

# ***Art Works: Creative Invention/Reinvention***

**A Collaborative Cultural Economic  
Development Plan for  
Greater Lansing's Urban Center**



**Approved October 5, 2009**

## **The Accident Fund**

### **–A Purposeful Reinvention (Times Two!)**

Life began for The Accident Fund in 1912 when the Michigan legislature enacted the State's first workers disability compensation law and provided for its financial needs in the state treasury. The organization was led and operated by Michigan business owners, but by 1976 Michigan Attorney General Kelley ruled that the Accident Fund was a state agency, classifying all employees within the state civil service.

Accident Fund became a national symbol of successful privatization following legislation authorizing its privatization in 1994. Blue Cross Blue Shield won the right to buy the assets and operations from the State, and it began operations in 1995. In 2000 the organization embarked on a national expansion, providing services outside of Michigan, licensed in 49 states and actively soliciting business in 18.

With such rapid growth over just one decade, the second reinvention began. The Accident Fund needed a new headquarters. They considered two paths.

To build new offices outside of the city center would prove most economical, but the company opted to renovate an iconic existing building downtown. The dramatic Board of Water and Light structure on a key riverfront site provided a unique company symbol as well as helping to stimulate a sense of regeneration in Lansing, rising from the city's industrial past.

The Accident Fund remains a leading corporate entity in Lansing and the 10<sup>th</sup> largest workers'



compensation insurance company in the country. The organization's aptitude for invention and re-invention is its leading asset, an asset shared with the Lansing and East Lansing wider community.



## **Barbara Hranilovich**

### **– Artist and Entrepreneur**

**B**arbara Hranilovich has made her living for many years as an artist and commercial illustrator. Her experiences with small businesses and partnerships have not only given her the strength to become a flourishing entrepreneur, but provided the knowledge and the desire to help other emerging professionals launch businesses across the country.

Beginning her work in a cottage industry as a teenager, Barbara's taste for self-employment grew into a profession. A member of Ladies Who Launch, an entrepreneurial women's group, her interest in the field led to the creation of *E is for Entrepreneur*, a companion book for prospective business owners, it is especially helpful for artists who understand they are running a business in addition to their creative work. The 2008 book, illustrated by Barbara's designs, is made up of a series of short essays which share Barbara's personal

experiences, talent and organizational skills and has been heralded an 'essential primer for every self-starter'.

Barbara sees the creative talent pool in Lansing and East Lansing as a tremendous asset, hugely vital to the strength of the community.



## **Creative Invention / Reinvention**



## Table of Contents

PLANNING PURPOSE AND PARTNERS .....	VI
CULTURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STEERING COMMITTEE .....	VII
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND .....	1
THE SETTING .....	2
GOALS, ASSETS, AND OBSTACLES.....	3
VISION .....	7
GOALS.....	7
CORE STRATEGY .....	7
FOUR SIGNATURE INITIATIVES .....	7
STRATEGIES, OUTCOMES, AND ACTION STEPS.....	11
GOAL I. LEAD & COORDINATE CULTURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT .....	11
GOAL II. ENCOURAGE, SUPPORT, AND INVEST IN CREATIVE ENTERPRISES.....	18
GOAL III. ATTRACT & ASSIST WORKERS AND BUSINESSES .....	27
GOAL IV. ENHANCE THE VALUE OF PLACE .....	34
APPENDIX .....	42
PLANNING METHODS.....	42
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION .....	42
INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS REPORT.....	46
CULTURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SURVEY RESULTS .....	57

## **Scrapfest**

### **- A New Take on Old Town**

**S**crapfest, the Lansing based sculpture competition, is a great example of the city's resourceful community spirit. The festival, which turned the historic streets of Old Town Lansing into a playground of reinvention, sent teams of artists into a creative frenzy, culminating in a series of artistic sculptures for the enjoyment of the community.



With just one hour to collect scrap materials from 120-year-old Friedland's Industries (a leader in the scrap processing and recycling

industry in the State of Michigan), teams of artists worked day and night to complete their sculptures before Old Town's Festival of the Moon and Sun, just one week later. The pieces were to be exhibited to the public, judged by leading artists and celebrities, and finally auctioned-off to raise money for the Old Town Commercial Association.

Resulting in twelve breathtaking sculptures, including a 260 pound scrap metal dinosaur, a 300 pound black scorpion, and a stunning eagle sculpture made of silverware the event filled the festival grounds attracting hundreds of visitors and raising a total of \$2,800 in 2009.



## ***Art Works: Creative Invention/Reinvention*** **A Collaborative Cultural Economic Development Plan for Greater Lansing's Urban Center**

### **Planning Purpose and Partners**

**Purpose:** Leaders from the cultural and economic development sectors in Lansing and East Lansing are committed to complete a cultural economic development (CED) plan for both Cities that:

- Identifies cultural assets, opportunities, and needs
- Defines a manageable set of economic development goals
- Builds collaborations among multiple assets and sectors to achieve CED goals
- Physically and virtually connects Lansing, East Lansing and Michigan State University (MSU)
- Recommends actions to develop partnerships and the cultural sector's capacity to contribute to the economy

**Partners:** Local and state agencies combined resources to implement this process: the Michigan Office of Cultural Economic Development, City of East Lansing, Arts Council of Greater Lansing, Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Lansing Economic Development Corporation, and Michigan State University.

**Building on other plans:** This Cultural Economic Development plan has been developed in close partnership with the Leap, Inc. regional economic development planning (Regional Cluster Analysis Report of the Lansing Metropolitan Region; Shared Visions, Gap & Barriers Analysis, & Alternative Economic Development Strategies for the Lansing Metropolitan Region). Successful implementation of this CED plan will require new, initiatives as well as embedding initiatives suggested here within other existing initiatives.

This CED plan builds on other plans and studies including: Downtown Lansing Market Study and Strategies, MSU Cultural Engagement Council Strategic Plan, The Dollars and Sense of Cultural Economic Development: Summary Report of Michigan's Cultural Capacity, The Michigan Center for Innovation and Reinvention, City of Lansing Comprehensive Plan, City of East Lansing Big Picture, Comprehensive Plan for our Community, City of Lansing Community Cultural Plan 1998 Status Report, and Arts Council of Greater Lansing Strategic Plan.

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The Steering Committee of community leaders and partner agencies oversees the CED plan, serving as the plan's advisory board for the anticipated six-month duration of the planning. The Committee's key role is to provide key information, confirm assessment findings and shape recommendations for the plan. Members of the committee review and refine drafts of the plan before their final consideration and approval of the plan.

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# ***Art Works: Creative Invention/Reinvention***

## **A Collaborative Cultural Economic Development Plan for Greater Lansing's Urban Center**

### **Introduction and Background**

The many unique qualities and assets of Lansing and East Lansing, when creatively combined, will significantly contribute to its economy and quality of life during the next decade. Creative thinking, smart young talent, hard-working 'get-it-made' workforce, visionary leadership, and a network of artists and cultural organizations are among existing ingredients.

**A bold vision** This plan recommends that the Cities of Lansing and East Lansing and region be ***the Midwest's most welcoming and supportive destination for creative innovators and entrepreneurs***. The two cities, Michigan State University, and the Arts Council of Greater Lansing should expand their promising collaboration and join with additional partners such as Capital Area Transportation Authority, Lansing Community College, Leap, Inc., Capital Area Michigan Works!, and other community leaders, to decisively coordinate and promote their strengths towards this vision.

This plan is Phase I of subsequent regional cultural economic development planning. While many assessment findings and planned strategies apply to the region, the current initiative studied and focused its recommendations on the urban center. Further planning will include the larger Greater Lansing region more explicitly.

This plan details a package of services, projects, and cooperative relationships – all built on existing assets and efforts – to nurture, attract, inform, fuel, and realize the visions of inventors, innovators, artists, and other entrepreneurs. Initiatives outlined are designed to significantly change the internal and external image of the cities.



Leap, Inc. is coordinating a Greater Lansing Regional Plan for Prosperity. This plan cites Leap, Inc.'s August 11 report ("Recommendations and Economic Growth Strategies") calls for "creating a vision that positions the region to effectively compete in the global New Economy and take advantage of existing assets and emerging new opportunities." The "Recommendations and Economic Growth Strategies" and its complementary findings and recommendations, are cited herein.

The report includes a call for coordinated efforts to create a region that ***"highly values knowledge assets, entrepreneurship and innovation... is***



***culturally rich and welcoming to new people, and new ideas.”***

History shows that vision, invention, and civic collaboration have brought one-hundred years of prosperity to the community. Now is the time for renewed vision, reinvention, and expanded collaboration in order to set the stage for the next one-hundred. Without swift action, the next century will be bleak. Nurturing, attracting, and retaining creative entrepreneurs, artists, and a creative workforce<sup>1</sup> requires deliberate efforts to lower barriers and to raise rewards for invention, innovation, and entrepreneurial efforts. This plan details four broad yet interconnected goals for expanded collaborative efforts. Together they can bring about new enterprises, attract new talent, devise new ways of generating income, and forge new ways for people to work together and enjoy their lives.

**Cultural Economy Defined**

***The Cultural or Creative Economy*** consists of a cultural core that includes occupations and industries, both for profit and not for profit that focus on the production and distribution of cultural goods and services, as well as intellectual property – but specifically intellectual property that has a cultural component.

*The Creative Economy involves:*

***Cultural Workforce:*** occupations that represent work that directly produces cultural goods and services, regardless of industry, or work within an industry that makes cultural goods/services regardless of the actual work task.

***Cultural Enterprises:*** those industries that are involved in the production and or distribution of cultural goods and services.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Thanks to Mt. Auburn Associates for suggesting these categories, [www.mtauburnassociates.com](http://www.mtauburnassociates.com)

## **The Setting**

**History of innovation** The histories of Lansing and East Lansing reveal how enterprising and inventive individuals leveraged the confluence of the Red Cedar and Grand Rivers, promises for a brighter future, geographic location, and plain old ingenuity and hard work. They attracted settlers and industry, created a capital city, built a Big 10 University, and grew major employers in the manufacturing, finance, and health care sectors – all surrounded by a vast and productive region with enormous agricultural and recreational tourism industries.



**A significant and growing creative economy** The combined creative sector workforce in the Lansing metropolitan area constitutes a significant economic sector, over nine percent of the workforce in 2006.<sup>3</sup> While the overall number of workers, payroll, and business establishments declined during the middle of this decade, the creative sector grew.<sup>4</sup> The numbers of people in

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<sup>3</sup> Creative Economy NAICS Codes (Core and Peripheral) and overall definition of the Creative Economy are based on the New England Foundation for the Arts publication, *The Creative Economy: A New Definition* - November 2007, which can be found online: <http://www.nefa.org/pubs/index.html>

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census data for the Lansing Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) when shifted using the

these creative fields declaring themselves as self-employed also grew from 13.9% to 16.6%, nearly twice the number of self-employed as in other industry sectors.

**Building momentum** Research for this plan found a multitude of forward-thinking people and initiatives already in motion. From transportation and urban re-development initiatives, to new technology business incubators, innovative workforce development programs and public-private partnerships these two cities are seriously and intelligently at work studying and addressing their contemporary economic challenges.



### ***Goals, Assets, and Obstacles***

**Four goals** The work already underway needs to go further, to better coordinate the many efforts referenced above, to set higher goals, and to address some complex obstacles. The four goals of this plan derive from Lansing and East Lansing opportunities and focus on Leadership and Coordination, Creative Enterprise Development, Creative Workforce Development, and Place-making, all contributing to this ambitious vision – shaping a new identity for

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above definition for creative industries, showed a workforce growing from 8.97% in 2004 to 9.69% of the total workforce in 2006. Employees in those industries grew by 4.04% over the same period while the region's workforce as a whole declined by 3.05%.

Lansing and East Lansing based on their history and practical realities.

**Significant assets** Key assets working together to contribute to these goals include: existing entrepreneur and incubator programs; the resources of Michigan State University, Lansing Community College, Cooley Law School, Davenport University, and other centers of knowledge, inquiry, and research; public and private capital; the growing and highly successful design, advertising, media production, and public relations industry, and the highly skilled and experienced manufacturing workforce. Lansing and East Lansing possess the knowledge, skill, and capacity to imagine, invent, produce, sell, and distribute virtually any product.

Lansing and East Lansing offer relatively low-cost housing and space, an active and full cultural and creative community, as well as unparalleled library, archive, and university research resources. These cities have also demonstrated a civic capacity to accomplish major public infrastructure projects including the River Trail, Michigan Avenue Corridor improvement, and formation of the Capital Area District Library System and the Capital Area Transportation Authority.



**Overcoming barriers** The two cities' assets and qualities add up to a recipe for a successful cultural economy initiative. They also require overcoming

some very real obstacles. Lansing and East Lansing have experienced a long period of a comfortable middle-class lifestyle and a stable economy enjoyed by white and blue-collar workers alike. There was little need for change and little experience implementing or adjusting to it. The existence of multiple jurisdictions and major entities make coordination of efforts and policies cumbersome. The State ban on gay marriage and prohibition on domestic partner benefits have set back the cities' abilities to implement a more inclusive atmosphere towards difference in sexual

orientation. Physical as well as perceptual disconnects between the two cities and the tens of thousands of students at Michigan State University, Lansing Community College, Cooley Law School and Davenport University – as well as perceived lack of opportunity – contribute to a constant exodus of educated youth, their talents, ideas, and creative energy.

This plan endeavors to marshal the community's assets to overcome its challenges and, at the same time, to lift its economy and quality of life.

## **Creole Galley**

### **- Reinventing a Community**

The shocking death of Robert Busby in February 2007 sent waves through the Old Town community and beyond. Robert was the owner of the Creole Gallery and his vision of a neighborhood filled with art, music and vibrant culture meant he was referred to by many as 'the mayor of Old Town'.

In a story of reinvention, hope and vision Robert's daughter, Ena Busby, has reopened the gallery in an act which continues her father's legacy.

Many felt Robert's death might affect the momentum behind Old Town's transformation, but in the last year alone the area has seen the opening of 23 new businesses as this vibrant community grows stronger day by day. Busby's vision did not die, nor did the lively society he worked so hard to support.

The reemergence of Robert's gallery and the continued development of Old Town's cultural economy is a metaphor for community reinvention at its best.





## **Capital Area District Library**

### **– Rethinking the Library System**

Consisting of 13 libraries and one bookmobile, The Capital Area District Library (CADL) was formed in 1998 and serves the residents of most of Ingham County, except East Lansing. The coalition of this library system stands as a triumph for the people of Lansing and an organizational success story of national relevance.

The previous Ingham County Library system and the Lansing Public Library System, originally run by Ingham County and Lansing School District respectively, lacked the funding to best serve their constituents.



In need of reinvention, the County and the City of Lansing joined to form a District Library and went directly to the voters for funding. The results have led to greatly enlarged budget for materials, longer open hours, increased staffing, increased programming and a greater number of computers for public use. The creation of CADL has directly improved the lives of thousands of individuals in the region.

