CULTURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

How can we better support cultural businesses during start-up, production, programming, presentation and participation?

## KEY CONCERNS

- **Noise regulations**
- Lengthy, unclear and difficult **public processes**
- Access to **non-grant funding sources**
- **Lack of connection** with others starting a new creative business venture
- **Difficulty sustaining and expanding** new organizations and/or businesses

## SOLUTION IDEAS

- **Mediation** between residents and performance venues
- **Designated and centralized points of contact** for public funding and processes
- Online and in-person **industry-specific networking opportunities**
- **Partnerships with private sector** to establish sustainable arts funding



# MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED...

Across all conversations, some topics were top of mind

**Community approach**

networking

**Information sharing**

mixed use development

**access to public**

**processes and resources**

**collaboration  
across disciplines**

**performance or**

leverage  
existing assets

**production space**

**public funding source**

flexible or multi-use  
space

# MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED...

Key themes and ideas emerged during conversations

## Performance or production space



116 mentions

- Need for more permanent and sustainable spaces
- Inadequate incentives for flexible or multi-use production space in new development
- Need to better leverage existing government-owned property (including schools, recreation centers and federal property)

## Accessibility of public processes and resources



101 mentions

- Need for transparent processes and agency liaisons to support creative entrepreneurs through agency systems
- Difficulty accessing District-owned and national public assets
- Inclusion of artists in decision-making

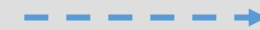
## Community approach



75 mentions

- Use of partnerships to promote cultural awareness and local history and heritage
- District support for hyper-local culture
- Rapidly changing demographics
- Affordability
- Youth education

## Public funding sources



73 mentions

- Policy incentives or requirements for inclusion of arts organizations in new development
- Increase support for smaller, local organizations
- Modify grant requirements and impact measurements to promote inclusion of smaller organizations





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Artist: James Bullough Addison Karl. Title: Shh  
Credit Line: DC Department of Public Works, MuralSDC  
Program



# DC CULTURAL PLAN



## Community Conversation Summary

### Northeast Quadrant: October 25, 2016

Department of Employment Services, 4058 Minnesota Avenue

*Hosted by the DC Office of Planning, in Partnership  
with the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities*





# OVERHEARD IN NORTHEAST DC

Quotes from participants

**“Space is power.”**

**“The gap between ‘Washington’ and ‘DC’ seems to manifest itself in legal structures like permits and licenses.”**

**“Small and mid-sized performance groups actually desire and thrive in shared/collaborative spaces. Larger spaces that contain multiple performance spaces are vital...”**

**“Design in active collaboration with artists and communities represented at the table.”**

**“We need more locations like Atlantic Plumbing or Monroe Building around DC where startups can open a storefront with small overhead.”**

**“We need graduated permit fees for small businesses who might not be able to afford permits.”**

# NE Quadrant Community Conversation

## on the DC Cultural Plan

**ATTENDANCE:** Approximately **90 participants**, representing a mix of community members across the District, including residents, individual creatives, members of arts and humanities organizations, students and District officials.

**WHAT:** In partnership with the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, the Office of Planning led facilitated group conversations on issues related to cultural development, preservation, production, expression, and consumption.

Through an event-wide “Aspiration Station” for big ideas and facilitated small group discussions, participants shared their reflections on the challenges they currently experience related to culture in the District, and provided their ideas and solutions to address these concerns.

**SO WHAT?** At each station, trained facilitators from the Office of Planning, the Commission on the Arts and Humanities, key stakeholder organizations, and HR&A advisors and bcWORKSHOP led participants in a conversation about:

- **DC Culture:** What is DC’s cultural identity, and how can we strengthen access to that culture?
- **Cultural Space:** How can more sustainable performance, production and creative living space be created across the District?
- **Partnerships:** How do partnerships support culture, and how can existing and new partnerships in the District be supported?
- **Cultural Entrepreneurship:** What is needed to support and expand cultural entrepreneurship?



# THE ASPIRATION STATION

What's your "big idea" for culture?



## MAJOR TAKEAWAYS

**More shared production and performance space in Ward 7 and East of the River**

**Prioritize youth arts education programming**

**Support the local community's heritage in cultural development**



# CULTURAL IDENTITY

What does DC culture mean to you? How do we define DC's cultural identity?



