

**ARTS AND LIVABILITY:
THE ROAD TO BETTER METRICS**

A Report from the June 7, 2010 NEA Research Forum

Prepared by Jane Pierson, Cavanaugh, Hagan, Pierson, & Mintz, Inc.

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PREFACE

This report summarizes the proceedings of a June 7, 2010 forum held by the National Endowment for the Arts' Office of Research & Analysis in Washington, D.C. The one-day convening launched a conversation among some of the nation's preeminent thinkers and practitioners in urban design, cultural policy, and community development. The convergence of those disciplines in the NEA's current and future programming has led to a more rigorous search for outcomes-based measures—a quest articulated in the forum's title, "Arts and Livability: The Road to Better Metrics."

As the following narrative shows, participants had no shortage of ideas and no difficulty in styling statistical tools for gauging the impact of art and design on greater livability. In some cases, conventional metrics for community health were offered up to be tweaked or repurposed. But for most participants, the event carried the realization that more innovative methods will be needed—and more comprehensive data sources must be mined—if we are to record the benefits of art and design for communities.

Those benefits are subtle and gradual; they will not yield to blunt instruments. We must continue, therefore, to work creatively and collaboratively to produce metrics that are worthy of the relationships they seek to measure. These pages track this insight as it evolved among the group.

For their work in catalyzing the day's discussions, the NEA would like to thank especially the following group members: Mario Rosario Jackson, Stephen Sheppard, Mark Stern, and Emily Axelrod. Jane Pierson and Jamie Lacey-Moreira of Cavanaugh, Hagan, Pierson, & Mintz prepared these proceedings from a transcript of the meeting. Further editing was provided by Ellen Grantham on the NEA Research staff.

Sunil Iyengar
Director, Research & Analysis
National Endowment for the Arts

October 2010

Arts and Livability: The Road to Better Metrics
NEA Research Forum Participants

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Jennifer Bradley, Brookings Institution
Laura Callanan, McKinsey and Company
Katharine Pearson Criss, Center for Rural Strategies
Anne Gadwa, Metris Arts Consulting
Toni Griffin, Harvard University Graduate School of Design
Adam Huttler, Fractured Atlas
Maria Rosario Jackson, The Urban Institute
Amanda Johnson, University of Pennsylvania
Sunil Iyengar, National Endowment for the Arts
Tim Jones, Artscape
Sakina Khan, Washington, D.C. Office of Planning
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Susan Silberberg-Robinson, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Mark Stern, University of Pennsylvania
Gary Steuer, City of Philadelphia
Sarah Sullivan, National Endowment for the Arts
Harriet Tregoning, Washington, D.C. Office of Planning
Alaka Wali, The Field Museum
Chris Walker, Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Margy Waller, Cincinnati Fine Arts Fund
Tim Wojan, U.S. Department of Agriculture

SUMMARY

On June 7, 2010, approximately 40 experts in the fields of urban planning, community development, design, arts, cultural policy and research, sociology, and economics gathered at the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) headquarters in Washington, DC, to consider ways to measure presence and impact of arts, design, and cultural assets in U.S. communities.

Statement of Purpose

The forum had the following goals:

- produce a list of questions that can yield statistically reliable information on how arts, design, and cultural assets contribute to the livability of communities;
- identify existing or potential data sources for answering those questions; and,
- determine which questions and/or sources can be adopted most rapidly.

In addition, organizers of the forum intended for it to generate 10 to 15 proposed metrics, with associated data sources (real and potential), and ratings in terms of quality, cost, and ease of use.

Background

The NEA is exploring methods of capturing and reporting the impact of arts and design on the livability of communities. In January 2010, the NEA announced a grant opportunity for past participants in the Mayors' Institute on City Design. The new grants are intended to support additional projects in planning, design, and arts engagement. Similarly, the NEA has requested funds for 2011 to launch an initiative called Our Town in 35 towns and cities. Our Town would fund projects that seek to place the arts at the center of creating livable, sustainable communities. The NEA also has begun speaking with other federal agencies about the need for policy planners to recognize the contributions that the arts make to livability. The NEA is positioned to play a leadership role in identifying and proposing standard metrics for assessing those contributions. The value of such research is reinforced by the Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities, sponsored by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Forum Report

The full forum agenda can be found in Appendix A.

NEA Chairman Rocco Landesman opened the meeting and welcomed participants. He affirmed his belief that by investing in the arts, and by supporting arts and artist organizations, more livable and sustainable communities will be formed. This concept is the premise behind the NEA's program, Our Town, which President Obama has proposed in the fiscal 2011 budget with a \$5 million allocation. Chairman Landesman urged the forum participants to develop a framework and tools to measure the investment in community arts and its impact on livability. He concluded by thanking participants for their time and their talents.