Now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year, demand for the organization's library services continues to increase. Since the year 2000, circulation of materials has more than doubled, with a grand total of 2.5 million items borrowed in 2008. Additionally, computer use has tripled and visits to the library have grown yearly adding up to nearly 1.6 million in 2008.

The creation of CADL is an indisputable success. In August 2006 the voters approved 1.56 mills in funding for the four year period ending in December 2010 affirming their appreciation for greatly enhanced library services.

**Creative Invention / Reinvention**

## ***Art Works: Creative Invention/Reinvention*** **A Collaborative Cultural Economic Development Plan for Greater Lansing's Urban Center**

### **Vision**

**Greater Lansing will be the Midwest's most welcoming and supportive destination for creative innovators and entrepreneurs.**

### **Goals**

**I. Lead & Coordinate Cultural Economic Development** Sustained leadership and support advances cultural economic development in the urban center to build jobs and strengthen the economy of Greater Lansing.

**II. Encourage, Support, and Invest in Creative Enterprises** Lansing and East Lansing become the region's acknowledged center of knowledge, services, capital, space, and recognition for innovators and creative entrepreneurs.

**III. Attract & Assist Workers and Businesses** A vital, culturally-rich and creative environment attracts and retains innovative workers, business owners, and young people.

**IV. Enhance the Value of Place** Residents are proud and others attracted as Greater Lansing's urban center becomes a geographically integrated arts, entertainment, and knowledge economy, and a business destination.

### **Core Strategy**

This Plan recognizes that multiple and significant activities are already underway in Lansing and East Lansing initiated by many different players, and that these efforts all contribute to cultural economic development. There is minimal need to create new programs, but rather to understand how these efforts fit together within a larger plan, and to connect existing initiatives with each other and with the creative/cultural sector.

**The core strategy is to connect existing economic, entrepreneurial, and workforce initiatives with the growing ranks of creative entrepreneurs, artists, creative workers, and cultural organizations.**

### **Four Signature Initiatives**

The plan identifies four key initiatives that build on assets to translate long-range goals into tangible projects that advance multiple priorities in the plan. Coordination would be vested in the Cultural Economic Development (CED) Partners, led by the Arts Council of Greater Lansing.

1. **Build Cultural and Creative Sector Leadership Capacity** to guide implementation of this plan. This initiative will strengthen the Arts Council of Greater Lansing to engage strategic partnerships and mobilize leadership, to lead and represent the



creative sector. Leadership is a pivotal requirement to fulfill strategies in all four goals of the plan. Additional implementation partners include: the Cities of Lansing and East Lansing, Michigan State University, Lansing Community College, Leap, Inc., Greater Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau, Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, and others.

2. **Cultivate the Spirit of Creative Entrepreneurism** with recognition including a significant new annual recognition, e.g. the *R.E. Olds Entrepreneur Award*, and a new entrepreneur or inventor festival or idea competition to celebrate, identify, and encourage outstanding creative entrepreneurs and the spirit of invention and reinvention. This supports goals II and III for creative enterprise and workforce development. Additional implementation partners could include: Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, Impression 5 Science Center, and Lansing Community College.
3. **Identify Creative Entrepreneur Financing** to provide incentives, resources, and expertise for small creative businesses and start-up enterprises. Identify and promote existing financing and create a new Creative Entrepreneur Fund that draws on local finance and investment expertise and brings together public and private resources, know-how, and capital pools. It supports Goals I and II. Potential additional implementation partners could include: the Cities of Lansing and East Lansing, Ingham County, insurance and banking companies, Capital Region Community Foundation, Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, and others.
4. **Develop the Michigan Avenue Center for Creative Business and Arts** at a central location between the two cities as part of a vital business node. A new center might incorporate one or more existing incubators and will include an incubator/studio facility with business services, training, and consulting that cross arts, technology, and business innovation. It will strengthen connections between Lansing, East Lansing, Michigan State University, Lansing Community College, and other creative nodes. This center could house some existing MSU and LCC faculty and research projects. It supports goals I, III, and IV. Additional implementation partners could include: Michigan Avenue Corridor Improvement Authority, Capital Area Transportation Authority, Capital Area Michigan Works, and others.



## **The Boomers**

### **- A New Twist on Life in the Corporate World**

**A**ndy Hopping is the CFO and Executive Vice President of Jackson National Life Insurance, a nationwide network with its home offices in Lansing, Michigan. Hopping's contribution to this thriving organization goes way beyond corporate leadership and business development, it symbolizes Lansing and East Lansing's capacity for re-invention.

In 2006 Hopping launched "Jackson Idol" – an opportunity for Jackson Insurance employees to audition to be part of a corporate rock band. Next came a competition to name the band and, soon enough, *The Boomers* (named after Jackson

Insurance's main customer demographic) were born. The seven-strong band, made up mainly of senior staff, began performing at Common Ground Festival – an annual Lansing event. By the summer of 2009 *The Boomers* were chosen to be one of 16 semi-finalists from a list of 56 other corporate bands at a Las Vegas gathering of corporate rock bands from across America.

Alongside boosting morale, encouraging teamwork and personalizing the company's corporate identity, the band provides an opportunity for Jackson Insurance to interact with the local community, performing across Lansing and East Lansing at charity related events. The band recently

performed at Capitol Moves, a community picnic event on the lawn of the Capital. Interest in the band has grown to such a degree that *The Boomers* sell CDs and other merchandise with all proceeds going to Ele's Place, a healing center for grieving children.



## **Greater Lansing Gay Men's Chorus**

### **-Pride in the Community**

As aptly stated in their mission statement, The Greater Lansing Gay Men's Chorus 'is a community of gay and gay-friendly men and women who, through song and community involvement, seek to create an atmosphere through musical expression that deepens and empowers our lives and the lives of those who hear us'. GLGMC represent community invention in its simplest sense.

First established in the summer of 1988 the Greater Lansing Gay Mens' Chorus was conceived by Larry Barnard and a small group of other individuals. Sadly, Larry passed away before the chorus could truly come to fruition.

Today the chorus represents a diverse cross-section of individuals who happen to be gay. With a long tradition of annual performances at Christmas concerts, fundraising events and festivals, the GLGMC is widely recognized for its treasured contribution to the Lansing and East Lansing community. Promoting a positive image for the region's gay population, the

organization seeks to encourage greater awareness of the diversity in the human spirit.

In an act of community collaboration, GLGMC has teamed up with Sistrum, Lansing Women's Chorus, for numerous events. Additionally GLGMC also benefits from other community related support through the Lansing Community College's *Gay Straight Alliance*, which has opened the door to a new venue for the chorus, the college's Dart Auditorium.

Striving for artistic excellence by singing on college campuses, shopping malls and street corners, the GLGMC is a symbol of success for the Lansing and Greater Lansing community and a clear indication of an area rich in both talent and opportunity.



## Strategies, Outcomes, and Action Steps

### ***Goal I. Lead & Coordinate Cultural Economic Development***

**Sustained leadership and support advances cultural economic development in the urban center to build jobs and strengthen the economy of Greater Lansing.**

#### **Assessment findings**

Creative industries and cultural organizations (the Creative Sector) in the Lansing MSA have grown (per most recently available Census data), while most other economic sectors contracted. Civic leaders, during Michigan's decade-long economic decline, have championed relatively small and/or fragmented creative and cultural initiatives. Although they recognize that the sector is an asset, no clear direction has existed for guiding the sector towards sustainable growth. The cultural sector has received support through grants and programs that are sometimes seen as subsidy rather than as investment.

Research and planning efforts currently underway by multiple entities including both cities, Michigan State University, Leap, Inc., Capital Area Transportation Authority, and others, have begun to examine the Creative Sector as an asset with potential for enterprise development, workforce development, and major contributions to placemaking. The current CED initiative recognizes the significance of the sector and is starting to coordinate efforts to tap its potential.

Strong champions for CED are needed in elected office, public service, the corporate and academic worlds, and in the nonprofit sector. While cultural economic development is no magic bullet, it can contribute to a comprehensive economic development strategy on multiple levels. This plan proposes a leadership structure, strategies, and priority actions to assure that momentum continues so the creative sector's potential is maximized to restore economic vitality to Lansing and East Lansing.

#### **Business, Government & NGOs Working Together**

The Leap, Inc. 2009 "Recommendations and Economic Growth Strategies" report calls for more collaborative decision-making, balancing three legs of a stool. *"More and more businesses, communities, and NGO's [Non-Government Organizations] around the world are embracing a vision of the future that is rooted in making decisions based on the triple bottom line: economic, environmental and social/cultural sustainability. These are the three legs of the sustainability stool... These are interdependent principles and building on one at the expense of the others, will result in a stool that is not strong enough to sit upon. All three legs must be strong."*

Strengthening the regional business, government and NGO infrastructure *"means helping to focus nongovernment organizations to put a portion of their efforts into activities that help support and promote the shared vision...and it means doing [this] with the full conviction of an ardent supporter, not as a half-effort."*

## **Goal I Signature Initiative:**

**Build Cultural and Creative Sector Leadership Capacity** to guide implementation of this plan. This initiative will strengthen the Arts Council of Greater Lansing to engage strategic partnerships and mobilize leadership – as the sector’s “passionate leader” --, to lead and represent the creative sector. Leadership is a pivotal requirement to fulfill strategies in all four goals of the plan. Additional implementation partners include: the Cities of Lansing and East Lansing, Michigan State University, Lansing Community College, Leap, Inc., Greater Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau, Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, and others.



### **Priority strategies:**

- 1. Build Cultural and Creative Sector Leadership Capacity to champion cultural economic development.** The Arts Council of Greater Lansing re-focuses its priorities and builds its capacity to serve as lead agency to guide implementation of the Cultural Economic Development Plan. Lansing, East Lansing, MSU and other CED partners invest to enhance the agency’s capacity with strong, identified community leaders, funding, and strategic partners on board (for example, Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce,

Greater Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau, Leap, Inc., MSU Governmental Affairs, Lansing Economic Development Corporation, City of East Lansing Planning and Development, and others).

### **Key outcomes:**

- The broad, cross-sector expertise assembled in the temporary cultural economic development steering committee is retained and expanded through formal, strategic partnerships, coordinated by the Arts Council of Greater Lansing.
- Cultural economic development strategies in this plan have been woven into the fabric of public and private investment strategies across the area, and these efforts are mutually supportive.
- Other economic agencies have easy access to local cultural and creative industries and the sector has an advocate.
- The Arts Council’s capacity is strengthened through partnerships, governance development, staffing, and new investment.
- Emerging opportunities are seized to further CED work.

**Anticipated Return on Investment (ROI):** Assures goals and strategies are successfully carried out; protects and maximizes dispersed investments to serve coordinated community vision and economic development efforts.

### **Priority Action Steps:**

- i. The Core CED partners meet with leaders of Leap, Inc., MSU, the Cities of Lansing and East Lansing, and the Greater



- Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau to determine how best to increase the Arts Council of Greater Lansing's capacity to lead implementation of the CED plan with its partners.
- ii. The Arts Council of Greater Lansing continues its strategic planning and reorganizing to respond to its CED responsibilities.
  - iii. Arts Council recruits new governing board members with economic development experience to complement its existing leadership.
  - iv. The City of East Lansing, City of Lansing, MSU, and others make leadership investments that increase the Arts Council's capacity and inspire additional investments.
  - v. The Arts Council of Greater Lansing continues to develop its board, fundraising, and earned revenue capacity, as outlined in its new strategic plan.

**2. Invest in top priority initiatives** Short-term strategies in this plan acknowledge funders' constraints in the lingering recession and do not require much new investment. Most of this plan can be accomplished by focusing attention on cultural economic development and connecting the dots among many initiatives underway. However, some strategic investment is required to realize the specific potential of cultural economic development in the short and long term.

#### Outcomes:

- Strategic investment is one of the means that priority outcomes throughout this plan are achieved.

**Anticipated ROI:** Evaluation of impacts demonstrate that investment in creative economic development creates and retains businesses, jobs, and economic activity.



#### Priority Action Steps:

- i. The Arts Council of Greater Lansing and other Core CED Partners develop cost estimates and identify likely investors to achieve priority outcomes in the first two years of plan implementation.
  - ii. Lead agencies identified in this plan build CED Action Steps into their work plans and related costs into their budgets.
  - iii. The Arts Council board invites the Cities of Lansing and East Lansing, MSU, Leap, Inc., and other member organizations of the CED Steering Committee to invest in Arts Council capacity and CED implementation.
- 3. Strengthen existing economic development efforts by embedding initiatives to support culture and creativity.**



As creative industries are the fastest growing economic sector in the Lansing Metropolitan Statistical Area, CED must be a part of the cities' economic development strategies and comprehensive plans. The central goal is to ensure cultural economic development becomes part of existing action agenda for agencies doing growth development.



#### Key outcomes:

- Creative and cultural entrepreneurship are integrated into the Lansing, East Lansing, Greater Lansing Regional Plan for Prosperity<sup>5</sup>, and other economic development plans and initiatives.
- Key provisions of this Cultural Economic Development Plan are included in the Lansing and East Lansing master plans.
- The many independent economic programs and initiatives are linked and accessible to creative entrepreneurs and cultural organizations.

**Anticipated ROI:** Minimal investment necessary. Requires CED “filter” to be embedded within existing planning and economic development initiatives. High return as this strategy will encourage

<sup>5</sup> Working title for regional economic development plan coordinated by Leap, Inc.

investment of other resources at sustainable, high-growth sector.

#### Priority Action Steps:

- i. The planning departments of East Lansing and Lansing integrate this CED plan into their master plans.
- ii. Leap, Inc. incorporates this CED plan into the regional economic plan's goals and strategies.
- iii. CED Steering Committee members actively look for opportunities to embed CED strategies into existing economic development initiatives and new plans, including the Master Plans of the Cities of Lansing and East Lansing, the CATA transportation study, and others.



4. **Coordinate and expand investment in building strong cultural sector.** There are a number of elements needed to build a strong cultural sector. Many of these are related to place-making (see Goal IV), but others are more specific such as providing information regarding space availability, ensuring adequate transportation infrastructure, and ensuring availability and access to affordable housing options.

#### Key Outcomes:

- In addition to including core Cultural Economic Development

opportunities other supportive service needs and desires of creative sector are embedded within existing initiatives and plans such as Master Plans of Cities of Lansing and East Lansing, CATA transportation study, etc.

- Affordable housing and/or live/work space for artists and other creative entrepreneurs helps attract and retain creative talent.



### Priority Action Steps:

- i. Arts Council of Greater Lansing provides information on its web site to direct low and moderate income creative workers to existing housing assistance programs.
- ii. The Cities of Lansing and East Lansing integrate opportunities for artists and other creative enterprises into their affordable housing development plans.
- iii. Arts Council of Greater Lansing is invited to participate and provide input into CATA Transportation study.

## **Steveanna Roose**

### **- A Storytelling Story**

Originally a state employee at the Michigan Department of Community Health, Steveanna always knew she had a creative side. With much more to offer than what was outlined in the scope of her job description, this Georgia born Ovid resident felt the need to explore more of her creative talents.