## ICE BREAKER QUESTION: HOW DO YOU DEFINE DC'S CULTURAL IDENTITY?

- “Rich”
- “Diverse”
- “Blackness”
- “Independent”
- “Resilience”
- “Spontaneity”
- “Food – Mambo sauce”
- “Collaborative”
- “Music evolution”

# CULTURAL IDENTITY

What does DC culture mean to you? How do we define DC's cultural identity?

## KEY CONCERNS

- **Local DC heritage and culture** are not supported in an official capacity by institutions
- Lack of support for **youth arts education and programming**
- **Affordability** of creative production space
- **Displacement** of long-term residents and local artists

## SOLUTION IDEAS

- **Create policies** requiring all government agencies to present a platform for the arts, culture and humanities
- **Develop intergenerational projects** that pair new and old residents in preserving community history (e.g. oral history)
- Require **private developers to include affordable housing** in every new development project

# CULTURAL SPACE

What types of spaces do you need to live, work and perform in the District?



## ICE BREAKER QUESTION: WHAT CREATIVE SPACES CURRENTLY WORK WELL IN THE DISTRICT?

- “WeWork coworking spaces”
- “H Street Corridor”
- “Atlas Performing Arts Center”
- “Flashpoint”
- “GALA Theatre”
- “Latin American Youth Center”
- “O Street Studios”
- “THEARC”



# CULTURAL SPACE

What types of spaces do you need to live, work and perform in the District?

## KEY CONCERNS

- **Limited investment in Ward 7** cultural production and performance spaces
- **Underutilization of existing assets** (e.g. schools, vacant buildings)
- **Knowledge of available space** for practice/rehearsal, production and performance
- **Permitting processes** are lengthy and difficult to navigate
- **Lack of affordable and permanent** performance and production **space**

## SOLUTION IDEAS

- **Diversify investment geographically, especially from the Commission on the Arts and Humanities** to include organizations spread across the District
- **Use existing spaces in Ward 7**, such as Fletcher Johnson Elementary School, as a cultural center
- **Create a streamlined and transparent permitting processes**
- **Create a development database** to inform available spaces for creatives
- **Establish protections** for current renters of valuable real estate

# PARTNERSHIPS

How do we leverage partnerships to enhance cultural programming, participation and access?



## ICE BREAKER QUESTION: HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF PARTNERSHIPS?

- “Relationships that have the potential to continue”
- “Tangible benefits for all”
- “Partnerships as learning opportunities”
- “Willingness to accept new ideas and give/get respect”
- “Grassroots”
- “Digital engagement and collaboration”

# PARTNERSHIPS

How do we leverage partnerships to enhance cultural programming, participation and access?

## KEY CONCERNS

- **Measuring and communicating the value of arts and culture** to the private sector
- Lack of **awareness about partnership** and funding opportunities
- **Engagement of local communities** in decision-making related to arts and culture

## SOLUTION IDEAS

- **Create standard metrics for cultural health and establish a common language** to engage both creatives and the private sector
- Host **more intentional networking events** for creatives to meet one another (e.g. happy hours and “speed dating”)
- Share resources, opportunities, and connections through a **clearinghouse of information** for creatives
- **Create community task forces** to advise outside organizations on local cultural programming and production



# CULTURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

How can we better support cultural businesses during start-up, production, programming, presentation and participation?



## ICE BREAKER QUESTION: CAN YOU SHARE A MEMORABLE CULTURAL EXPERIENCE?

- “Howard’s Homecoming”
- “Attending a Junk Yard Band (go-go) show at Holy Comforter”
- “Storytelling from parents”
- “...event at the Zanzibar in 2007”
- “ballet class at Therrell Smith School of Dance”
- “Petworth band and show playing on Petworth Rec Center rooftop”
- “Capital Fringe Festival”
- “Howard University Gallery of Art”
- “...a lot, a lot, a lot of museums”
- “A street party”

# CULTURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

How can we better support cultural businesses during start-up, production, programming, presentation and participation?