NEA Senior Deputy Chairman Joan Shigekawa and NEA Office of Research & Analysis Director Sunil Iyengar led the meeting. Senior Deputy Chairman Shigekawa called this gathering a “working group on arts and livability . . . a dream team of pioneers and seminal researchers in this field.” She dubbed the meeting the launch of a new line of collaborative research for the NEA. Mr. Iyengar explained that the impetus for the meeting came from a single question: “If we are going to support a program related to arts and livability, how will we measure the impact of our work?” He explained that this led to several other questions, including: “What do we mean by ‘strengthening communities?’ ‘Who is capable of measuring these programs?’ ‘What are the right questions to ask?’ ‘And what type of data should we be collecting?’” Mr. Iyengar recognized representatives from three other federal agencies and thanked them for their participation in the forum.

Jane Pierson of Cavanaugh, Hagan, Pierson, & Mintz, Inc. moderated the meeting. She acknowledged the large group participating with its wide array of knowledge. Her goal for the meeting was to help the learners, thinkers, and those who will apply the knowledge to come together and share ideas.

CORE ELEMENTS OF LIVABILITY

The introductory session was followed by a discussion about the core elements of livability with Ms. Pierson sharing results from a pre-forum survey (Appendix B). She flagged the meeting as an effort to identify a critical mass of researchers studying questions related to arts and livability, and acknowledged that a cohesive community of such researchers does not exist today. Ms. Pierson then asked participants to break into small groups to address three questions. The questions and responses are summarized below.

1. *What are the core elements of a livable community?*
 - Accessibility to quality community services and amenities, including the arts, transit, schools, and medical care
 - Walkability
 - Diversity (ethnicity, age, gender, socioeconomics, networks)
 - Safety
 - Sustainability
 - Space and opportunities available for social engagement and creative collaborations
 - Authenticity
 - Private spaces
 - Sense of pride in ownership (stewardship), unique identity
 - Economic stability (businesses, housing prices)
 - Focus beyond cities (rural areas, small communities, and suburbia)
 - Presence of amenities that support lifelong learning
 - Quality of physical environment
 - Jobs
 - Opportunities for “fit” (healthy) life
 - Urban design
 - Landscaping/beautification/ community gardens and parks/cleanliness
 - Public art
 - Environmental quality (air quality)
 - Sense of connectivity to other neighborhoods

- Tolerance
- Shared values
- Civic involvement
- Connection to history and heritage
- Volunteerism
- Political engagement

2. *What are some widely recognized ways to measure those core elements?*

- Walkability (Walkscore.com is a privately developed tool that maps local attractions within walking distance of any address. It provides scores from 0-100 computed by using quarter-mile increments; map includes performing arts centers)
- Transportation choices
- EPA environmental measurements
- City measurement of green space
- Social Compact's work in economic indicators and analysis supporting community development
- Social Impact of the Arts Project (SIAP), University of Pennsylvania
- Mt. Auburn Associates' creative economy reports
- HUD/DOT/EPA's six principles of livability
- Measurements of affordable housing
- Align measurement with community type (urban, rural, ethnic) and population (immigrant, socio-economic)
- Community educational levels
- Economic impact studies
- Census data
- WolfBrown's Cultural Engagement Index
- Social capital
- Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index (WBI) used in Congressional districts to determine how happiness factor is measured
- Credible data sources (the measurements must be believable)
- Resident surveys
- Data sources that can be compared locally, regionally, and nationally
- Analysis of relationships among indicators being measured
- Statistics from Department of Education (truancy and education rates), U.S. Census Bureau crime statistics (including domestic violence), unemployment rates, public health issues
- Net result of migration in and out of community
- Number of tourists
- Population density

3. *How might arts and design relate to your answers to the first two questions?*

- Importance of architecture and design
- Importance of creative assets (within a small-business context)
- Relationships of arts and cultural entities
- Active commuting habits: are artists more likely to walk or bike to work?

- Recognize what the public appreciates about the arts: people care about connection and visibility
- Many community indicators measure negative impacts. The arts, however, have basically a positive impact, so research needs to be shifted to consider positive indicators (such as happiness factors)
- Connections between arts, creative economy, and entrepreneurialism; how these create platforms for information-sharing

TRACKING THE PRESENCE OF ARTS, DESIGN, AND CULTURAL ASSETS IN COMMUNITIES

Mr. Iyengar next introduced the topic of “Tracking the Presence of Arts, Design, and Cultural Assets in Communities.” The Urban Institute’s Maria Rosario Jackson, Ph.D., presented on the “Arts and Culture Indicators Project: Insights from the Field.” She discussed examples of data indicators that were available for use in the project. These included a blend of national and local data that are free or inexpensive, recurrent, and capable of being disaggregated to the metropolitan level. She also broached the concept of “indications” versus indicators, suggesting items that could be included on a checklist but which might not be quantitatively measured.