On attending a storytelling festival in Detroit, memories of winning a fourth grade competition in the same subject resurfaced, inspiring Steveanna to revisit the art form on a professional level. Working for a period as a substitute teacher, Steveanna's talent for public speaking made her instantly popular with local schools and invitations to speak to students began to pour in.

Taking the time to understand the nature of the arts world, by attending conferences and workshops, Steveanna gradually began to build a career in storytelling. Whether bringing science to life in the classroom or working as part of a museum based education program,

she has used her entrepreneurial spirit to unleash her creative potential.



Steveanna believes that storytelling can be a creative solution to a plethora of problems and challenges. She has served as the first artist-in-residence at the Michigan 4-H Children's Gardens and was recently selected as one of six area teaching artists trained in aesthetic arts education by New York's Lincoln Center for the Arts as part of the federally funded Michigan Art Project for Lansing Public Schools.



## **The Root-Bernsteins**

### **– Alchemists at Work**

**A**s professors at Michigan State University, husband and wife Bob and Michele Root-Bernstein have developed theories about the relationship between science and art. Their work illuminates a hidden potential within the process of mixing the towering silos of seemingly disconnected disciplines. They are re-inventing the way we see the world.

Beginning his studies over 25 years ago, Bob embarked on a program of research to determine what makes the world's most imminent scientists 'different.' To his surprise, the results revealed that the vast majority of pioneers in the sciences were accomplished in the creative arts, be it music, crafts or literature.

Together, the Root-Bernsteins published *Sparks of Genius, The Thirteen Thinking Tools of the World's Most Creative People* in 1999,

translating their findings into practical techniques which pivot on the understanding that creative development and scientific method are remarkably similar. Furthermore their theory suggests that the creative process can invigorate the fields of science and technology, increasing their capacity and effectiveness.

Teaming up with the MSU Center for Community and Economic Development, Bob and Michele continue to conduct studies as part of an interdisciplinary research group interested in cultural creativity. They lecture and consult

on topics such as thinking tools, the creative process, polymathy, and arts as the 4th "R" in education. Most importantly, their creative approach and ability to reinvent and reposition deep-rooted notions within our community could make the Root-Bernsteins theories a valued part of

Lansing and East Lansing's collaborative future.



## **Goal II. Encourage, Support, and Invest in Creative Enterprises**

**Lansing and East Lansing become the region's acknowledged center of knowledge, services, capital, space, and recognition for innovators and creative entrepreneurs.**

### **Key Assessment Findings**

Many excellent business development resources have been established in Lansing and East Lansing with more economic development initiatives underway. Michigan State University, Lansing Community College and others operate research and entrepreneur development programs, representing a critical mass of knowledge resources and economic development outreach. As an emerging center of finance and insurance, investment and risk management expertise is at hand to develop pooled investment and venture capital funds. The critical opportunity is to connect experience, business development services, and venture capital with ideas and entrepreneurial energy to grow creative enterprises. Michigan has been a national leader in cultural economic development. During the last decade, Lansing and East Lansing have experienced a wake-up call to the need for economic restructuring, responding to the needs and opportunities in the new economy, and cooperation between adjacent municipalities to coordinate services, land use planning, and economic development strategies.

### **Cluster Strategy**

The Leap, Inc. 2009 "Recommendations and Economic Growth Strategies" report examines existing and promising industry clusters for future growth. While none are strictly defined as Creative Clusters, embedded within some are creative workers. Moreover, a culture of openness and a spirit of creativity and inventiveness, as well as a community receptive to new ideas, are essential for every entrepreneurial or business innovative effort to gain traction. The vision described in the Leap, Inc. Recommendations *"requires an entrepreneurial and innovation mindset. It must be focused on building places within the region that are unique, attractive, diverse, and well-connected with a variety of transportation options."*

### **Goal II Signature Initiative:**

**Cultivate the Spirit of Creative Entrepreneurism** with recognitions including a significant new annual recognition, e.g. the *R.E. Olds Entrepreneur Award*, and a new entrepreneur or inventor festival or idea competition to celebrate, identify, and encourage outstanding creative entrepreneurs and the spirit of invention and reinvention. This supports goals II and III for creative enterprise and workforce development. Additional implementation partners could include: Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, Impression 5 Science Center, and Lansing Community College.

### **Priority strategies:**

**1. Focus existing entrepreneurial and business development strategies to meet unique needs of creative/cultural entrepreneurs**  
Lansing, East Lansing, MSU, Arts Council of Greater Lansing and additional partners such as LCC, Leap, Inc., and others take decisive steps to coordinate, streamline, and promote access to the many providers of new business development information and services. Adjusting some services to be specific to the creative/cultural-sector, pointing assistance providers and entrepreneurs to each other, and coordinating information can position the cities to be the Midwest's most



supportive place for creative entrepreneurs.

**Key outcomes:**

- Central information allows entrepreneurs and artists ready access to economic development agencies, MSU/LCC knowledge resources, marketing and design resources, incubator spaces, business management assistance, streamlined permitting, and the cities' enterprising young talent.
- A directory of business and workforce development resources identifies the many resources and connects these with entrepreneurs and other information and service providers (underway with Leap, Inc.).



- Existing entrepreneurial and business development services will be responsive to the creative-sector.
- Lansing and East Lansing enhance education in the public schools, as creativity is fundamental to a cultural economy and arts education cultivates creativity in the next generation.
- MSU, LCC and other higher education institutions expand curricula for entrepreneurs in business programs as well as through their arts programs.
- A dynamic "reinvention" of the Michigan Library and Historical

Center in downtown Lansing, similar to that proposed as the Michigan Center for Innovation and Reinvention. This facility, in its new use, can represent the "transformation led by innovation" of Michigan, and should include entrepreneurial and innovative programs that are symbolic of the state's history.

**Anticipated ROI:** Nominal investment needed. Aggressive coordination with existing entrepreneurial and business development infrastructure to adjust existing programming to meet the specific needs of creative entrepreneurs. Return will be increasing impact of existing expenditures by focusing on sustainable, high-growth sectors. Additional cost savings can be realized through service coordination, expanded success rates of new business, added jobs and increased tax revenue.

**Priority Action Steps:**

- i. Arts Council of Greater Lansing, the Lansing and East Lansing planning and economic development agencies, MSU, LCC and Leap, Inc. convene providers of entrepreneurial assistance for a summit to present this plan. Encourage and help them understand how best to coordinate service to respond to the needs and opportunities of the growing creative sector. Convene by January 2010. Limited cost.
- ii. Identify one or two entrepreneurial training and/or business development program(s) to partner with Arts Council of Greater Lansing to develop "pilot" program that tailors existing services to meet needs of creative entrepreneurs (a good model is Springboard for the Arts (St. Paul) "The Work of Art" business development workshop series).



- iii. Arts Council of Greater Lansing, Leap, Inc., and Ingham County MSU Extension & Economic Development Corporation create a central web portal that directs creative entrepreneurs and artists to entrepreneurial training and other economic development resources.
- iv. Leap, Inc. develops a network of entrepreneurial assistance providers and periodically convenes their representatives to coordinate efforts, facilitate constituent referrals, and avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts.
- v. The State of Michigan and MSU propose to re-invent the Michigan Library and Historical Center to be a regional asset for creative invention/reinvention.



## 2. Cultivate the Spirit of Creative Entrepreneurism

Recognize and network entrepreneurs by creating recognitions and convening events that promote and honor entrepreneurs, artists, and innovators as local heroes.

### Key outcomes:

- A new annual award, e.g., the *R.E. Olds Entrepreneur Award*, celebrates outstanding innovators, inventors, designers, artists, or other creative

entrepreneurs who exemplify the creative economic spirit.

- Investment in, and branding of, festivals that highlight the creative and reinvention capacities of artists and the Greater Lansing community. Infuse this spirit into festivals and events.
- Expanded networking and professional associations encourage and connect creative and young professionals.
- Visible community leaders demonstrate openness to new ideas and model the tolerance and cooperation that will make creative entrepreneurs and artists welcome.
- "LansingMade" branding of local entrepreneurs and specialty food producers and distributors increases their visibility and respect and helps re-frame the prevailing Lansing/East Lansing narrative as a success story.
- Entrepreneurial recognition and networking events like creative expos and *Ignite Lansing* recognize and facilitate collaborations.
- A new arts and technology festival (like Boston's Cyberarts) celebrates and promotes the University's and cities' technological capacities, interests young people in arts and technology careers, and encourages the emerging cluster of creative technology businesses.

**Anticipated ROI:** Primary return will be a change in attitude from entrepreneurs being seen as "people who can't keep a job" to "heroes" and the future for Greater Lansing. Developing a renewed spirit of entrepreneurialism with visibility and recognition will help retain existing

small businesses, attract new investment, and encourage more additional start-ups, thereby increasing employment and tax revenues.

### Priority Action Steps:

- i. The Arts Council of Greater Lansing (ACGL) works with partners such as Leap, Inc., Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, and others to establish the entrepreneurial award (e.g. R.E. Olds Entrepreneur Award) determine a process and criteria for selection, and the award-granting entity or partnership. Launch by 2010.
- ii. ACGL invites area professional associations to share in implementing these strategies and challenges at least one of the associations to initiate an arts and technology festival.
- iii. The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce explores the feasibility of LansingMade branding.

### 3. Expand opportunities for creative businesses within existing business incubators and by creating new space as needed

Grow the nurturing environments, and create new ones as needed, that allow creative entrepreneurs and artists to start up new enterprises.



### Key outcomes:

- A new or combined creative industry incubator and live/work space is developed on Michigan Avenue expanding on a successful retail or business cluster.
- Creative entrepreneurs and artists have access to a sequence of business development “ladders” to support their businesses from education, to design and product-development assistance, start-up incubators, business planning, and on to management assistance, capital, professional associations, and global marketing.
- Over 100 new enterprises launched during the first five years.

**Anticipated ROI:** Targeting high-growth creative industries to occupy existing incubators will result in higher occupancy, higher number of businesses and jobs, and an increased tax base. Future investments in creative incubators will bring additional businesses, new jobs, and make use of vacant real estate. Growing companies that graduate from incubators will add workers and expand tax base.

**Priority Action Steps:**

- i. Arts Council of Greater Lansing and business development providers working with creative industries work to locate emerging creative industries in existing (and new) business incubators as they grow (moving from the kitchen table to needing an office space).
- ii. Arts Council of Greater Lansing provides information on its website about the availability of office space in existing (and new) incubators.
- iii. Arts Council of Greater Lansing and its partners work with creative sector businesses to address any concerns or deficiencies in existing incubator spaces to accommodate needs of emerging creative businesses.



- iv. The Cities of Lansing and East Lansing identify promising properties (giving priority to central Michigan Avenue sites) to develop a creative entrepreneur incubator modeled after the successful Technology Innovation Center.

**4. Identify sources of flexible financing** that matches investors, expertise, entrepreneurs, and good ideas.

**Key outcomes:**

- Creative entrepreneurs have increased access to flexible and supportive financing.
- Potential start-up businesses can easily find providers of new business loans.
- Public and private entities form an investment and business assistance fund, possibly building on an existing effort.
- An initial fund of \$5 million is assembled with a team of experts to seek, support, and counsel new ventures.
- Twenty new ventures are in the pipeline within the fund's first two years.

**Anticipated ROI:** Immediate return will be based on repayment of loan funds by growing companies. This will also provide critically needed short term capital needed to attract and retain new start-ups and increase their success rate. This strategy will also result in long- term return on new venture investments by adding employment and building tax base.

**Priority Action Steps:**

- i. Ingham County MSU Extension & Economic Development Corporation and Leap, Inc. survey the Ingham County list of entrepreneurial and small business assistance providers and identify existing sources of financing.
- ii. Arts Council of Greater Lansing works with existing small business lenders to provide training and assistance to artists and

- other creative industries to help them access existing pools of loan capital (e.g. help them navigate the loan qualification process, link to other financial coaching services to help repair credit, etc.).
- iii. Work with existing new business loan funds and leaders of locally-based banking, finance and insurance companies to assemble a \$5M flexible financing fund for creative and innovative businesses.
- iv. Achieve a portfolio of 20 new business loans within first two years



### 5. Identify and grow clusters of creative industries

Identify and develop incentives to grow promising clusters of creative industries to create significant numbers of new enterprises and employment.

#### Key outcomes:

- Michigan Avenue emerges as a strong link between city downtowns and numerous business nodes, including music, entertainment, ethnic foods, as well as creative business clusters.

- A stronger cluster of existing media, design, and advertising industries grows in the Old Town area.
- Economic development agencies agree on clusters with most potential, and best fit for Greater Lansing's resources for development.



**Anticipated ROI:** Low-cost strategy applied to future business attraction activities. It will result in "critical mass" of creative businesses that can be mutually supportive of one another. Will result in overall increase in employment by existing creative businesses; growth of high-performing clusters; attraction of multiple new complementary businesses in key clusters.

#### Priority Action Steps:

- i. Lansing Economic Development Corporation, East Lansing Planning and Development, Leap, Inc., and the Arts Council of Greater Lansing identify existing creative clusters as priorities for recruiting complementary businesses to create a critical mass. These include: printing, publishing and graphic design; motion picture/sound production and photography; libraries, archives



and museums; performing arts, arts instruction; architecture and design; and fabric arts.

- ii. The two cities' economic development agencies work with the Arts Council of Greater Lansing and other partners to recruit complementary businesses within each high-potential cluster, promoting training, facilities, business development services, and knowledge resources outlined.
- iii. The cities and higher education institutions actively recruit new graduates and creative workers who complement growing clusters of creative enterprises.

## **6. Grow creative workforce and help link workers with employment in creative sector**

While the greatest creative-sector jobs potential is through growing local entrepreneurs, developing creative workers is an important complementary strategy. As the creative sector grows, it is necessary to develop a "pipeline" of trained workers. In addition to developing new workers, it is critical we also maximize the talents of the existing workforce with access to information, training, and assistance.

### **Key outcomes:**

- Existing and potential creative workers have easy access to entrepreneurial and workforce development programs and services already in place.

**Anticipated ROI:** Nominal investment needed. Increased success rate of start-ups and existing small businesses in the creative sector.

### **Priority Action Steps:**

- i. Work with creative sector employers to identify future workforce needs.
- ii. Work with existing workforce development providers to tailor training and workforce development programs to build "pipeline" of qualified workers.
- iii. Expand programs like Graduate to Lansing and Linking Lansing & U, and (SCENE) MetroSpace that connect students with activities, services, and job opportunities in Lansing and East Lansing.
- iv. Invest in the future: Establish a partnership with Lansing Schools and creative sector to identify future job opportunities for current students and build curricular and/or extra-curricular activities designed to prepare students for the future.



- v. Work with existing youth employment service providers to create partnership with creative industries to provide summer internship/employment opportunities for youth in creative sector.
- vi. Develop mentoring program between creative industries and schools (or other youth service organizations (Boys and Girls Clubs, Junior Achievement, Scouting organizations, etc.) designed to introduce youth to creative workforce opportunities of the future.