## KEY CONCERNS

- **Expensive, challenging and lengthy permitting process**
- **Access to individuals, organizations and funders** that support arts and culture
- Lack of attention to local culture in **marketing and publicity** of the District
- **Knowledge of tools and methods** to support new cultural endeavors

## SOLUTION IDEAS

- Create an **income-based payment system for permitting**
- Create **Mentorship program** matching CEOs and founders of successful organizations **with creative start ups**
- Create an **app or database** that connects individual artists with organizations that produce and fund cultural programming
- Generate **cultural marketing** that highlights local, neighborhood history for residents and visitors
- Provide expanded **technical assistance** to creatives



# MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED...

Across all conversations, some topics were top of mind

A word cloud visualization of frequently mentioned topics. The words are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with some larger and more prominent than others. The background is split into two vertical panels: white on the left and light blue on the right. The words are in various shades of blue.

**accessibility of public**  
**processes and resources**  
**collaboration across**  
**disciplines**  
**cultural identity**  
**community approach**  
**performance or**  
**production space**  
**public funding sources**  
**private funding**  
**information sharing**  
**barriers to participation**  
**heritage**

# MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED...

Key themes and ideas emerged during conversations

## Collaboration across disciplines

----->  
112 mentions

- Support for partnerships between local arts organizations and the private sector
- Requirements and incentives for the inclusion of arts and cultural space in new development
- Online tools and events that can connect participants in the creative sector

## Community approach

----->  
91 mentions

- Engagement between developers and the existing community
- Local hiring of Washingtonians in cultural organizations and development
- Equitable distribution of funding and cultural programming across the District, especially East of the River

## Cultural identity

----->  
58 mentions

- Marketing and expression of hyper-local/neighborhood culture
- Heritage projects that connect new and old residents
- DC music
- Respect for and elevation of existing residents' culture

## Accessibility of public processes and resources

----->  
58 mentions

- Permitting processes that are lengthy, difficult to navigate and expensive
- Inclusive engagement processes in decision-making with cultural implications
- Official representation of the arts community in planning and policymaking





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Artist: James Bullough, Addison Karl. Title: Shh  
Credit Line: DC Department of Public Works, MuralSDC  
Program





# Arts Action DC Conversation Summary

**November 15, 2016**

**Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater**

*Hosted by the DC Office of Planning, in Partnership  
with the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities*



# OVERHEARD AT ENGAGEMENT WITH ARTS ACTION DC

Quotes from participants

**“We need grants or other accessible funding sources for the maintenance of facilities”**

**“DC needs to advertise the wealth of culture we possess beyond the National Mall in order to bring in tourists and drive business and cultural growth”**

**“We must ensure that locals and strong neighborhood identities are a part of the brand that is built”**

**“DC provides tax abatements and other incentives to foster a digital industry. It should treat arts and culture as an industry”**

**“We need a *Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act* for artist entrepreneurs”**

**“Non-profit property owners are exempt from paying property taxes. Why not extend that exemption to landlords who lease long-term to non-profits?”**

# Arts Action Community Conversations

## on the DC Cultural Plan

**ATTENDANCE:** Approximately **150 participants**, representing a mix of Arts Action members from a wide range of arts and humanities organizations, as well as District officials.

**WHAT:** After hosting four community conversations across the District, the Office of Planning in partnership with the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (DCCAH) held a meeting with Arts Action DC member organizations to assess and build upon concerns and strategies documented to date.

Key takeaways from the past four Community Conversations were shared with attendees to foster these discussions.

**SO WHAT?** At each conversation, trained facilitators from the DC Office of Planning, the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, HR&A advisors and bcWORKSHOP led participants in a discussion about:

- **DC Culture:** What is DC's cultural identity, and how can we strengthen access to that culture?
- **Cultural Space:** How can more sustainable performance, production and creative living space be created across the District?
- **Partnerships:** How do partnerships support culture, and how can existing and new partnerships in the District be supported?
- **Cultural Entrepreneurship:** What is needed to support and expand cultural entrepreneurship?



# CULTURAL IDENTITY

What does DC culture mean to you? How do we define DC's cultural identity?





# CULTURAL IDENTITY

What does DC culture mean to you? How do we define DC's cultural identity?

## KEY CHALLENGES

- **Local culture and heritage** are overshadowed by national arts, culture and programming
- **Lack of a brand/marketing tool** that groups and promotes diverse forms of cultural expression
- Diverse **community-based needs and existing initiatives** should be acknowledged
- **Arts and humanities education** is not currently an integral part of the DC Public Schools (DCPS) system

## SOLUTION IDEAS

- **Dedicated, targeted cultural marketing** that highlights local, neighborhood history for residents and visitors
- Work with current residents to **strengthen institutional understanding of diverse neighborhood identities** and support local endeavors
- DC government support of **community-based initiatives**
- **Work alongside DCPS** to provide **equitable access** to arts and humanities education across the District

# CULTURAL SPACE

What types of spaces do you need to live, work and perform in the District?