PRESENTATION ONE

Summary

Maria Rosario Jackson

“Arts and Culture Indicators Project: Insights from the Field”

Arts and Cultural Indicators Project goals:

- Determine the kinds of things that should be measured and understand why they matter
- Identify and or collect data necessary to measure what is important
- Integrate the topic and data into indicator/quality of life measurement systems
- Encourage use of data in research, planning and policy to improve communities

Guiding premises:

- Creativity is a natural impulse—everyone has it and there is an active or latent demand to address it. Cultural participation takes many forms and happens in a wide range of venues, and opportunities for cultural participation rely on multiple stakeholders. Arts and cultural activity, while intrinsically important, is also relevant to other community concerns and dynamics

Cultural participation contributes to:

- Civic participation
- Social capital—bridging and bonding
- Improvements in the built environment
- Stewardship of place
- Preservation of cultural heritage
- Creation or affirmation of group identity
- Bridging boundaries of difference

- Education outcomes
- Economic development

Three domains of cultural vitality:

- 1) Presence of opportunities for cultural participation
- 2) Cultural participation itself
- 3) Support for cultural participation

Together, these provide a comprehensive picture of a community's cultural vitality:

Presence of Opportunities for Cultural Participation

- Nonprofit, public, and commercial arts-related organizations (with a focus on size and function within the cultural and broader community context)
- Retail arts venues—bookstores; music stores; film/theaters; and craft and art supply stores
- Non-arts venues with arts and cultural programming—parks; libraries; ethnic associations; societies; and centers
- Festivals and parades
- Arts-focused media outlets (print and electronic, including web-based venues)
- Art schools

Participation

- Amateur art-making
- Collective/community art-making
- K–12 arts education
- Arts after-school programs
- Audience participation
- Purchase of artistic goods (materials for making art as well as final arts products)
- Discourses about arts and culture in the media

Support

- Public expenditures in support of the arts in all sectors (nonprofit, public, and commercial)
- Foundation expenditures in support of the arts (nonprofit, public, and commercial)
- Volunteering and personal giving to the arts
- Integration of arts and culture into other policy areas and corresponding allocation of resources (e.g., community development, education, parks and recreation, etc.)
- Public will regarding the arts and artists.
- Presence of working artists

Examples of data available:

- National
 - County Business Patterns; Bureau of Labor Statistics; National Center for Charitable Statistics; NEA Survey of Public Participation in the Arts
- Local
 - Parks and recreation cultural programming data (Chicago Parks and Recreation/Metro Chicago Information Center)
 - Arts instruction per week, K-12 (Ohio Department of Education)

- Proportion of school budgets for arts education (Los Angeles County Arts Commission)
- Library volumes and circulation (King County, WA)
- Household surveys including questions about cultural participation (Philadelphia Metropolitan Area Survey; Seattle-King County Public Health)
- Consumer data (Santa Monica Economic Development Division)

Examples of “indications”:

- Design considerations in the development or re-development of new buildings/facilities
- Inclusion of arts education in standards
- Programs by which local businesses support local artists

The following highlights emerged from group discussion:

- **QUESTION:** Property value change has been an important indicator for measuring livability because it is readily available and because it substitutes for other attributes. What are other indicators that can be included?

Dr. Jackson said she believes there are other measurable indicators, but not many that are nationally applicable. She stated that the data tend to be specific to a particular locality (e.g., Chicago or Philadelphia). She noted that not all national data sets have been exploited fully.

- **QUESTION:** Should the framework be focused on arts and culture or should it be broadened to include the creative economy?

Dr. Jackson said she doesn’t think either option is exclusive, but that integration of arts and culture into the creative economy discussion is imperative. She cautioned that amateur and commercial arts might not be “leading-edge” for consideration within the context of a creative economy because they are not “cash cows.” However, Dr. Jackson noted that they should not be dismissed just because they may not be easily incorporated. She argued for a strategic and adaptive framework.

- **QUESTION:** Much of our discussion seems to focus on urban experience. Can you speak to application of this knowledge in ex-urban, suburban, small town experience?

Dr. Jackson explained that the Central Valley in California was the only or primary non-urban site in which her group conducted work. She noted that similarities exist between disenfranchised urban communities and rural communities (e.g., social isolation, lack of resources). She indicated that the focus on rural areas must be stronger.

- **COMMENT:** This work is important because livability is more than economic indicators and concerns. This idea is gaining traction worldwide (beyond GDP) because purely economic indicators don’t get at qualities of livability (e.g., happiness, access). Measuring objectively and subjectively will become increasingly important. There are clearly aspects of well-being that go beyond economic factors.

- COMMENT: Creative economy includes everything from traditional arts to web design, graphic design, public relations, and media. Creative economy should be viewed broadly for how it translates at the neighborhood level into quality of life.
- COMMENT: Mr. Iyengar stressed that a “big tent” approach to art should be considered for the forum’s purpose. (“Art in its broadest sense and metrics in their broadest sense.”) Every community has its own definition of art. We have to let each community define it for itself. HUD is looking at sustainability by meeting communities where they are and adhering to their definitions; defining art could be done the same way (although parameters and budget come into play). Under the current Administration, the sustainability concept is “Do no harm. Give communities resources to make their own decisions,” according to HUD’s Dan Lurie.
- COMMENT: One should identify different policy sectors and figure out strategically the intersection of arts and all of these other sectors. Ask, “How do you frame in an articulate and clear way to get beyond the default definition of arts as audience participation and consumerism?” Making connections clearly across fields would strengthen advocacy and a political position, even if the measurement isn’t quite there yet.