## **Capital Area Transportation Authority**

### **– Connecting People**

**C**ATA, or the Capital Area Transportation Authority began in 1972, when it operated 14 bus routes and gave 750,000 rides. Since that date the number of bus routes has doubled and CATA has become a key factor in the success of the Lansing and East Lansing community.



Providing over 11,000,000 rides to seniors, persons with disabilities, students, and commuters, in 2008 alone, CATA is widely relied upon by residents and visitors to Lansing and East Lansing.

In recognition of this organization's outstanding success as a community service, the American Public Transport Association (APTA) declared CATA America's number one transit system for its size in 2007.

Going above and beyond the role of a transport authority, this company takes pride in its wider community, hosting annual programs such as New Year's Eve Safe Rides Home, We Love Riders Week and the CATA Senior Health Fair. Additionally the organization sponsors numerous events in the metro area including Be a Tourist in Old Town, Silver Bells in the City, East Lansing Art Festival, Great Lakes Folk Fest and other holiday parades. CATA sees enriching the lives of mid-Michigan residents as part of its mission.

In 2006 CATA collaborated with MSU to create a transit system and university model unlike any other in the country. Since 2009 the number of students and university staff using the campus routes soared from 850,000 riders a year to over 3.2million in 2006.

CATA's role in connecting the people of Lansing and East Lansing and in providing first rate transportation for those who need it makes it a seminal factor in the area's sense of community. Both improving standard of living and increasing resident's opportunities to experience the region, public support for this authority is evident in ridership figures alone.





## **Fathy and Mohamed Shetiah**

### **- Reinventing Their Livelihood**

When Fathy and Mohamed Shetiah arrived in the USA from their homeland of Egypt in 1989 they were faced with an entirely new environment. Still unable to speak a word of English, the America they knew from childhood movies was coming to life around them, as these brothers reinvented their lives in new and unfamiliar surroundings.

Attending high school and eventually going on to study at MSU, Fathy and Mohamed soon felt a valued part of the Lansing and East/Lansing community. In fact, their sense of belonging became the motivation the brothers needed to start local business ventures and build a permanent future in the area.



Working together in a number of companies including Marriot, Fathy and Mohamed reinvented their brotherly bond and became business partners. In 2006 they became the first franchisers of Biggby Coffee in East Lansing. Their venture has grown to include 18 such coffee shops across the region.

Furthermore, in an unanticipated change in his career, Fathy started his own translation agency in 2007. Global Image Network sprung from a project which required the translation of Arabic- a venture Fathy saw as the forerunner for a his new business which currently functions as a network of international translators, interpreters, and editors.

The story of Fathy and Mohamed reflects Lansing and East Lansing's capacity to support new business ventures, allowing the area's residents to reinvent their livelihoods on many different levels.



### **Goal III. Attract & Assist Workers and Businesses**

**A vital, culturally-rich and creative environment attracts and retains innovative workers, business owners, and young people.**

#### **Key Assessment Findings**

Lansing and East Lansing have a looming workforce crisis. There are not enough young workers to replace those who are nearing retirement. This “replacement gap” is more than three times higher than the average for the U.S. International migration has represented the only area of population growth. According to Capital Area Michigan Works!, it is imperative to “create and market a community able to attract people to the area.”<sup>6</sup> This plan positions the cultural sector as an active partner to help recruit the critical workers needed to grow the cities’ economies.

The automotive industry has left a legacy of highly trained people in many areas of manufacturing who have the capacity to “make almost anything.” These skills and capacities need to be turned to new products, making productive uses of new and old skills. The CED Steering Committee identified many economic development initiatives that benefit creative workers and help address workforce needs of other industry sectors.

The assessment also found that Lansing, East Lansing, and MSU host far more arts and entertainment opportunities than most residents realize or can find. Cultural amenities are a key factor in recruiting and retaining creative workers. Research shows a strong correlation between scientists, physicians, and arts participation<sup>7</sup>. Young people cite arts and entertainment as important factors in their decision to relocate or stay. Immigrants seek opportunities to participate in their traditional cultures and to see themselves reflected in the broader community’s activities. Attitudes of tolerance and policies of inclusion complement recruitment and retention initiatives by making people feel welcome regardless of age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or other differences that may otherwise marginalize populations. Some assessment participants said that the quality of public schools must improve to attract and retain new economy employers and workers.

#### **Diversity for the Betterment of All**

The 2009 Greater Lansing Regional Plan for Prosperity<sup>8</sup>, coordinated by Leap, Inc. calls for strengthening regional business, government, and NGO infrastructure. This will require “a host of new initiatives centered on creating a welcoming attitude, culture, and climate for supporting entrepreneurial activities and innovation.” Creating productivity among people, cultures, and skills means recognizing the strengths in diversity. “Diversity is about drawing from the strength of those being served to synergistically enhance the power and effectiveness of the whole. It is not about quotas and entitlements, it is not about chauvinism or tokenism; it is about creating and implementing a vision that draws from the power of diversity for the betterment of all.”

<sup>6</sup> Capital Area Michigan Works! (2009). “After the recession: Now where are the workers?” retrieved from [http://www.camw.org/docs/where\\_are\\_the\\_workers\\_report/Now%20Where%20Are%20The%20Workers.pdf](http://www.camw.org/docs/where_are_the_workers_report/Now%20Where%20Are%20The%20Workers.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Root-Bernstein, Robert, et. al., “Arts Foster Scientific Success: Avocations of Nobel, National Academy, Royal Society, and Sigma Xi Members,” Journal of Psychology and Technology, Vol. 1, Number 2, 2008.

<sup>8</sup> Working title of regional economic development plan underway

### **Goal III Signature Initiative:**

**Identify Creative Entrepreneur Financing** to provide incentives, resources, and expertise for small creative businesses and start-up enterprises. Identify and promote existing financing and create a new Creative Entrepreneur Fund that draws on local finance and investment expertise and brings together public and private resources, known-how, and capital pools. It supports Goals I and II. Potential additional implementation partners could include: the Cities of Lansing and East Lansing, Ingham County, insurance and banking companies, Capital Region Community Foundation, Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, and others.



#### **Priority strategies:**

**1. Coordinate efforts to recruit and retain skilled workforce** Many businesses in the Greater Lansing area are looking to recruit and retain the highly-skilled workforce such as IT professionals, doctors, physicists, and other scientists, executives, teachers, and young people necessary for cities to succeed. A coordinated effort should be made to effectively and efficiently recruit and retain these professionals.

#### **Key outcomes:**

- Better recruitment and retention of skilled workers for all growth industries throughout the region.

#### **Priority Action Steps:**

- i. Arts Council of Greater Lansing helps to coordinate a resource guide and conducts an informational tour/orientation for human resources managers responsible for recruitment and retention of highly-skilled workers and executives so they can better promote existing cultural assets of Greater Lansing area.
- ii. Lansing and East Lansing economic development agencies, Leap, Inc., MSU, Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitors Bureau and others develop coordinated strategy to recruit and retain a highly-skilled workforce that includes highlighting existing Lansing/E Lansing cultural opportunities.
- iii. Partners integrate consistent recruitment messages (i.e. what are three best assets of Lansing) into literature, web sites, tours, and other promotional materials.

**Anticipated ROI:** Nominal cost to address current and looming workforce challenge that leverages existing information, activities and efforts. Will result in ability to recruit and retain better and more highly-skilled workers, reducing turnover costs and helping to ensure long-term viability of businesses throughout region.

## **2. Focus efforts on retaining graduates**

It is always easier and cheaper to retain a customer than it is to attract a new one. A key asset of Lansing and East Lansing is the tens of thousands of students that attend MSU, Cooley, LCC and the other major educational institutions in the area. Efforts need to be enhanced on retaining a greater percentage of these graduates in the region.

### **Key outcomes:**

- Retain local graduates and reduce the growing replacement gap of 20-34 year olds.

### **Priority Action Steps:**

- i. The City of Lansing expands “Graduate to Lansing” and “Linking Lansing & U” initiatives to retain students in Lansing area.
- ii. Educational institutions (e.g. MSU, Cooley, LCC, etc.) partner with Chamber, Leap, Inc., and other local businesses to provide increased opportunities to link students to local businesses through internships, mentoring opportunities, on-campus presentations by local businesses, and other opportunities to expose soon-to-be graduates to potential employers in the Greater Lansing region.
- iii. Educational institutions partner with Arts Council of Greater Lansing and other cultural organizations to provide opportunities for students to become aware of opportunities in Greater Lansing after graduation (e.g. what opportunities are there to continue to be involved in theater or music post-graduation). May include providing space on campus for local arts organizations to present their work as a “recruitment” tool for

future audience and performers/participants.

**Anticipated ROI:** Nominal costs building off of existing activities and programs. Return would be increased student experience of learners while in school as well as increased percentage of graduates choosing to stay in Lansing area.

## **3. Improve marketing and coordination of cultural organizations and events**

Leverage existing tools to market Lansing and East Lansing arts and entertainment attractions.

### **Key outcomes:**

- The Arts Council of Greater Lansing (ACGL) and the Greater Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau help organize and brand the emerging Greater Lansing Festivals Alliance into a sustainable network that coordinates and promotes events.
- First Sunday Gallery Walk expands the visibility and impact of the coordinated openings.
- Events receive enhanced promotion and branding that ties these events with the spirit of reinvention.

### **Priority Action Steps:**

- i. ACGL works with its nonprofit members to consolidate mailing lists into a single marketing resource (as done by ArtsBoston’s “Big List”).
- ii. The Festival Alliance organizes to develop a planning calendar to coordinate scheduling, branding, and marketing.

**Anticipated ROI:** Reduced costs through higher cooperation, improved revenues, and job retention.

**4. Create a central events calendar and ticketing system** Link the central arts and entertainment calendar and directory to an online ticketing system, as done in other major cities.

**Key outcomes:**

- A robust and easily accessible calendar and directory for arts, entertainment, dining and drinking, farmers' markets, and sports events.
- Lansing and East Lansing cultural attractions are more visible and accessible.
- Public perception of many vibrant cultural activities counters negative perceptions of the cities.
- Cultural organizations and creative businesses increase earned revenue.



**Priority Action Steps:**

- i. ACGL convenes organizations that host existing calendars to determine how to consolidate and link calendars to create an easily accessible arts and entertainment guide (good example is the Philadelphia

Cultural Alliance's PhillyFunGuide).

- ii. Arts Council of Greater Lansing and the Greater Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau create an online ticketing system.

**Anticipated ROI:** Revenues for all arts and entertainment activities increase to provide more stability for existing enterprises and incentives for adding new venues, higher retention of graduates and young professionals, and more highly-sought professionals attracted to Lansing and East Lansing.

**5. Develop cultural facilities**

Create a robust environment attractive to creative workers and industries by upgrading the cultural infrastructure.



**Key outcomes:**

- The community and visitors have access to improved cultural facilities. With high visibility and easy accessibility between the two downtowns, these are well integrated with Michigan Avenue corridor developments and broader community and business recruitment and retention efforts.



- Developments underway are completed including MSU's Broad Museum, City Center II with a branch of the Wharton Theatre/MSU Theater Department.
- A renewed feasibility study recommends a mixed-use cultural facility and provides direction on a new facility to house BoarsHead Theatre and other performing arts organizations.

**Anticipated ROI:** Will result in reduced recruitment and retention costs to local corporations and businesses; increased attractiveness of Greater Lansing area for future business expansion or relocation by major employers, expanded community volunteerism, and heightened community self-esteem

#### **Priority Action Steps:**

- i. MSU and East Lansing implement their plans to develop the Broad Museum and City Center II.
- ii. The City of East Lansing encourages development of complementary nonprofit and commercial cultural and entertainment near the Broad Museum.
- iii. A dynamic "reinvention" of the Michigan Library and Historical Center in downtown Lansing, similar to that proposed as The Michigan Center for Innovation and Reinvention. This facility, in its new use, can represent the "transformation led by innovation" of Michigan, and should include entrepreneurial and innovative programs that are symbolic of the state's history.

## **River Trail Project**

### **– Collaboration is Second Nature**

**T**he Lansing River Trail is 13 miles of scenic river front trails and pathways passing through parks, natural areas, Downtown Lansing and Michigan State University.

Recent growth of the River Trail includes two southern extensions executed through a partnership with the Parks and Recreation Department, the City of Lansing, Ingham County Parks Commission, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Michigan Department of Transportation.

This collaborative effort stands as a testament to the powerful level of shared ownership and

responsibility of Lansing and East Lansing's most important natural assets, Grand River and Red Cedar River.

Incorporating commercial centers which are host to restaurants, museums, galleries, a theater and a number of historic homes, the River Trail unites Lansing and East Lansing, both geographically and symbolically. Bolstering this community's standard of living by providing a clean open-air environment stretching through the metro area, this paved trail also helps develop the community's self-image, uniting the people of Lansing and East Lansing in something they both can be proud of.

The Lansing and East Lansing River Trail project is a good example of these two cities adopting the power of reinvention to better the community. Since the 1970's both Lansing and East Lansing have regularly revived the way residents see and use these rivers, reinvigorating public perception.



## **Leslie Donaldson**

### **–From Artist to Arts Council**

Leslie Donaldson started-out as an artist, a profession she has continued to uphold throughout her varied career in the arts. An MSU graduate, Leslie, along with two others, conceived and created the Art Apartment. This alternative arts space, a small renovated apartment in downtown East Lansing, was part of a cluster of creative workshops and stores emerging on Abbot Road in the late 90's. The exhibitions, which included performance art, video, and various visual art installations were well received by the community, but ceased to continue after a downturn in the economy in 2001.

During a new role as the Director of the East Lansing Arts Festival, Leslie recognized the need for opportunities for emerging artists in the region and with the forward thinking support of the City of East Lansing – (Scene) Metrospace was born. With Leslie at the helm, this alternative art and performance space gave local artists a place to explore their artistic projects, nurturing the city's creative community.

By 2005, Leslie had become the Executive Director of the Arts Council of Greater Lansing. Upholding her belief in emerging artists, she led the organization in the sale of the Center for the Arts (a one theater venue, owned by the Arts Council and in operation since the 1970's). Proceeds from the sale helped to set-up two grant programs for individual artists and funded numerous cultural and artistic endeavors designed to increase youth participation in the arts.

Leslie's story is one of vision, persistence and community support – a testament to the re-inventive nature of Lansing and East Lansing.



## **Goal IV. Enhance the Value of Place**

**Residents are proud and others attracted as Greater Lansing's urban center becomes a geographically integrated arts, entertainment, and knowledge economy, and a business destination.**

### **Key Assessment Findings**

Focus groups and interviews identified seven emerging clusters of Lansing and East Lansing cultural and creative development assets: Geographic and place-making features, concentrations of policy and knowledge, creative and cultural institutions and organizations, artists and creative businesses, festivals and events, a history of innovation, and support systems for cultural and economic development. Yet, many also expressed perceptions of inferiority, as in, "there's nothing to do in Lansing," or, "it's *only* Lansing." Entrepreneurs, artists, and young people are looking for PLACES to live, not just jobs.