# CULTURAL SPACE

What types of spaces do you need to live, work and perform in the District?

## KEY CHALLENGES

- **Underuse of existing assets** (ie. schools, DC public libraries, and vacant buildings and lots)
- Existing cultural spaces are **too expensive for community groups** to use due to liability insurance and rental fees
- Difficult and lengthy process to navigate **permitting**, especially for public spaces & libraries
- **Lack of awareness of available space** for practice, rehearsal, production, and performance
- **Lack of affordable and permanent** living, performance and production **space**

## SOLUTION IDEAS

- Provide resources to **maintain existing spaces**
- Develop **public use, free of charge City-owned art centers**
- Create **streamlined, timely and transparent permitting processes**
- Require **private developers to include affordable housing/arts space** in every new development project
- **Inventory private development** to create a database of spaces available for creatives
- Provide **tax incentives** for property owners to include arts, culture and humanities spaces, including extending non-profit exemptions to rental tenants

# PARTNERSHIPS

How do we leverage partnerships to enhance cultural programming, participation and access?



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How do we leverage partnerships to enhance cultural programming, participation and access?

## KEY CHALLENGES

- **Communicating the value** of arts, culture and humanities **to the private sector**
- Lack of **awareness about partnership and funding opportunities**
- **Lack of dialogue** with and **technical assistance from DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (DCCA)** after grants are distributed for non-grantee organizations
- **Underuse** of potential **international partnerships**

## SOLUTION IDEAS

- **Establish a common language** to engage both creatives and the private sector
- Host **more intentional networking events** for creatives to meet one another (ie. happy hours and “speed dating”)
- Share information, resources, technical assistance, opportunities, and connections through a **database/clearinghouse of information** for creatives



# CULTURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

How can we better support cultural businesses during start-up, production, programming, presentation and participation?



# CULTURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

How can we better support cultural businesses during start-up, production, programming, presentation and participation?

## KEY CHALLENGES

- Expensive, challenging and lengthy **permitting processes**
- **Affordability and access to space** for creative entrepreneurs
- **Access to individuals, organizations and funders** who support arts and culture
- Lack of attention to local culture in **marketing and publicity** of the District
- Neighborhood business development **focuses on incoming residents** rather than the existing community

## SOLUTION IDEAS

- Create a **streamlined, timely and transparent permitting processes**
- Develop a *Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act* for artist entrepreneurs
- Encourage developers to **partner with artists and cultural organizations**
- Identify culture as an **industry and economic development tool** through tax incentives
- **Dedicated, targeted cultural marketing** that highlights local, neighborhood history for residents and visitors
- **Funding and capacity building** for artists and organizations at **accessible locations and times**, with information specific to both non-profits and for-profits

# MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED

Across all conversations, some topics were top of mind



A word cloud of frequently mentioned topics, split into two columns by a vertical line. The left column has a white background and the right column has a light gray background. The words are in various shades of blue. The most prominent words are 'performance space' and 'production space', which are the largest and most central. Other large words include 'collaboration across disciplines', 'public funding source', and 'accessibility of public processes and resources'. Smaller words include 'resource sharing', 'private funding source', 'mixed-use development', 'information sharing', 'leverage existing assets', and 'barriers to partnership'.

resource sharing private funding source  
collaboration across disciplines mixed-use development  
information **performance space**  
sharing **production space**  
leverage existing assets accessibility of public processes and resources  
**public funding source** barriers to partnership



# MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED

Key themes emerged among the most-discussed topics

## Performance or production space

109 mentions

- Underuse of existing public and private assets
- Need to maintain existing funding streams
- Inaccessibility of public cultural spaces for small community groups due to high rental fees and liability insurance

## Public funding source

84 mentions

- Providing more funding for small organizations
- Use of tax incentives to support the arts, culture and the humanities
- Requiring new development to include arts and cultural space through an “arts overlay”