MEASURING THE IMPACT OF ARTS, DESIGN, AND CULTURAL ASSETS ON COMMUNITIES

Mr. Iyengar next introduced the topic “Measuring the Impact of Arts, Design, and Cultural Assets on Communities,” with presentations by Stephen Sheppard, Center for Creative & Community Development, Williams College, on infusing aesthetics into property value measurement; Mark Stern, Social Impact of the Arts Project (SIAP), University of Pennsylvania, on SIAP’s Cultural Asset Index and the ecology of culture; and Emily Axelrod, Rudy Bruner Foundation, on case studies using pre- and post- data.

PRESENTATION TWO

Summary

Stephen Sheppard

“Infusing Aesthetics into Property Value Measurement”

Improved metrics for impacts of the arts:

- Neighborhood livability
 - Housing
 - Employment
 - Education
 - Health and safety
 - Social connection
- Ideal metrics:
 - Relevant and plausible

- Meaningful and understandable
- Replicable and comparable
- Feasible to obtain

Improved livability has a measurable impact:

- Impact of better communities
 - Improved employment access
 - Improved local schools
 - Improved environment
 - Lower crime
- Measurable impact on values:
 - Intuitive and plausible
 - Easy to explain
 - Meaningful
- Use this approach to measure the impact of arts and culture

Impact measurement before and after change:

- Measure the contribution of proximity to cultural resource location before and after its creation
- Before and after is ideal – because values may rise or fall with distance from cultural assets

Measuring ‘aesthetic contribution’ to value is:

- Feasible
 - Data available in a wide range of communities
 - Many communities maintain historical records of sales
 - Match to changes in arts funding and cultural institutions
- Replicable
 - Can be undertaken in many communities for similar projects
 - Can be undertaken at different times in a single community
- Comparable
 - Between projects
 - Between communities

Potential difficulties:

- Data needs
 - Ideally, thousands of observations
 - Many different types of houses
 - Sales before and after
 - Property details
- Analytic needs
 - Greater than summarizing census data or visitors
 - Detailed statistical analysis to isolate the effect
 - Adjustment for other developments in community
- Limits
 - Changes at same place and time difficult to distinguish
 - Should be compared with other metrics
 - Identify policy challenges

In summary:

- Many metrics and indicators have been explored
 - Traditional economic impact – income and employment
 - Surveys of patrons and identification of neighborhoods
 - Social networks and social capital formation
 - Impact of cultural assets on property value
 - Analysis of property values offers some unique benefits
 - Uses widely available data – applicable in many communities
 - Change is tied to the time and location of cultural project
 - Tied to livability in a way that economic impact analysis is not
 - Helps identify policy challenges for equity and accessibility
-

PRESENTATION THREE

Summary

Mark J. Stern

“The Ecology of Culture”

The Social Impact of the Arts Project (SIAP) at the University of Pennsylvania started in 1994 to develop empirical methods to explore the relationship of the arts and culture to community vitality.

Central to SIAP’s approach is the *linking of concepts to measurement*:

- Social impact is not equal to the sum of individual impacts—cultural engagement operates at many levels.
- The critical link between *concepts* and *measurement* is *analysis*.
- Analysis of the *market* and *civic* ecologies of cultural engagement can provide a guide to policy interventions.

Social impact is not equal to the sum of individual impacts:

- This theoretical stance led to a method that focused on the ecology of cultural engagement.
- An early SIAP working paper—using the NEA’s Survey of Public Participation in the Arts and Census data—found that ecological variables had the same explanatory strength as an individual’s education. (*Note that SPPA no longer has this capacity.*)
- SIAP has focused on conceptualizing *community-level* effects of the arts and their relationship to other social phenomena (such as neighborhood diversity).

Concepts, analysis, and measurement:

- Data-gathering and conceptualization must interact.
- We tend to underestimate the role of *analysis* in linking the two.
- Compared to other policy fields—welfare, labor force, housing—cultural research is especially weak in these links *because it lacks a community of university-based scholars*.
- The failure of the *social indicators* movement of the 1970s suggests that indicators are meaningful only if they are based on clear conceptualization.

An inductive approach:

- Four elements that have *face validity* in measuring cultural engagement
 - Presence of nonprofit cultural organizations—compiled from variety of sources including IRS, funders, and event listings
 - Presence of commercial cultural firms—several proprietary data sets
 - Cultural participation—organizational lists of participants geocoded
 - Resident artists.
- Development of cultural asset index (CAI)—use of factor analysis to identify common spatial patterns across the four subindexes.

The ecologies of cultural engagement:

- Cultural asset index identifies neighborhoods with high cultural assets.
- Clear correlation between neighborhood CAI and revitalization status
- Clear correlation between CAI and socio-economic status & location
- Use regression to “correct” for these factors results in three types of clusters, which SIAP calls “natural” cultural districts:
 - *High market districts*: “Natural” cultural districts that have higher asset scores than their socio-economic status and location would predict
 - *Market districts*: “Natural” cultural districts with high asset scores
 - *Civic clusters*: Disadvantaged neighborhoods (in terms of economic status and location) that “outperform” their predicted cultural asset score

The temporal challenge:

- Originally, social indicators and cultural asset indicators were from the same time. As a result, we could establish *correlation* of assets to revitalization but not *direction* of causality (if any).
- After 15 years, we have cultural indicators for late 1990s and social indicators for 2000s.
- Not airtight, but at least we’ve ruled out directional issue.