The two cities host a wide variety of annual festivals celebrating music, heritage, food, and other aspects of culture, that have not fully coordinated promotions, services, and/or vendors. The Arts Council of Greater Lansing has only recently begun to gain traction as a coordinating, planning, and advocacy body with a backlog of work to accomplish. Features and places such as the River Trail, Old Town, Stadium District, REO Town, Potter Park Zoo, MSU cultural venues and gardens, among others represent considerable civic achievement, yet appear under-appreciated. Multiple existing and emerging neighborhoods, as well as downtown living options, are beginning to increase the lifestyle choices for a more diverse community. There is a need for Lansing and East Lansing's cultural resources to be more visible, more accessible and to restore pride of place.

### **Place Matters**

The Leap, Inc. 2009 Report recommends improving the quality of place to attract and retain highly skilled workers (*"the core of the New Economy"*). In addition to a welcoming place, the Greater Lansing Regional Plan for Prosperity, coordinated by Leap, Inc. calls for linked green infrastructure, a wide range of housing, shopping, cultural and entertainment options. *"Lansing will need to focus much more effort on increasing intensity of use and density on its riverfront, building a fixed rail connection between Lansing and East Lansing, creating an integrated regional bicycle trail system, expanded transit opportunities and connections to high speed rail between Detroit and Chicago and Detroit and Grand Rapids, and improving air service."* Leap's implementation steps call for investment that commits one-third of resources to placemaking. *"Together, these places must provide a high quality of life to those who live there and be magnets for new residents, businesses, and visitors."*

### **Goal IV Signature Initiative:**

**Develop the Michigan Avenue Center for Creative Business and Arts** at a central location between the two cities as part of a vital business node. A new center might incorporate one or more existing incubators and will include an incubator/studio facility with business services, training, and consulting that cross arts, technology, and business innovation. It will strengthen connections between Lansing, East Lansing, Michigan State University,

Lansing Community College, and other creative nodes. This center could house some existing MSU and LCC faculty and research projects. It supports goals I, III, and IV. Additional implementation partners could include: Michigan Avenue Corridor Improvement Authority, Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA), Capital Area Michigan Works, and others.

### **Priority strategies:**

#### **1. Build and connect clusters of cultural attractions and creative activity**

Identify and promote walkable nodes within concentrations of arts, entertainment and public space amenities and events.

#### **Key outcomes:**

- The Cities of Lansing and East Lansing encourage clustering of arts and entertainment attractions, including: a new gallery district in East Lansing, creative businesses and dining near the new Broad Art Museum, Old Town galleries, shops, and dining; and downtown Lansing dining and entertainment, Michigan Avenue Corridor, and Stadium/Convention Center/Nightclub District.



- The Michigan Avenue Center for Creative Business and Arts, serves dozens of new ventures from its central Michigan Avenue location. It includes an incubator/studio facility with business services, training, and consulting that cross arts, technology, and business innovation. It strengthens connections between Lansing,

East Lansing, MSU, LCC, and other Creative Nodes and may house some MSU and LCC faculty and research projects.

- Effective marketing promotes awareness and participation in the cities' distinct neighborhoods appealing to a wider variety of lifestyle choices.
- Coordination of initiatives among allies in technology, industrial design, green movement, agriculture, and outdoor recreation build on each other's initiatives to strengthen the local quality of life and the economy.

#### **Priority Action Steps:**

- i. MSU and the Arts Council of Greater Lansing (ACGL) map arts and entertainment attractions.
- ii. Encourage interactive web sites and social media like "My Michigan Avenue" to identify and attract people to centers of activity.
- iii. The Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA) and events producers promote events and activity notes and encourage public transportation.

**Anticipated ROI:** Higher levels of business and nonprofit success, retaining and adding jobs; increased tax base through attractive and thriving neighborhood residential and business areas; reduced dependence on driving and needs for parking.

#### **2. Further improve the River Trail landscape, walking/biking paths and animate with art and creative**



events geared to using it; promote walking/biking traffic between destinations.

**Key outcomes:**

- Improved cultural opportunities and amenities along the River Trail, landscape, walking, and bike paths.
- Consistent way-finding and activity stations for health-conscious walkers and runners.
- Interesting public art works at key sites.
- Seasonal events that highlight the River Trail and encourage use.

**Anticipated ROI:** Improved physical health, increased stability or residential areas and higher employee retention rates.

**Priority Action Steps:**

- i The Festival Alliance and other presenters of cultural programs and events examine scheduling, locations and branding of events to maximize and encourage use of River trail and other pathways.
- ii Comprehensive transit and public space maps are posted publicly and online, linked to municipal and civic organization sites.

**3. Better connect the two downtowns and expand business activity along the Michigan/Grand River Avenue corridor**

The Michigan Avenue Corridor Improvement Authority will build up the perceived and real unity

of the two cities which is dependent on this primary connection between the two downtowns and the major higher education campuses. Support existing creative and business nodes, neighborhoods and entertainment venues.



**Key outcomes:**

- Improved public transportation with multiple, clear destination nodes.
- Continuous mixed-use in-fill development the entire route creates a dynamic urban environment.
- Safe sidewalks, lanes, and lighting for bikers and pedestrians create a well-used urban artery.

**Priority Action Steps:**

- i. Michigan Avenue Development Authority actively supports and develops infrastructure, zoning and other development policies friendly to retail, small business, service, residential, and live/work space.
- ii. The two cities continue to develop the Michigan Avenue corridor, infilling gaps in the corridor.

- iii. Encourage use of the My Michigan Avenue initiative.

**Anticipated ROI:** Stronger and more stable business corridor; expanded tax base; improved business success and retail/service expansion; higher transit use, reduced costs for car parking; and enhanced value of place.



**4. Simplify wayfinding** The cities, MSU, CATA and ACGL develop an integrated system of maps, web sites, signs, way-finding systems, and promotions that direct people to cultural attractions and patrons to public transportation, bike and walking trails, as well as parking (as done with the Syracuse Connective Corridor and the planned Wayfinding Worcester: Finding Your Way system).

**Key outcomes:**

- Local design professionals and artists are tapped for their ability to contribute unique ideas to the wayfinding system.
- Residents and visitors easily find their way to widely dispersed cultural attractions.

**Anticipated ROI:** Higher transit use, increased retail business activity, and strong tax base.

**Priority Action Steps:**

- i. CATA and ACGL work to create an aesthetically integrated system of maps, web sites, signs, and promotions that direct riders to cultural attractions and patrons to public transportation. See the Syracuse connective corridor for a good example, [www.connectivecorridor.syr.edu](http://www.connectivecorridor.syr.edu)
- ii. The two cities and MSU identify & promote walkable nodes where people can walk among cultural attractions, shopping, dining, trails, etc. The two cities continue to enhance physical infrastructure through streetscape, and biking/walking. Create an integrated sign and way-finding systems to direct people to cultural attractions. For example: Way-finding Worcester: Finding Your Way is a public-private partnership between the City of Worcester and its business, higher education and cultural communities. The Worcester Way-finding Project is intended to develop a way-finding system--including signage, destination identifiers and information kiosks capable of guiding Worcester visitors to their destinations while giving them the sense of Worcester's rich cultural history and future.
- iii. The City of Lansing enhances signage and street patterns to connect Old Town

with downtown and East Lansing.

**5. Implement strategic public art program** as a means to enhance pride in the community and to make visible the creative energies in the community. Featuring local and area artists with more intimate works that express ideas related to the entrepreneurial spirit will set Lansing and East Lansing apart from other cities relying on internationally-known public artists, and help create a more distinctive character of key public spaces that speaks to a creative community sensibility.

**Key outcomes:**

- A public art master plan for both cities is completed which includes specific area plans for each downtown, key neighborhoods, Michigan Avenue and the River Trail.
- A public art ordinance integrates public art into new developments (including potential transit stations)
- Distinctive areas of the cities are signified by unique public art works
- Creativity is ever-present in the daily public realm and experience.

**Anticipated ROI:** Increased business and recreation use of key nodes and public spaces, and greater safety and heightened perception of community assets.



**Priority Action Steps:**

- i. The City of Lansing seeks to enact and secure funding to install art in public places including the Capital City international airport and Lansing center.
- ii. The cities seek opportunities to mitigate eyesores like highway overpasses with Overpasses public art.
- iii. CATA integrates public art into the design of future transit stations.

**6. Using arts and culture to further enhance rapid transit**

expand on the recent work of CATA by building an enhanced multi-modal system with multiple distinguished destinations and aesthetic experiences to help increase ridership.

**Key outcomes:**

- A rapid transit system between the two cities encourages access to widely dispersed arts and entertainment attractions.
- A finding of rapid transit feasibility from the MI/Grand River Transportation Study enhances cultural economic development.



- Transit stations, nodes of cultural attractions, and affordable housing are co-located.
- Walking, biking, and auto use are integrated to move people to destinations within the cities and in the outer reaches of the Capital Area.
- Transit includes arts and cultural design, artworks, and creative events to raise awareness of the arts in the Capital Area while encouraging increased use of the transit system.

**Anticipated ROI:** Greater retail/service activity, more stable tax base, increased transit use, and strengthened physical connections.

**Priority Action Steps:**

- i. ACGL communicates this plan's endorsement of rapid transit to planners of the MI/Grand River Transportation Study.
- ii. CED Steering Committee members testify at Transportation Study focus groups and hearings.

## Warren Armstrong

### –Reinventing Public Interaction

**W**arren Armstrong, a retired General Motors I.T. professional from Lansing, is changing the way communities interact, plan and share information. On considering the next chapter of his life, Warren developed a public calendaring system by the name of *Publicdrum*. The online program allows multiple entities to add events to a single public calendar.

With over 500 users, the system has been utilized internationally across Canada, Mexico, Ireland, Australia, France and the United Kingdom, but has been mostly adopted by US communities. Together with ArtServe Michigan, Warren provides advice and information to interested arts organizations who wish to co-promote or employ combined calendaring to provide a united face to the public.

Alongside the clear benefits of uniting community attention and stimulating a sense of social capital, the *Publicdrum* program has become a go-to platform for the media with newspapers and radio stations using this system as a community research tool.

Warren's story is one of invention and reinvention in more ways than one. In a practical sense, *Publicdrum* is reinventing the way we communicate and plan as a community, but on a more personal level this story shows the power of personal and vocational reinvention. Warren's ability to transfer his skills, which had been fine tuned in the corporate world, and apply them to his own vision is both commendable and inspirational.





## **i3 Strategies**

### **– The Nurture of New Businesses**

**W**orking in advocacy and political organizations since 2001, Julielyn Gibbons has always appreciated the power of the internet as an informer and social connector, an appreciation which fast became the key to her entrepreneurial success.

Diagnosed with Crohn's disease at the age of 14, Julielyn used the internet as a link to the outside world and current events. She grew up with the intrinsic knowledge that the web could motivate and connect people in brilliant new ways.

Blogging as "Liberal Lucy" from 2006, Julielynn developed her technology-based skills and honed her craft using the internet to discuss multiple topics for [www.michiganliberal.com](http://www.michiganliberal.com). Going on to become an online campaign coordinator

for Progress Michigan, handling all marketing for a statewide campaign, Julie's childhood interest had become a career.

Julielyn started her own business in June of 2009 opening the East Lansing-based *i3Strategies*- a social media and internet strategy consulting firm. As part of the TIC (Technology and Innovation Center) Julie's fledgling company benefitted from new offices in a professional setting, discounted rent and fees and the added bonuses of parking spaces and conference rooms.

Looking forward to a prosperous future and with its sights set on servicing the Michigan region, i3Strategies is an excellent example of individual vision meeting Capital area business support.



## **Appendix**

### ***Planning Methods***

Local and state agencies combined resources to implement this collaborative plan. They are the Michigan Office of Cultural Economic Development, City of East Lansing, Arts Council of Greater Lansing, Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Lansing Economic Development Corporation, the City of Lansing, and Michigan State University. Planning was overseen by a Cultural Economic Development Steering Committee.

Creative Community Builders provided planning expertise. The consulting team included Tom Borrup, Principal; Dr. Craig Dreeszen, and Erik Takeshita.

### **Schedule of Steering Committee and Public Meetings:**

May 3-5, 2009 First consultants' visit for interviews, focus groups, and meetings

May 4 First Steering Committee Meeting Discuss cultural economic development, purpose and role of committee, introduce planning consultants, establish goals and work plan, begin cultural inventory.

June 29-30 Second consultants' visit, interviews, and focus groups

June 29 Steering Committee Planning Retreat – The committee reviewed assessment data and outlined broad strategies to generate jobs and economic activity through/in partnership with cultural assets; recommend action steps

June 29 Public Meeting – Introduced CED planning to public audience and engaged public in creative exercises to provide information and input

September 14-15 Third consultants' visit, conclude interviews and focus groups

September 14 Third Steering Committee Meeting to review and approve broad strategies outlined by consultants; and refine action steps

October 5 Fourth Steering Committee meeting to review, amend, and vote to formally approve the CED plan

October 12, 2009 Fourth and final consultants' visit to present final plan  
Public Meeting and release of plan

### ***Public Participation***

**Objectives** Interviews, focus groups, planning meetings, a public meeting, and survey gather assessment information from key opinion leaders to inform cultural economic development planning.

**Methods** The CED Core Group recommended names of key representatives of the Lansing and East Lansing cultural and economic development sectors. Interviewees recommend additional contacts. Creative Community Builders team members contacted potential interview and focus group participants, scheduled meetings, and conducted face-to-face interviews, focus groups, and telephone interviews. The Arts Council of Greater Lansing, along with other planning partners promoted the public meeting. A survey of young professionals was conducted with help from i3 Strategies and the Arts Council of Greater Lansing. Additionally a number of key individuals from the community were interviewed to inform a series of short case studies which chart successful invention/reinvention in the area.

**Participation** The Creative Community Builders team interviewed 38 opinion leaders, facilitated two CED Steering Committee meetings, interviewed 14 community leaders for case studies, convened seven focus groups, and led one public meeting. In all, over 600 Lansing and East Lansing community leaders and key constituent representatives have participated in the Cultural Economic Development assessment and planning.