## Accessibility of public processes and resources

59 mentions

- Equitable access to public resources across the District (especially East of the river)
- Support for artists living in the DC Metro area
- Lengthy and difficult to navigate permitting processes

## Information sharing

59 mentions

- Sharing resources, opportunities, and connections through a database / clearinghouse of information
- Creating networking events for arts, culture and humanities organizations and funding organizations





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Artist: James Bullough, Addison Karl. Title: Shh  
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# DC CULTURAL PLAN



## Community Conversation Summary Individual Artists and Cultural Producers Open House: March 9th, 2017

**Hamiltonian Gallery, 1353 U Street NW**

*Hosted by the DC Office of Planning, in Partnership with  
The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities & The DC Office of Cable Television, Film, Music, and Entertainment*





# ASPIRATION STATION

## ASPIRATION STATION!

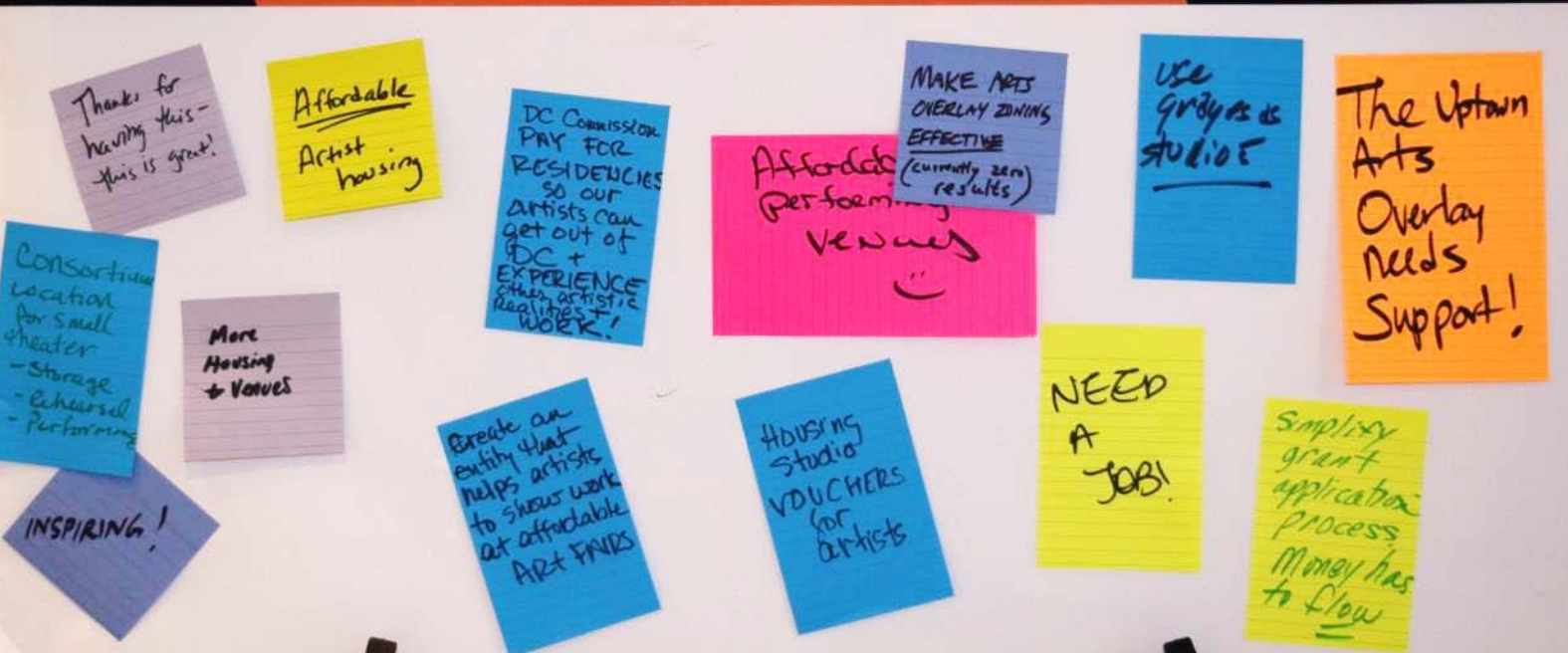
Tell us your **BIG** ideas

#dcculturalplan  
#intermissionDC



Create an entity that helps artists to show work at affordable ART FAIRS

The Uptown Arts Overlay Needs Support!