Cultural assets have a consistent set of relationships with civic and economic outcomes:

Civic outcomes

Public health (social stress decline)
Reduced ethnic and racial harassment
Decline in serious crime
Property value increase

Economic outcomes

Decline in poverty
Population growth
Improved housing markets

Social stress index:

- Based on long-term tracking of Philadelphia young people by City health department
- Index of “social stress” includes:
 - underweight infants at birth
 - births to younger teenagers
 - infant deaths
 - substantiated child abuse and
 - out- of-home placements for delinquent and other dependent children.

The arts and public health:

- Philadelphia’s social stress index for the early 2000s was strongly correlated with the cultural asset index, even controlling for per capita income. That is, even in low-income neighborhoods, a high concentration of cultural assets was associated with a dramatic decline in social stress indicators.

Reducing ethnic and racial harassment:

- In the early 2000s, civic clusters had the lowest rates of ethnic and racial harassment in the city (as reported to the Philadelphia Human Relations Commission). This was true, as well, in neighborhoods experiencing ethnic transition.

Serious crime:

- Serious crime declined more in cultural clusters than in the rest of the city between 1998 and 2006.
- The decline was sharpest in high market cultural districts.

Translating cultural assets into economic assets—“natural” cultural districts have driven improved housing markets:

- According to The Reinvestment Fund’s Market Value Analysis, Philadelphia neighborhoods with high levels of cultural assets were more likely to experience significant improvements in their housing markets between 2001 and 2003.
- However, this benefit does not carry over to civic clusters.

“Natural” cultural districts are able to translate their assets in economic growth, but civic clusters have difficulty overcoming their socio-economic and locational disadvantages:

- Neighborhoods with high cultural asset index scores in 1997 saw their residential sale price increase nearly twice as fast between 2001 and 2006.
- Civic clusters, by contrast, had less impressive results.

Lessons for intervention and assessment:

- We don’t yet have enough data to sort out what causes what—in particular, the relationship between cultural assets and civic engagement—as a generator of neighborhood revitalization.
- However, whether a strong or weak model of the arts, our work suggests that cultural engagement is at least an important part of the story in many neighborhoods.

Two policy strategies:

- Market cultural districts can serve as engines of economic growth. *Local government* can contribute to revitalization spillover through reliable services and transparent governance.
 - Civic clusters improve the quality of life of economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. They need *compensatory interventions* by *philanthropy* (and perhaps the federal government) to translate cultural assets into prosperity.
 - If we encourage *only* market districts, we will increase spatial and economic inequality.
-

PRESENTATION FOUR

Summary

Emily Axelrod

“The Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence”

Goals of the Rudy Bruner Award (RBA):

- Discover and celebrate excellent urban places
- Make the experience of RBA winners available to place-makers across the country
- Illuminate the complex process of urban place-making
- Better reflect the balance between form and use; opportunity and cost; and preservation and change

Rudy Bruner Award Case Studies:

- Project At-A-Glance
- Project Description
 - Urban Context
 - Demographics
 - Project History
 - Architecture
 - Program
 - Leadership
 - Future Plans
 - Finances
- *Impacts*
 - Assessing Project Success
 - Success in Meeting Project Goals
 - Other Measures of Success
 - Selection Committee Comments

Project Impacts:

- How does the project relate to the urban fabric of its block, neighborhood, city?
- Has the project resulted in additional investment in the area?
- How has the project impacted its users? Who benefits most from the project and its programming?
- How has the project impacted residents' and users' perception of the area? How is the project perceived?
- What is the meaning or importance of this place in its urban context?
- Does the project provide a model that could be adapted in other cities?

Examples:

Children's Museum of Pittsburgh

- Providing leadership in organizing nearby cultural institutions into a cultural district in North Pittsburgh
- Preserving two historic structures important to Pittsburgh's history

- Providing environmental education to children through the museum building and through creative programming
- Creating a regional destination in a neglected area of the city

Project Row Houses

- Building bridges among diverse populations
- Creating new partnerships with diverse sectors of the Houston art and corporate community
- Preserving 22 historic “shotgun houses”
- Showcasing the work of nationally known African-American artists, contributing to community pride and art education
- Builds community through art education with the artists
- Creating a national art destination in Houston’s Third Ward
- Growing to include artist housing; young mothers’ housing; retail outlet; restoration of other historic structures
- Creating sense of community pride and identity

Inner-City Arts

- Introducing an oasis of beauty and safety into a dangerous industrial neighborhood of LA
- Providing art education to transient immigrant children who do not receive art instruction at school
- Making a demonstrated difference in school performance, self- esteem and long-term academic success to its students
- Building and strengthening community through art education
- Training teachers in the LA public school system in art instruction
- Building family stability by involving parents in children’s performances and shows

Millennium Park

- Creating a major new downtown attraction through creative public/private partnerships
- Sparking major new investment in the downtown
- Transforming an under-utilized railroad yard into an art and recreational destination that attracts millions of visitors each year
- Contributing to the livability of the downtown with a series of 12 art installations and green spaces for the use of Chicagoans and visitors from around the world.
- Creating a year round center for free public use, bringing together diverse populations, and extensive programming at little cost to the public

Following are highlights from the group discussion:

- **QUESTION:** For Mark Stern, when you talk about specific benefits for civic clusters, there seemed to be some tension between positive impacts (from arts) that are measurable, even if economic benefits are not clear. Can you address?