**Focus Groups and Planning Meetings (112)**

- CED Core Partners
- CED Steering Committee
- Cultural/creative businesses
- Arts organizations
- Cultural festivals, and galleries
- Artists
- Communities of color
- Gays/Lesbians
- Cultural economic researchers

**Young professionals survey (451 responses)**

- Responses were anonymous

**Individual Interviews (38)**

- Arts Council of Greater Lansing, Leslie Donaldson
- Capital Area Michigan Works, Kate Tycocki
- Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA), Debra Alexander
- Center for Community & Economic Development, MSU, Rex LaMore
- City of East Lansing, Planning & Development, Tim Dempsey
- City of East Lansing, Planning & Development, Lori Mullins
- City of East Lansing, Planning & Development, Jim van Ravensway
- City of East Lansing, Technology Innovation Center, Jeff Smith
- City of Lansing Parks and Recreation Department, Murdock Jemerson
- City of Lansing, Planning and Neighborhood Development, Bob Johnson
- City of Lansing, Planning and Neighborhood Development, Kate Koskinen
- Greater Lansing Convention & Visitors Bureau, Julie Pingston
- Ingham County MSU Extension & Economic Development Corporation, Susan Pigg
- Fulcrum Group, Former CEO Leap, Inc., Matt Dugener
- Greater Lansing Gay Men's Chorus, Peter Morse
- Land Policy Institute (LPI), Mark Wyckoff
- Lansing City Pulse, Berl Schwartz
- Lansing Community College, Business & Community Institute, Bo Garcia
- Lansing Economic Development Corporation, Bob Tresize
- Lansing Economic Development Corporation, Brian Anderson
- Lansing Economic Development Corporation, Marchelle C. Smith
- Lansing Entertainment Public Facilities, Eric Hart
- Lansing Principal Shopping District, Michigan Main Street Program, Mindy Biladeau
- Lansing Symphony Orchestra, Catherine Guarino
- Leap, Inc., Denyse Ferguson
- Leap, Inc., Jeanne Cleary
- Linking Lansing & U, Andrea Ragan
- Local historian, Craig Whitford

- Message Makers, Terry Terry
- MI Office of Cultural Economic Development, Carol Trosper
- Michigan Creative Collective, Jeremy Herliczek
- Michigan State University Museum, C. Kurt Dewhurst
- Mid Michigan Creative Alliance, Camron Gnass
- MSU Office of Governmental Affairs, Ginny Haas
- MSU Office of Governmental Affairs, Steven Webster
- Public Humanities Collaborative at MSU, Eileen Roraback
- (SCENE) Metrospace, Tim Lane
- Wharton Center for Performing Arts, Mike Brand

**Case Study Interviews (14)**

- Matthew Haran, Accident Fund Insurance Company of America
- Leslie Donaldson, Arts Council of Greater Lansing
- Barbara Hranilovich, Artist and entrepreneur
- Kathy Johnson, Capital Area District Library
- Lauren Ciesa, Ciesa Design
- Ena Busby, Creole Gallery
- Warren Armstrong, Publicdrum
- David Wiseman, Greater Lansing Gay Men's Chorus
- Julielyn Gibbons, i3 Strategies
- Fathy Shetiah, Global Image Network
- Andy Hopping, Jackson National Life Insurance Company
- Murdock Jemerson, City of Lansing Parks and Recreation Department
- Robert and Michele Root-Bernstein, MSU
- Steveanna Roose, Storyteller

**Focus Group participants**

- Chad Badgero, Peppermint Creek Theatre Company
- Angela Bailey, Christman Company
- Rhonda Buckley, MSU Community Music School
- Deborah Cholewicki, Fiber artist
- Willie Davis Jr., LCC
- Wanda Degen, Folk Musician
- Doug DeLind, Ceramic Sculptor
- C. Kurt Dewhurst, Michigan State University Museum
- Kathy Holcomb, Absolute Gallery
- Melvin Holley, Earl Nelson Singers
- Andy Hopping, Jackson National Life Insurance Company
- Barbara Hranilovich, Illustrator/Painter
- Murdock Jemerson, City of Lansing Parks and Recreation Department
- Bob Johnson, City of Lansing Planning and Neighborhood Development
- Rex LaMore, MSU Center for Community and Economic Development
- Jim Lawton, Sculptor and Professor MSU Department of Art and Art History
- Nancy McRay, Woven Art Gallery and Textile Education Center
- Lori McSweeney, Woldumar Nature Center and coordinator American Heritage Festival
- Craig Mitchell Smith, glass artist
- Ricardo Rocha, Fantasia Ballet Folklorico
- Chemo Rodriguez, Hispanic Business Association, Lyricist, Dance instructor

- Steveanna Roose, Storyteller
- Robert Root-Bernstein, MSU, Department of Physiology
- Michele Root-Bernstein, Teaching artist
- Eileen Roraback, Public Humanities Collaborative at MSU
- Mariya Ryabushkina, Student
- Margo Stork, Greater Lansing Weavers Guild
- Dave Trumphie, Trumphy Photography
- Corrin VanWyck, East Lansing Art Festival
- David Wiseman, Greater Lansing Gay Men's Chorus

**Public Meeting** participants:

- Tom Ferris, Riverwalk Theatre
- Barb Whitney, Lansing Art Gallery
- Catherine Babcock, Lansing Art Gallery
- Leslie Donaldson, Arts Council of Greater Lansing
- Carolyn Damstra, Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs
- Will Jurkiewicz, Concerned citizen
- Linda Cowles, Capital City Reprographics
- Deena Hodson, Artist
- George Orban, Arts Council of Greater Lansing, BoarsHead Theater, Holt Community Arts Council
- Gretchen Sanford, Concerned citizen
- Jim Lucas, Concerned citizen
- Kellee Christensen, E. Lansing Historic District Commission
- Catherine Guarino, Lansing Symphony Orchestra
- Craig Mitchell Smith, Artist
- Michael Pohnl, Michigan Economic Development Corporation
- Ill Holden, Riverwalk Theatre
- Ami Van Antwerp, City of East Lansing
- Dan Combs, Happendance
- Eileen Roraback, Public Humanities Collaborative at MSU
- Ken Beachler, Lansing Symphony Orchestra, former Director of Wharton Center
- Tamera Nielsen, InView, Lansing Community College
- Bob Trezise, Lansing Economic Development Corporation
- Tim Lane, (SCENE) Metrospace
- Tony Sump, Lansing Civic Players
- Cathy Wotring, Lansing Civic Players
- Bill Gordon, Mid Michigan Family Theatre
- Susan Bandes, Kresge Art Museum
- Bill Morgan, WKAR Public Media
- Jon Beard, Land Policy Institute at MSU
- Nancy Dixon, Community arts advocate
- Pat Carolan, MSU
- Mindy Biladeau, Lansing Principal Shopping District
- Jeff Croff, Icarus Falling Theatre Company
- Donna Randall, Artist
- Simon Perazza, ArtServe Michigan
- Carolyn Ojala, Artist, volunteer, Mid Michigan Art Guild



- Lisa Benck, Map designer, State of Michigan and freelance designer
- Suzanne Brouse, Volunteer
- David Dilworth, MSU
- Kathy Johnson, Capital Area District Library

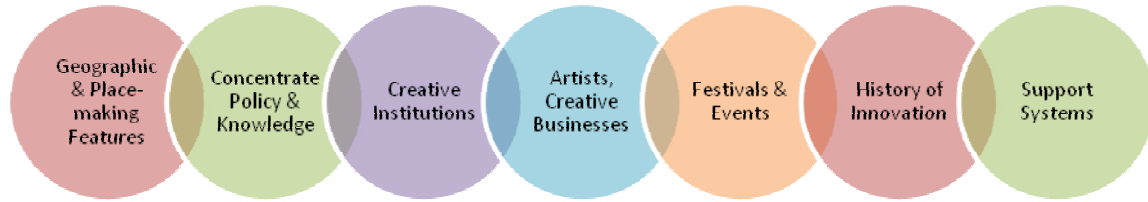
## ***Interviews and Focus Groups Report***

**Objectives** Interviews and focus groups gather assessment information from key opinion leaders to inform cultural economic development planning. Data from these individuals complements information provided by the Core Group and Steering Committee. These findings validate information from other public meetings and analysis of economic data and other plans and studies.

### **Executive Summary of Interview and Focus Group Findings**

Respondents appreciate that creative workers, cultural attractions, and heritage represent a significant economic sector. The Creative Community Builders team has thus far identified seven clusters of significant cultural assets in the Lansing and East Lansing area: Geographic and place-making features, concentrations of policy and knowledge, creative and cultural institutions and organizations, artists and creative businesses, festivals and events, a history of innovation, and support systems for cultural and economic development.

## Lansing and East Lansing Cultural Assets



### Geographic and Place-making Features

- **Lansing and East Lansing is an urban/rural nexus**, is central to a large agricultural region, and host to a popular farmers' market (which is about to be significantly redeveloped).
- **Central location in Michigan** makes Lansing and East Lansing a focal point for the meeting place of government, business, and varied interests.
- **State capital**, capitol building, and grounds define the capital center, create open space (and sites for public art and events), and attract business and tourists.
- **Grand and Red Cedar Rivers, and River Trail** system connects Lansing, East Lansing, and MSU. Rivers and non-motorized trails provide place-making recreational opportunities.
- **City parks** provide open spaces, playgrounds and sites for festivals and concerts. Lansing Parks and Recreation programs concerts in neighborhood parks. The Woldumar Nature center and Potter Park Zoo are significant cultural attractions.
- **Michigan/Grand River Avenue corridor** from the capitol grounds to MSU is a central, integrating feature that connects and helps distinguish the two-city region.
- **Distinct and interesting neighborhoods and districts** define distinctive places throughout the region. These include: Old Town (with galleries, artists, designers, architects, specialty shops, and dining), Reo Town, Lansing and East Lansing downtowns (entertainment and dining), Washington Square, Stadium district, Farmers' Market, East Lansing cultural district (pending formal definition), and more.
- **Diverse racial, ethnic heritage** (populations, neighborhoods, shops, dining, pow wows, festivals) add rich social diversity.
- **R.E. Olds Stadium** and other public facilities host sports and other public events.
- **Public art** delights residents and visitors on campuses and capitol grounds. East Lansing and MSU have public art programs. Campus grounds and gardens are cultural attractions.

### Knowledge and Policy Concentrated in Education Institutions and Governments

- **Michigan State University** is a major educational and cultural resource cited in every interview. Its cultural institutions and programs, arts schools, outreach services are significant cultural forces. Medical, technology, and other specialties within the institution benefit the region and create potential for business development. Its faculty, staff, and students are involved in civic and cultural life of communities surrounding the campus, through applied research, public service, service learning, and arts patronage.
- **Cooley Law School** attracts students and business to Lansing.

- **Lansing Community College** provides continuing education and business services to surrounding communities, including the Business & Community Institute; Small Business and Technology Development Center; Extension and Community Education; Apprenticeship Program; Jobs, Education, and Training; and Film and TV training.
- **K-12 school systems** provide arts, humanities, and creativity education to students. While arts education has suffered throughout Michigan, interviewees suggest that most area schools offer some art and music instruction taught by certified arts teachers. Other providers offer out-of-school arts and humanities instruction for children and adults.
- **Cities of Lansing and East Lansing** provide significant cultural and economic development support through direct funding, staffing, planning, facilities, and services to the non-profit sector and creative businesses.
- **State Government** agencies offer funding, information, and services to the cultural sector. Significant agencies with a stake in cultural development include MEDC, MCED, MSHPO, MSHDA, MDOT, and others. Recent budget cuts have significantly reduced arts funding and threaten to eliminate the office of History, Arts, and Libraries.

### **Panoply of Cultural Institutions and Organizations**

- **Cultural ecosystem** The Lansing and East Lansing cultural sector is characterized by a few large cultural institutions, a few mid-sized organizations and many small community-based organizations. There are a significant number of artists and creative businesses. A review of IRS records on arts and humanities nonprofits in Lansing and East Lansing revealed 528 organizations. This is a relatively high number given the population of Lansing and East Lansing. (A recent study by Creative Community Builders of ten U.S. cities with populations between 400,000 and 1.5 million generally revealed lower numbers. Seattle had a similar number of such nonprofits.)
- **Wide variety of offerings** Citizens and visitors to Lansing and East Lansing have access to more, and wider variety of cultural opportunities than people would expect for the size of the cities. “There is a little bit of everything.” The MSU Weekly Update lists 48 cultural events for the week of May 8, 2009.
- **Performing Arts** Performing arts organizations like the Wharton Center, Lansing Symphony Orchestra, BoarsHead Theatre, and many others provide high quality music, theatre, musicals, opera, and dance to the region’s audiences and outreach to students.
- **Visual Arts** The Kresge Art Museum, Scene Metrospace, and a remarkable concentration of non-profit and for-profit art galleries represent local and national artists to art collectors. The Gallery Walk lists 30 participating venues.
- **Museums** The two cities are home to several significant museums, including: Michigan Historical Museum, R.E. Olds Transportation Museum, Michigan Women’s Hall of Fame, Impression 5 Science Center, MSU Museum, Kresge Art Museum, and more. MSU is developing a new art museum designed to be accessible to the community.
- **Live music** Fans of live music can choose from major concerts, festivals, clubs, local bands, military bands, and others presented by several performing arts centers.
- **Humanities organizations** Libraries, literature programs, bookstores, poetry clubs, etc. provide access to books, writers, and other humanities resources.

- **Community arts organizations** Residents have many opportunities to participate in organized arts making through community choruses, bands, orchestras, theatres, arts associations, and craft guilds.
- **Arts centers and neighborhood cultural centers** Citizens and visitors have access to cultural opportunities in arts and community centers throughout the region. Interviewees specifically cited Scene Metrospace and the Hanna Arts Center as examples. The City of East Lansing created an artists' co-op that is fully occupied.
- **Significant economic impact** Interviewees believe the cultural sector provides a significant direct and indirect economic impact for Lansing and East Lansing. Cultural attractions help attract and retain businesses and workers and provide direct employment and create local wealth. This is documented for the Wharton Center and Great Lakes Festival.

### **Artists, Creative Workers, and Creative Businesses**

- **Individual artists** The foundation of the Lansing and East Lansing cultural and creative economy are the individual artists and creative workers in all disciplines: music and theatre performance, visual arts, storytelling, writing, etc. The Arts Council of Greater Lansing online directory lists approximately 50 professional artists. Typically many artists are not included in such directories, so there are likely many more in the region.
- **Innovative young entrepreneurs** Young developers, business people, and other creative professionals are making an impact in the region. They have organized networks that encourage and support each other. Interviewees specifically cited: Accelerate Lansing and the Fulcrum Group.
- **Creative workers** Many other individuals work in creative industries who may not present themselves as artists. These include graphic and web designers, architects, knowledge and information workers, advertising workers, journalists, librarians, editors, etc. Our continuing analysis of this sector applies standard NAICS codes to define the creative sector workforce.
- **Clusters of creative businesses** Interviewees suggest that designers represent a distinctive local creative cluster. We seek to identify other significant clusters.

### **Festivals and Special Events**

- **Many festivals** The region is known for major and community festivals. These include Common Ground, two Jazz festivals, Blues, Silver Bells in the City, Folk Life, Film festivals, Harvest Festival, African American Parade and Family reunion, and many more festivals and special community events.
- **Community celebrations** Several distinctive events gather people in common celebrations: 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade, Thirsty Thursdays, Chili Cook-off, etc.
- **Neighborhoods and parks concerts and events** Lansing Parks and Recreation organizes a privately-funded concert series presented in neighborhood parks. Independent community groups use parks and other community venues to produce other events.

### **Lansing and East Lansing History, Heritage, and Sites**

- **Founding of state capital** The designation of Lansing Township into the state capital in 1847 transformed the village into a seat of government.