More Housing + Venues



# OVERHEARD IN THE HAMILTONIAN GALLERY

## Quotes from Participants

**“I live in Eckington, the linkage with other community members is really important.”**

**“We need affordable housing at 30% AMI that is permanent.”**

**“Seek out good stories, African American stories, to prevent disenfranchisement.**

**“Audience is an end product. Build up the community to build the audience.”**

**“Simplify the grant application process. Money has to flow.”**

**“Help artists come together to buy live/work space.”**

**“‘Never be dark’ black box theatre management: We need a consortium location for small theaters with storage, rehearsal and performance space.”**

**“Create incentives for developers to retain existing cultural tenants.”**

# INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS OPEN HOUSE

## on the DC Cultural Plan

**ATTENDANCE:** Approximately **90** individual artists, creative entrepreneurs, and humanities practitioners from across the District attended this open house. Individual artists, unaffiliated with an organization, have a unique perspective, set of goals and needs to be incorporated into the Cultural Plan.

**WHAT:** After hosting four community conversations across the District, the Office of Planning (OP) in partnership with the DC Commission on Arts and Humanities (DCCAH) and Office of Cable Television, Film, Music and Entertainment (OCTFME) held a meeting to hear directly to individual artists, humanities practitioners, and creative entrepreneurs.

**SO WHAT?** At each conversation, agency directors from OP, DCCAH and OCTFME talked directly with attendees, while trained staff from the Office of Planning, the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, DC Arts and Education Collaborative, HR&A advisors and bcWORKSHOP transcribed notes on these conversations. These discussions sought to better understand the specific challenges experienced by individual artists and potential strategies to address them.

Participants engaged in **three salon style conversations: Stage hosted by OP, Performer hosted by OCTFME, and Audience hosted by DCCAH.**



# STAGE

Does the District support your space needs?

How can cultural space promote collaboration?



# STAGE IDEAS

Does the District support your space needs?

How can cultural space promote collaboration?

- Collaborative spaces that are “**never dark**”: Occupied seven days and nights a week with artists from a variety of disciplines
- **Rethink or consider public spaces**, such as alleys, as areas for production, expression and performance
- **Connect local artists with developers**
- **Create financial incentives** for developers/space owners **to keep existing cultural tenants** in new development projects
- A mechanism that **connects owners of available space to those in need** of performance or production space



# PERFORMER

What specific information, resources, and tools do you need to pursue, produce, and present creative endeavors? What kind of partnerships do you need to be successful?



# PERFORMER IDEAS

What specific information, resources, and tools do you need to pursue, produce, and present creative endeavors? What kind of partnerships do you need to be successful?