Dr. Stern explained that he doesn’t see a contradiction between a civic cluster’s social benefits from the arts and the same cluster’s lack of economic impact. He pointed out that there are neighborhoods that are poor and not well-located, so that economics are unlikely to be generated

by arts in those areas without external intervention. He noted that other types of incentives exist so that policy-makers and funders can look beyond what works from a financial market standpoint.

Dr. Sheppard also responded to the question. He explained that he is looking at market indications of a specific change, which is different from what Dr. Stern examined. He asserted that if you went into a neighborhood, had resources to affect change, and measured the pre- and post- effects, you would see a difference in a specific market indication.

- **QUESTION:** Changes in real estate values are very interesting. Could other indicators of neighborhood vibrancy be measured, such as increases in restaurant traffic, neighborhood traffic, and other businesses moving in?

Dr. Sheppard said that, yes, some of his case studies looked at the process of business permitting and the number of business permits issued. In some cases, there are also permits required for sign changes, but business permits are the only universal measure across communities. Regarding the number of people present in a neighborhood, he explained that he had considered using street view images from Google Earth to count people or cars, but that he couldn't obtain from Google the exact time images were taken. Thus, this type of data cannot be standardized (i.e., you can see differences from one view to another, but you do not have data regarding time of day).

- **QUESTION:** Can you access cell phone data as a potential measurement of arts impact on communities?

A department at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology is using cell phone data from around the world through cooperation from cell phone companies. The MIT project looks at cultural events and how people move through a city. Cell phone data may be ideal for this type of research because data are tagged by location.

- **QUESTION:** Are we talking only about physical communities or are online communities also part of this forum? (Many art projects are experienced online now.) Would metrics exist for online art consumption?

Mr. Iyengar addressed this question. For the purposes of this discussion, he noted that participants should focus on physical place. More layered and sophisticated analyses of technology will be needed later.

Dr. Sheppard also answered the question and noted that this issue dates back to discussions over the last 15 years on digital consumption and the funding of broadband accessibility. He expressed interest in the topic and recognized its importance, but acknowledged that it is less obvious as a function in measuring the impact of the arts.

Another participant noted that while digital communities (e.g., Twitter) live virtually, meet-ups and local physical manifestations are frequently occurring. There is no clear way to measure this phenomenon yet, but perhaps there could be as social media continues to grow and physical connections occur as a result.

- QUESTION: The panel showed us big projects as case studies. Sometimes arts projects are very small. What's the smallest project you've looked at where you've had a measurable effect?

Ms. Axelrod noted that some projects that her organization has recognized have started with one artist in a vacant lot. She gave an example of one lot cleared by an artist in Philadelphia that led to neighborhood youth pitching in and then parents helping. Eventually, several lots were cleaned and sculptures added; then small grants were contributed to the effort. She emphasized that it is impossible to ignore the vision and power of one person who learns as he or she progresses with a project.

Dr. Stern studies arts organizations at all levels (from very small to large) in his research, which is why he has developed the terms "cultural ecosystem" or "ecology of culture." Within his research, he avoids focusing on one type of organization as a "model" project. He said the "star system" devalues ordinary programs that simply teach kids about different modes of creative expression, for example. So, while it is important to understand exemplary cases, moving forward requires understanding the contributions of arts at the basic level as well as the collective impact of many small and community-based programs.

Dr. Sheppard quipped that not all systems evaluated have "Mass" in their title and that he has measured impacts from much smaller organizations. He gave an example of a street festival, and said that you could consider its impact on a community if it conveyed a sense of permanence or if it was something a real estate agent would share as a selling point to a prospective buyer. In other words, relatively small arts-related projects can be considered, but they must have an identifiable building or address.

- QUESTION/COMMENT: The examples provided by the panelists focused on urban and/or high-density populations. Can the same measurements be used for rural or smaller towns? Would cell phone and/or media/smart phone data be applicable? The participant said she hopes we can remember that rural communities have slightly different questions to address, and that questions/definitions of livability should be customized for varying types of communities.
- QUESTION/COMMENT: One participant spoke to Toronto as an example of a city exploring arts and livability and the "place characteristics" necessary to attract and retain creative people. He acknowledged the importance of clustering, which he sees as a market phenomenon. He indicated that a light bulb went off for him when he thought about the projects of Drs. Stern and Sheppard in the context of one another, saying that he believes the two combined might illuminate arts' power to add value. He said, "The value artists generate is so much greater than one might predict, and that's the phenomenon of clustering, which drives property value." If you understand how that value is aggregated, he said, it speaks to the power of the arts to transform communities.
- QUESTION: Another participant expressed an interest in non-clustered areas. She noted that some areas with high property values and high socio-economics (e.g., places like suburbs, ex-urban "McMansion-type" places) are well-off communities, and yet they often lack arts and culture. If this is the case, she asked, how do we/should we look at and consider the relationship between these communities and arts/culture?