- **R. E. Olds and automobile industry** Lansing has a history of industrial innovation and persistence to start and retain industry.
- **Organized labor** The organization of labor has been central to Lansing history and economic development.
- **Historic Buildings** The region is home to many historic buildings and sites including the Turner-Dodge House and historic sites and cemeteries overseen by local government and historical societies.

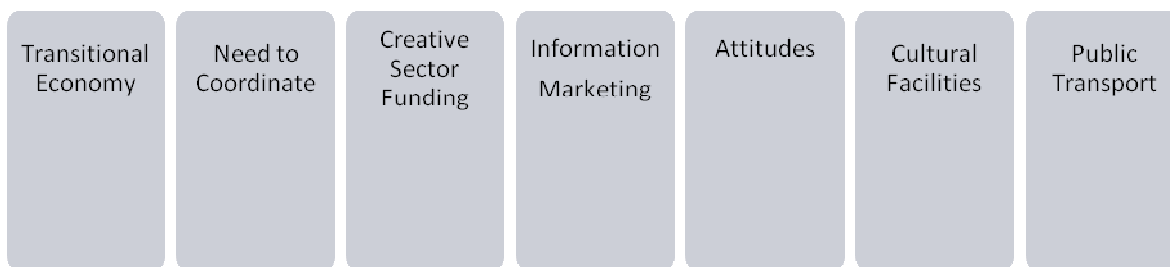
### Support Systems and Infrastructure

- **Lansing Economic Area Partnership** (Leap, Inc.) The first major regional public/private business partnership effort in some time, Leap, Inc. is aggressively building connections across sectors and forging plans for improving the economy and quality of life of the Capital Area.
- **Arts Councils** The Arts Council of Greater Lansing, East Lansing Arts Commission, and other local arts councils in the region offer funding, information, networking and support. The Arts Council of Greater Lansing is one of the few sources of grants for individual artists.
- **Lansing Economic Development Corporation** initiated this CED planning and has identified Arts and Culture and Creative Services as two of the City's key economic sectors. LEDC offers business financing, assistance, and an innovative Arts & Culture Matching Loan Fund.
- **Greater Lansing Convention and Visitors' Bureau** This active CVB has worked to brand Lansing and East Lansing a meeting ground for the state and to highlight the cultural and natural amenities in the community.
- **Business support** Many organizations provide support to business including: Lansing Regional Chamber, Old Town Business and Art Development Association, and more.
- **Higher Education outreach** Michigan State University has an explicit commitment to community outreach with initiatives including: MSU Outreach and Engagement, Cultural Engagement Council, Arts and Cultural Initiative, Cultural Creativity Research Group, Center for Community and Economic Development, and E. Lansing Technology Innovation Center. Lansing Community College has several programs serving the larger community's economic developing including: a local branch of the Michigan Small Business and Technology Development Center, Business and Community Institute, and more.
- **Public funding** Municipal grants, facilities, and in-kind support; county funding, state grants, and federal grants help support the Lansing and East Lansing cultural sector.
- **State agencies** Several state agencies provide support to the cultural sector. These include: MEDC, MCED, HAL, SHPO, and MSHDA.
- **Corporate/business arts contributions and sponsorships** Business-sector funding has been critical to support the nonprofit cultural sector. This funding has dropped significantly.
- **Foundations** Corporate, family and community foundations are an important source of private-sector funding to nonprofit cultural organizations. Their capacity to give has declined with their investments.
- **Individual philanthropy** As virtually all other sources of funding have declined, individual contributions have become an even more critical source of support for nonprofit cultural organizations and programs.



- **News media and communications systems** The region has retained its print media and has growing electronic communications systems to inform people about economic changes and cultural opportunities. Interviewees cited a few of the region's many media outlets: Lansing State Journal, Lansing City Pulse, and Capital Gains.
- **Capital Area Transit Authority** This progressive regional transit agency has made improvements to transit in recent years attempting to meet the needs of this varied community and better connect the two cities and the region.
- **Audiences, participants, buyers** The cultural economy ultimately depends on cultural consumers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that area arts audiences are participating, though attendance is trending down. Classical audiences are aging. Art buyers are cautious. Industries may be employing fewer creative workers.

## Barriers to Lansing and East Lansing Cultural Economic Development



### Transitional Economy

- **Recession** Michigan is still in deep recession with a declining auto industry, high unemployment, flagging state revenues, and tight financing. Fortunately, the cities of Lansing, East Lansing, and the region statistically, and in the continuation of significant projects, is faring far better than the state.
- **Ambiguity** The early stage transition to new, sustainable economy is challenging and uncertain.

### Need for Coordination

- **Fragmentation** The convergence of multiple municipal, township, county, and state jurisdictions in Lansing and East Lansing create challenges to coordinate and overcome inertia.
- **Independent economic and cultural networks and initiatives** The many private and public entities working for economic development is a good thing. Coordinating among them and identifying resources can be challenging.
- **Ongoing cultural economic development coordination** There is not yet an established leadership and coordinating entity for cultural economic development (CED) beyond the present cultural economic planning initiative.

### Creative Sector Funding

- **Reduced funding** for non-profits has reached a crisis. Virtually all revenue sources are down as costs rise. Some have laid off staff and reduced programs.
- **Tight credit** for creative businesses limits economic growth.
- **Markets are tight** for art work, which puts stress on individual artists and galleries.
- **Audiences cautious** Audiences are being careful with their discretionary spending and time. Attendance and buying patterns are unpredictable. The subscription series, the pillar of nonprofit presenters, is no longer reliable.
- **Few major philanthropic families** in region provide leadership gifts and inspire civic giving. One major cultural organization reported their largest few annual gifts were about \$10,000 and most donors gave at far lower levels.
- **Little funding for coordination and services** While this assessment is finding the need for coordination of the creative sector, there is little funding for services.

### Information and Marketing

- **Need for central information** sources about events, programs, and services. While we found several good sources of cultural information (including Lansing State Journal, City Pulse, MSU Public Humanities Collaborative Weekly Update, Greater Lansing CVB calendar, LEAP, and Arts Council of Greater Lansing

calendar and listings), interviewees still complained they had difficulty identifying cultural programs and events.

- **More potential for cultural tourism** Interviewees consistently advised that Lansing's and East Lansing's cultural assets had more potential to interest cultural tourism than has yet been realized.
- **Business recruitment** Business leaders advised that cultural assets are important for business, worker, and young talent recruitment and retention. The region's cultural advantages should be more explicitly a part of communications and recruitment efforts.
- **Central planning calendar** While there are several online and print calendars of cultural attractions, focus group participants reported difficulty in finding information. CED planning will explore if existing resources need more promotion or if there should be additional coordination and/or consolidation.
- **Creative education** A creative economy depends on a workforce educated in creativity. The MSU Cultural Creativity Research Group is actively exploring the connection between a region's cultural opportunities and creative education and the innovation needed for business and industry to succeed. Several interviewees cited the need for arts education and cultivation of the next generations of audiences, participants, and consumers.

#### Attitudes

- **Self-image** There is need for renewed optimism and positive regional self-image to counter a negative or ambivalent self-perception, "It's just Lansing."
- **Respect entrepreneurs** An interviewee observed, "In some regions entrepreneurs are heroes. Here they are seen as people who can't hold down a job."
- **Build respectful connections across divides** There are some distinct schisms that limit cooperation throughout the region and across sectors. These include: blue collar/white collar; town/gown; Lansing/East Lansing, and cities/townships. Some notable work is being done to address divisions especially between higher education and municipalities and between the two cities. Regional thinking and cooperation, as in this cultural economic planning, will help balance competition between cities and between cities and rural townships.
- **Tolerance** Richard Florida cites tolerance as critical to the success of a creative economy. Lansing and East Lansing, as any diverse metropolitan area, is challenged to increase tolerance for differences: race/ethnicity, class, education, age, gender, and sexual orientation.
- **Creative thinking** An interviewee said, "Whenever, we get stuck, it's usually 'old school' thinking that blocks us." This cross-sector cultural economic development planning is evidence of the power of the creative thinking necessary to re-invent the region's economy.

#### Cultural Facilities and Gathering Places

- **Lansing Performing Arts facility** Community leaders have wanted a new performing arts facility in Lansing for many years, yet economic conditions and the absence of major philanthropy have thwarted that dream. A plan to renew a feasibility study has been put on hold and the Arts Council of Greater Lansing has shifted its attention to grants-making and cultural economic development. BoarsHead Theatre is performing in a facility that may not serve long-term.

- **Other facility needs** Other cultural organizations cited need for facility repair and improvements.
- **Café culture and meeting places** While East Lansing demonstrates a rich café culture with numerous locations for students and others to mix, such informal “Third Places” are less present in Lansing. State employees and other downtown workers fill lunch spots and a growing number of bars and clubs. However, informal community gathering places are few.

### Transportation

- **Auto-dependent** Transportation systems rely primarily on private automobiles, roads, and parking. Some residents, including students, do not drive.
- **Dispersed attractions** Cultural attractions are widely distributed across the region, making transportation critical to cultural economic development.
- **Commuters** There is a large proportion of commuting workers who leave the cities at the end of each work day.
- **Public transportation** may be inadequate for regional cultural attractions. Despite an entertainment express bus, interviewees suggest that improved public transportation would improve access to cultural programs and events.

### Lansing and East Lansing Opportunities for Cultural Economic Development



Creative Community Builders have identified four broad areas of opportunity for cultural economic development. We invite the Cultural Economic Development Steering Committee to identify strategies that will become the basis of the Lansing and East Lansing Cultural Economic Development Plan. The following questions and suggestions are emerging from our assessment.

## **I. Quality of Life and Sense of Place Initiatives**

**To attract and retain creative workers, overcome attitude barriers, and take full advantage of locational assets, how can we build on Lansing and East Lansing's quality of life and sense of place?**

An outline of topics emerging from the assessment phase:

- Michigan Ave Corridor
- River front, River Walk, and trail developments
- Lansing City Market
- Open spaces and public facilities
- Regional identity as a knowledge, innovation, and cultural center
- Support for artists and cultural organizations' contributions to quality of life
- Common interests among advocates of culture, economic development, sustainable environments, outdoor recreation, and agriculture
- Communicate authentic sense of place and cultural opportunities

## **II. Creative Workforce Development**

**To fully engage the talents and potentials in all ages of our population, how can we build and nurture a creative workforce for the new economy?**

- Arts and innovation education in and out of K-12 schools
- Workforce training and development
- Networking and support among creative workers
- Affordable housing and workspaces
- Affordable health care and insurance
- Respect for artists and creative entrepreneurs

## **III. Creative Enterprise Development**

**To spark innovation in existing business and nonprofits and motivate the creation of new businesses, how can we encourage and support the development of creative enterprises?**

- Creative industry clusters
- Grow indigenous creative businesses
- Incubators
- Grants and loans
- Develop nonprofit capacity
- Strategic alliances
- Cultivate philanthropy
- Facilitate networking

## **IV. Regional Leadership, Coordination, and Support**



**To build momentum, track developments in the creative economy, maintain partnerships, and achieve results, how can we empower and support implementation of the cultural economic development plan?**

- Leadership/coordination to implement the cultural economic development plan beyond the life of the CED planning process
- Funding and in-kind support for CED initiatives
- Regional approach
- Deepen culture and economic connections
- Integrate with other plans
- Connect intersecting CED interests
- Encourage cultural alliances
- Map cultural attractions

## ***Cultural Economic Development Survey Results***

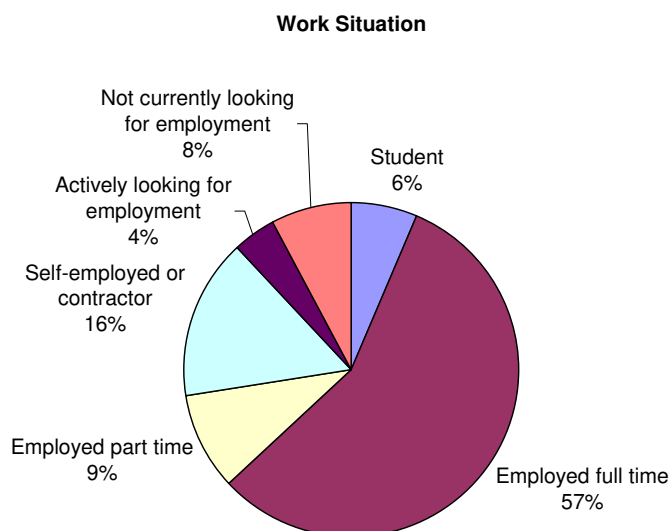
August 13, 2009

**Survey objective and methods** The Cities of Lansing and East Lansing completed a cultural economic development survey targeted to professional networks. The survey complements other assessment methods to identify cultural assets, opportunities, and barriers to cultural economic development. Our specific objective was to hear from more young professionals, who had been under-represented in earlier assessment focus groups and interviews. Response was excellent with 451 completed surveys, half of whom were under 40 years of age. The Greater Lansing Arts Council and i3 Strategies.LCC distributed email invitations to professional networks and constituent lists to an online survey. Survey and analysis by Creative Community Builders, Craig Dreeszen, Ph.D.

### **Key findings**

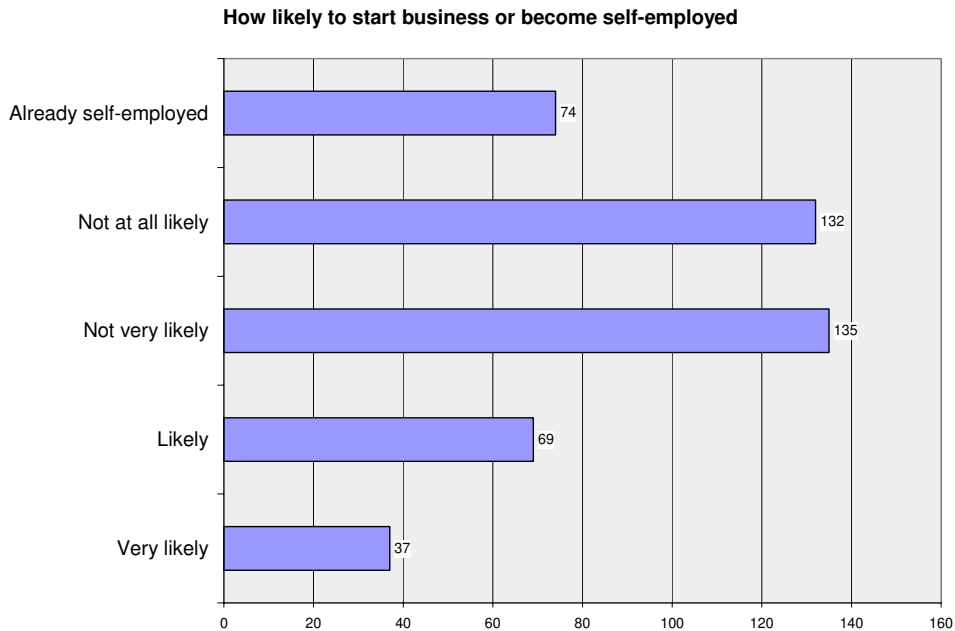
**Demographics** Nearly all survey respondents (97%) live or work in Lansing or East Lansing. The median age is 40. Over half of respondents are female (61%). Most are white (93%). Eighty percent have college degrees.