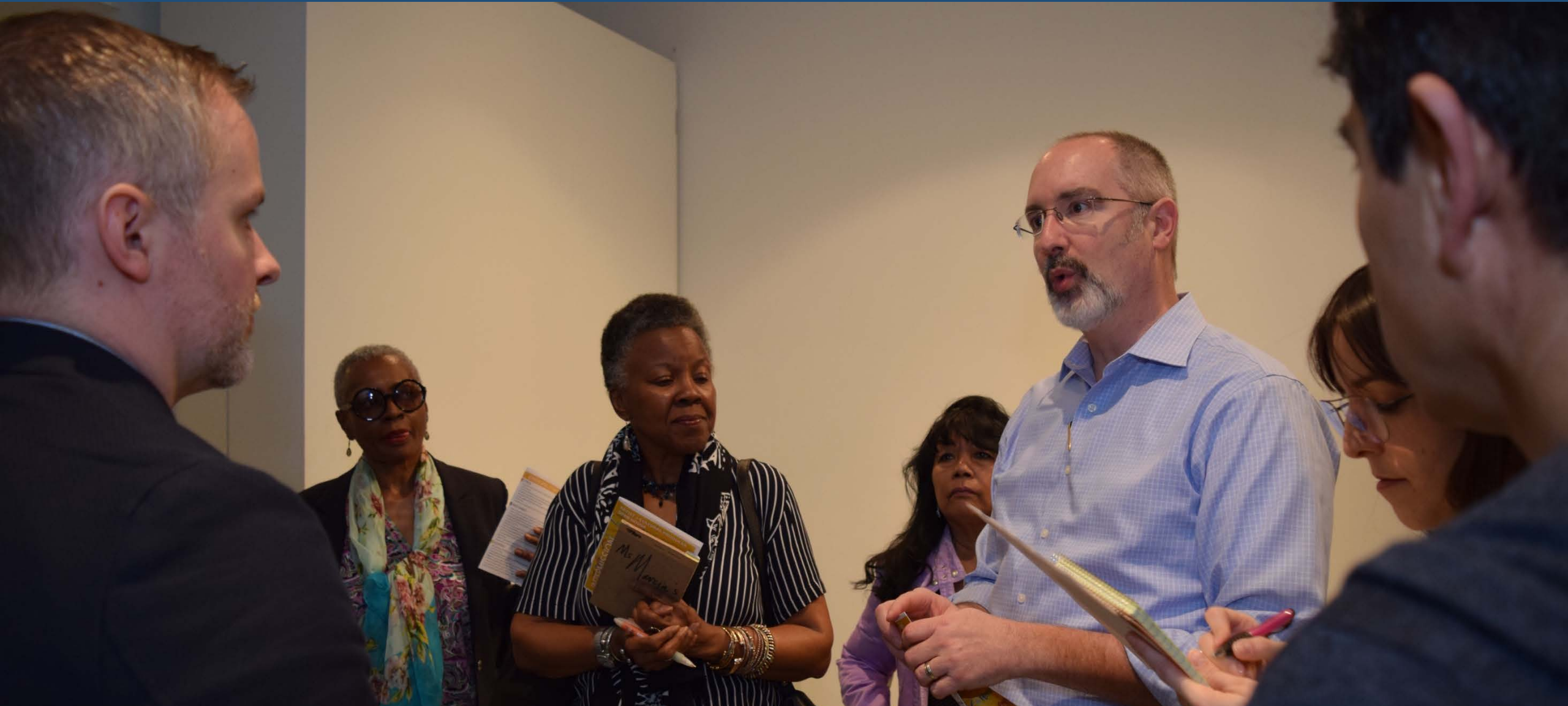
- **Review and revise the zoning arts overlay** to ensure equitable inclusion of arts space
- **Create an institution** dedicated to **local visual artists** and/or **celebrate local identity in existing federal institutions**
- A mechanism that **connects owners of available space to those in need** of performance or production space
- Hire an **artist ambassador** to act as a **liason between local artists and businesses**
- **Create permanent, sustainable spaces that allow for artists to exist and mature in DC** (production space, galleries to show and sell work, affordable housing)



# AUDIENCE

How do you experience culture?

How do you engage your audience?



# AUDIENCE IDEAS

How do you experience culture?

How do you engage your audience?

- Include a **local artist advisor** in all DC events and initiatives
- **Bolster the visual arts audience** by creating a DC Art Fair
- **Increase opportunities for paid work** for local artists by **incentivizing and expanding marketing of local venues**
- **Facilitate collaborative artist purchases of live-work space**
- As DC continues to change demographically, **preserve local cultural heritage** by focusing on **access and inclusion** in strategy development



# MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED

Across all conversations, some topics were brought up on repeated occasions



# MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED

Key themes emerged among the most-discussed topics

## Community approach

42 mentions

### Key comments related to community approach addressed:

- Inclusion of local artists and culture in federal institutions
- Financial support/grants for local, “grassroots” organizations
- Linkages between artists and local businesses
- Connecting local artists to local space owners

## Support for small businesses

27 mentions

### Key comments related to support for small businesses were concerned with:

- Build capacity and provide technical assistance for artists to start their own business
- Financially incentivize local organizations to stay within the District
- Connect local artists to local developers

## Public funding source

30 mentions

### Key comments related to public funding sources in the District were concerned with:

- Create a revenue stream to support growth of the arts community (ex. tax or endowment)
- Incentives for developers to provide space for arts uses and prioritize local artists and organizations
- Need for short term and flexible funding
- Mandates for artists to be paid

## Performance or production space

25 mentions

### Key comments related to barriers to performance or production space included:

- Need for permanent, sustainable space – both affordable housing and production space
- Tense relationship between artists and nearby businesses due to noise regulations
- Connect local artists to local space owners





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Artist: James Bullough, Addison Karl. Title: Shh  
Credit Line: DC Department of Public Works, MuralSDC  
Program