Dr. Stern addressed her comment by noting that his research looks at urban neighborhoods and old suburbs (mostly in regional Philadelphia) and thus he could not speak to new suburban issues. He said it is clear that the concentration of arts and cultural assets declines as you move toward the ex-urban areas, which makes it hard to characterize or integrate into a geographic community analyses.

- QUESTION: A participant asked Dr. Stern, “You’ve got four measures that are an index of cultural assets. Can you get away with measuring these in other places?”

Dr. Stern believes his measures can apply elsewhere, particularly in other urban areas. The hardest measurement for annual data collection may be “participation” because it requires arts organizations to compile and provide their participant lists. He explained that in Philadelphia, when the Social Impact of the Arts Project (SIAP) began its research in the mid-1990s, SIAP had to make individual requests of about 100 organizations to share their participation data. It is easier today because the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance has developed a marketing list co-op for member organizations that it updates annually. SIAP now works directly with GPCA and its technical consultant. Stern also said that more serious data-gathering would be necessary to get deeper into understanding the dynamics of the cultural ecosystem. However, he added that it is attainable (if someone is willing to pay for it) to take a regional cut at a cultural asset index. He noted that essentially two people run SIAP with students as research assistants.

- QUESTION: The same participant then asked Dr. Stern how hard it was to get the IRS or Urban Institute’s National Center for Charitable Statistics data into shape?

Dr. Stern said this was not the hardest part of his research. He explained that SIAP supplements IRS and NCCS data for its nonprofit index by getting applicant lists from local funders as well as by scanning Web, weeklies, and community listings to identify groups that may not be official 501(c)(3)s. He noted that the IRS is now throwing off nonprofits that don’t file 990 forms, and that it can be hard to follow “shadow” 501(c)(3)s that are no longer listed.

DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE SET OF METRICS

Mr. Iyengar introduced the group’s next task, which focused on developing a comprehensive set of metrics around arts and livability. Each group was given a topic and asked to consider measurable units of impact related to the arts and the subtopic assigned. Mr. Lurie’s comments, which were originally slated for this portion of the agenda, were moved to later in the day.

Highlights from each group’s discussion follow.

The first two questions for consideration were: What are measurable units of impact that we can identify for the arts with respect to the following domains? Within each domain, what might be priority units of impact to measure?

Housing: The group that considered housing broke their factors for measurement into several subfactors as follows:

- Production – Units of measurement could include:

- Uptick in new housing starts/rehabs as catalyst for revitalization
- Residential vacancies
- Redevelopment/development of new housing
- Turning vacant land/buildings into something else
- Density (in urban conditions)
- Market/Choice – Units of measurement could include:
 - Retention: Residents’ tenure, change in renter/owner mix
 - Characteristics of homebuyers: Income levels, race/ethnicity, diversity of neighborhood
 - Gentrification-led displacements
 - Change in consumption
- Cost/Affordability – Units of measurement could include:
 - Increases to property values
 - Diversity of housing mix
- Design – Units of measurement could include:
 - Availability of beauty (as defined by community), art’s role in changing exterior space/public space
 - Existence of mixed use creative space
- Revenue – Units of measurement could include:
 - Property taxes
 - Collateral sales/increase in revenue spending
- Zoning/regulatory housing policies
 - Government requirements
 - Flexible zoning to foster art activities
- Other factors such as boosts in volunteerism

Jobs: The group that considered jobs opened its discussion by stating that any measurements related to employment must define the word “job.” They then listed several questions that could be posed to measure how the arts affect employment in a community, including:

- Are there more jobs today (directly or indirectly related) versus before a program was put in place?
- Are there new businesses or nonprofits operating in the community as a result of the arts program?
- Can we look at occupations in the community and assess whether the concentration of “creative” jobs is rated higher or lower following the establishment of an arts program?
- Do better jobs exist as a result of a program’s existence (based on pay, benefits, safety, worker satisfaction)? This should include factors around quality and potential for upward mobility (moving from one job to a “better” one).
- How easy is it to recruit and retain employees?
- Is the workforce more prepared? That is, does the workforce exhibit readiness skills, such as teamwork and critical thinking skills?

Social cohesion: The group addressing social cohesion described the term with words such as “pride of place,” “authenticity,” “civic and civil engagement,” and “shared vision.” They identified measurable units of impact as follows:

- Participation in shared art-making activities

- Number of trusted role models, mentors, leaders
- Existence of networks and their efficacy
- Community assets (public spaces, public governance and policies exemplary of good governments; private sector investment in the arts)
- Charitable assets (foundations, non-profits, public endowments)
- Number of events and audiences attending those events as well as the effect of their presence (on restaurants, galleries, etc.)
- Number of volunteers and volunteering associations in a community

Commerce: The group considered aspects such as retail, travel/tourism, and vendors. The units of measurement offered by the group include:

- Jobs created/retained; private investments; secondary jobs created; revenues in restaurants, hotels, retail, galleries
- Measures of innovation (patents granted, new small businesses created)
- Attracting new businesses, executives
- Tax revenue, property values

The groups were also asked to consider how those units might be tracked over the short-term (1 to 2 years) versus long-term (5 to 10 years), and to prioritize.