**Employment** Most are employed full time (64%, self employed (18%), or employed part time (11%).

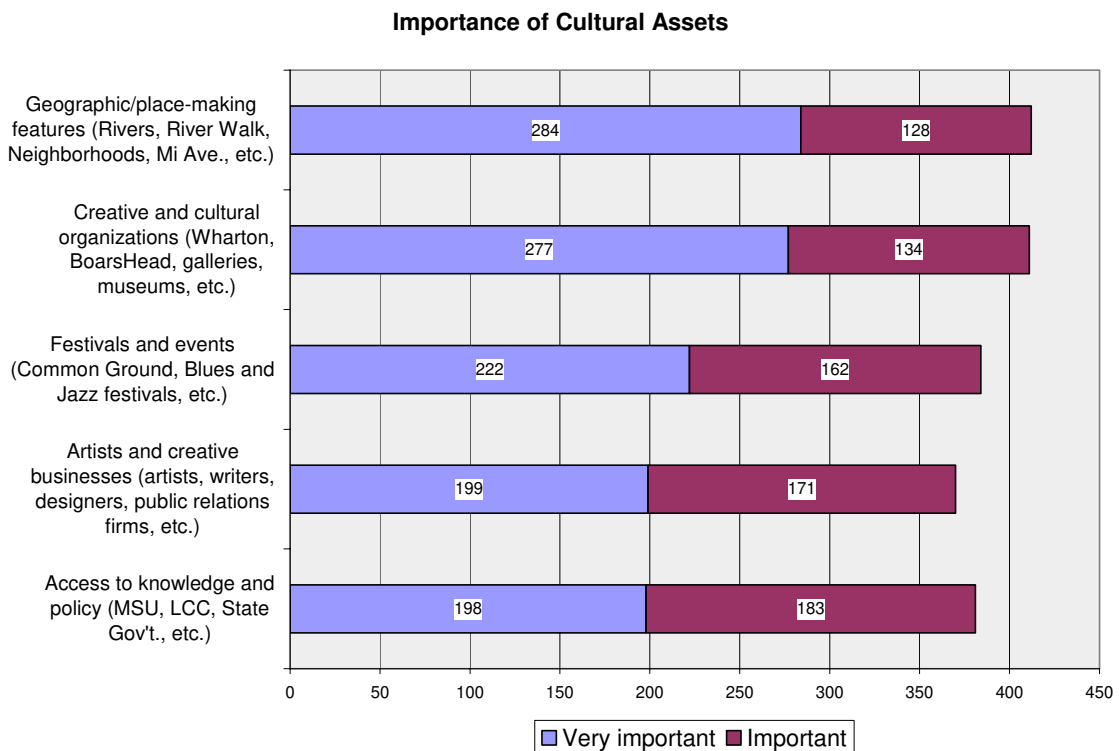


**Creative workers** Over a third of survey respondents are creative workers (35%) earning a significant portion of their livelihood through creative work (e.g. as a writer, visual artist, musician, gallery owner, or other creative worker such as design, architecture, publishing, advertising, etc.).

**Self employment** Nearly a quarter (23%) thought it very likely or likely they would start a business or become self-employed, while 18% were already self employed. The majority (60%) thought self-employment was not likely.



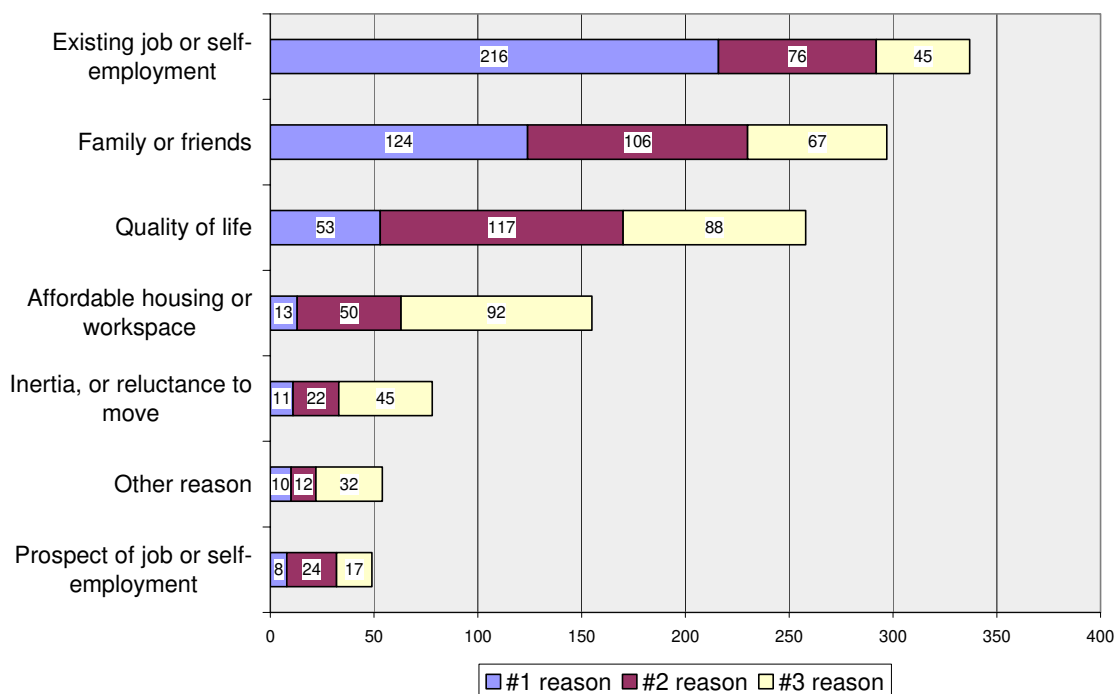
**Valued cultural assets** Geographic and place-making features are the most important perceived cultural asset followed closely by cultural/creative organizations, and festivals and events. Artists and creative workers and access to knowledge and policy institutions are also very important for most respondents.



## Reasons Cited for Living and Working in Lansing and East Lansing

Existing jobs or self-employment topped the reasons respondents cite for choosing to live or work in Lansing or East Lansing. Next most often, they cite family or friends. The third most important reason is quality of life. Affordable housing is important for many. The least important reason was the prospect of future work.

**Top 3 Reasons You Live or Work in Lansing/East Lansing**



## Perceptions of Lansing and East Lansing

**Lansing/East Lansing Now** We asked, “What single word comes to mind when you think of Lansing and East Lansing as it is now?” Most commonly, respondents did not see the two cities as connected. While many cited depressed or struggling, nearly as many said “potential.” Most perceptions are negative. Following are the words or their synonyms repeated more than once, listed in the order of most frequent mention:

Separate, divided, disconnected, fractured, disjointed, two different cities (cited by 33)  
Depressed, hurting, struggling (31)  
Potential (28)  
MSU, Michigan State, university, college (31)  
Home, hometown (16)  
Boring (14)  
Diverse (13)  
Stagnant (10)  
Growing, developing, progressing (9)  
Government (8)  
Rebounding, rebuilding, rebirth, ready, revitalizing (8)  
Capital, capitol (8)

Vibrant, dynamic (7)  
Comfortable (6)  
OK (5)  
Community (4)  
Small, small town (4)  
Trying (4)  
Dead, dying (4)  
Improving (4)  
Nice (4)  
Opportunities (4)  
Drab, dull (4)  
Old (4)  
Slow (3)  
Behind (3)  
Bland (2)

Blue collar (2)  
 Mediocre (2)  
 Nothing (2)  
 Sad (2)  
 Tired (2)  
 Traditional (2)

Unknown (2)  
 Lacking (2)  
 Politics (2)  
 Familiar (2)  
 Family (2)  
 Bars (2)

**Desired Lansing/East Lansing** We asked, “What single word would best describe the Lansing or East Lansing you would wish to live in? “Vibrant” or another energetic variation was by far the most common response. Many also cited arts and culture opportunities, a sense of community, creativity, diversity, and prosperity as ideal attributes of the two cites. Words or their synonyms repeated more than once, listed in the order of most frequent mention:

Vibrant, (most common cited by 77),  
 booming, bustling, active, busy,  
 lively, energetic, exciting, dynamic,  
 thriving, or alive (cited by 298)

Arts, culture, cultural activities (19)

Community (13)

Creative, innovative (11)

Diverse (10)

Prosperous, economically stable,  
 employment (9)

Inviting, open, welcoming (7)

Fun (7)

Cool, hip (7)

Progressive (6)

Green (6)

Growing (5)

Walkable (5)

Entertainment, night life (5)

Cosmopolitan, sophisticated (5)

Friendly (4)

Connected, united (4)

Enriching, stimulating (4)

Interesting (3)

Cooperative (3)

Unique (3)

Urban (3)

Ann Arbor (3)

Comfortable (3)

Eclectic (3)

Entrepreneurial (2)

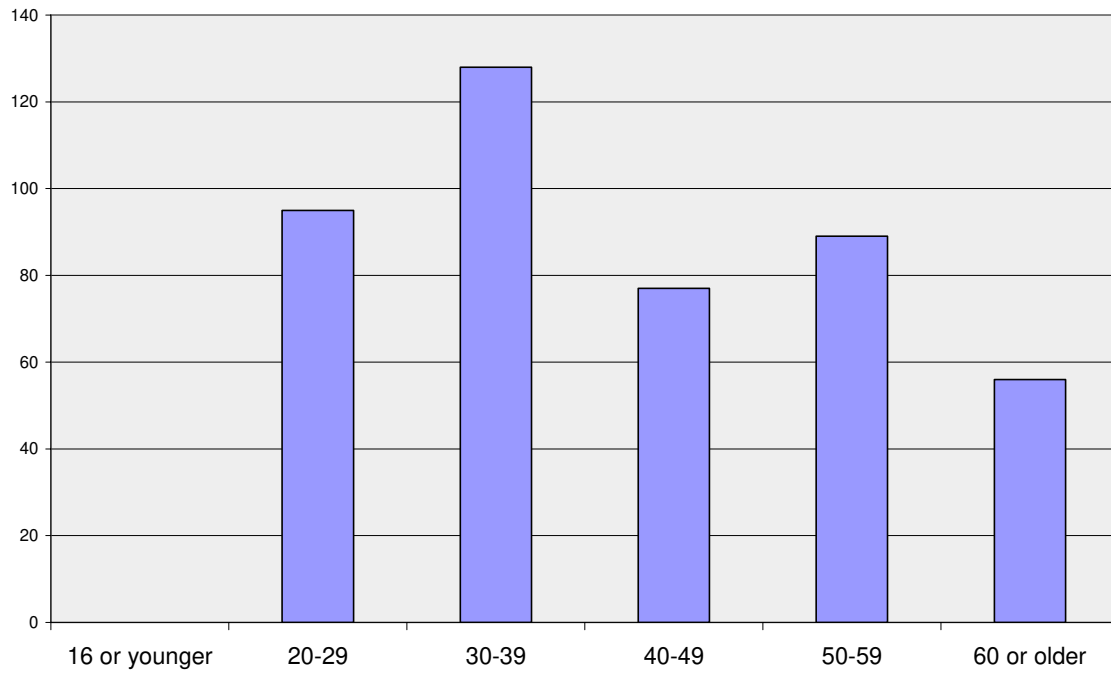
Visionary (2)

Awesome (2)

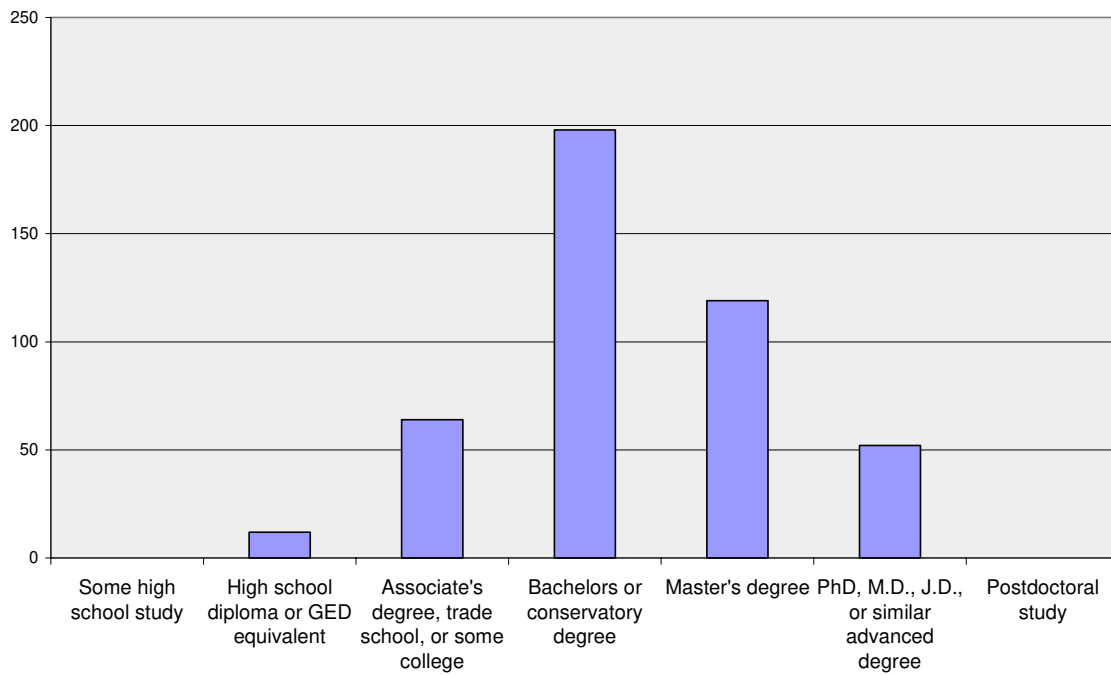
Equal (2)



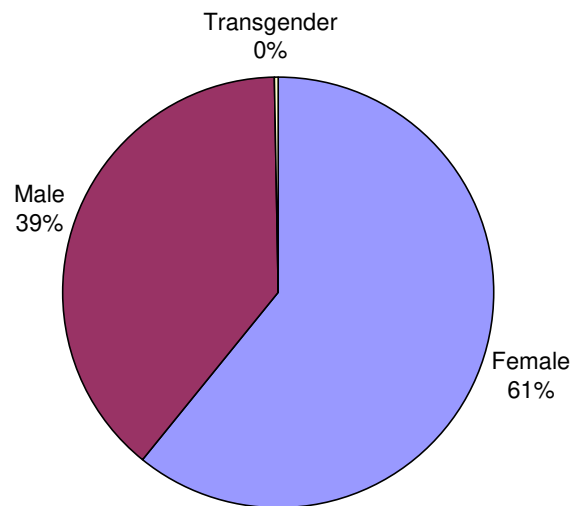
**Respondents' Age**



**Respondents' Education**



### Respondents' Gender



### Do You Identify as a Person of Color?