Housing: The group considered leading versus lagging indicators, concluding that these indicators vary and that most housing-related measurements are long-term by nature. For the short-term, members suggested the possibility of reviewing:

- Zoning resolutions through policy and/or regulatory audits
- Programmatic or educational measures (such as school quality)
- Public art beautification efforts (although the group acknowledged that maintaining scenic beauty requires a long-term, coordinated effort)

For the long term, the housing group members suggested focusing on the overall policy and regulatory framework, noting that housing submarkets take a while to emerge. The group proposed:

- Vacancies and property value impacts
- Metrics using the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey
- Residential mobility/migration patterns (attraction and retention patterns for the general population and for artists in particular)
- A "collaboration index" (measuring organizational partnerships)

Jobs: The group noted that it is easier to capture additional new jobs and harder to look at specific impact from arts on types of jobs being created.

Social cohesion: The social cohesion group identified priorities in two areas:

- Measuring participation (individual attendance, other kinds of contributions people are making to the arts such as volunteerism or monetary donations)
- Perceptions and attitudes around quality of life in the community (e.g., social networks, attitudes toward creativity and innovation).

The group noted that all other measurement options appear to be long-term.

Commerce: The commerce group offered jobs, business development, and revenue-generation (e.g., government return on investment) as priorities for measurement. For short-term metrics, the group suggested that one could identify data sets that are already out there (e.g., tax revenue, jobs being created, property value) and increase the use of data mining.

For long-term measurements, the group suggested tracking technology and innovation, as well as network analyses (i.e., social networks between entrepreneurs) and corporate decision-making issues.

Finally, the groups were asked to consider what the appropriate geographic units for measuring such impacts might be.

Housing: The housing group suggested looking at the neighborhood level, but also noted that it may depend on the size of a particular art activity. For example, Millennium Park in Chicago is one geographical unit, while artist housing might be a different geographic unit.

For residential factors, the group pointed out that mobility could be within the neighborhood or up to the full metropolitan area. Here, they noted, it depends on the scale of community (i.e., urban = neighborhoods, including business districts; smaller city/suburb = depends on density/size; rural area = entire town or even region).

Jobs: The group found this question hard to answer, citing the “new economy” and the flexibility of where people work.

Commerce: The commerce group felt that some measurements would be regional (such as creative economy factors) while others would be for a neighborhood or small city (such as jobs).

Social Cohesion: The social cohesion group had little consensus and little time to address this discussion question. Group members noted that measurements could be taken at geographical units ranging from census block groups to a regional impact.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE (HUD-DOT-EPA)

Dan Lurie of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was next on the agenda. He introduced the HUD-DOT-EPA “Sustainable Communities Initiative,” which he said had been authorized and soon would be funded by Congress (including \$100 million with roughly \$25 million allotted to rural initiatives). He noted that applications for grants will be coming soon and that the purpose of the program is to fund regional sustainable community plans. The program encourages arts organization to become part of a consortium and to apply for the grants, and he anticipates that funding will be awarded in fall. He explained that all applications and awards will have joint review teams comprised of HUD-DOT-EPA officials. Mr. Lurie noted that the six livability principles within this program capture many of the issues raised during the NEA forum.

CONNECTING THE METRICS TO DATA SOURCES NEA RESEARCH: RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER FEDERAL DATASETS

The final topic was “Connecting the Metrics to Data Sources – NEA Research: Relationships with Other Federal Datasets,” presented by Bonnie Nichols, NEA.

PRESENTATION FIVE

Summary

Bonnie Nichols
“Federal Data Sources on the Arts”

Form 990 Filings:

- Internal Revenue Service
 - NCCS
- Filed by nonprofits with receipts of at least \$25,000
- Subject detail
- Geographic detail
- Updated annually

Economic Census:

- U.S. Census Bureau
- Collected from “establishments” with at least one paid employee
- Subject detail
- Geographic detail
- Updated every 5 years

Special tabulations funded by the Small Business Administration:

- Almost 88% of performing arts companies have fewer than 20 employees
- This rate is comparable to the rate for all U.S. business *firms*
- 79% of paid workers in the performing arts industry work in firms with more than 20 employees

National Income and Product Accounts:

- Bureau of Economic Analysis
- Nation’s Accountant
- Reported for the U.S.
- Consumer spending on tickets to the performing arts
 - \$15.9 billion in first quarter of 2009
- Performing arts contribution to the U.S. economy
 - Roughly \$14 billion

Bureau of Labor Statistics:

- Current Population Survey (U.S.)
 - SPPA

- Artist Employment
 - *11.5% unemployment rate in Q1 of 2010*
- Location Quotient (U.S. states, metros, counties)
 - In construction, Riverside County is 80% above U.S. average; Imperial County is 40% below
- American Time Use Survey (U.S.)
 - 1.5 million Americans attend the performing arts on any given day

American Community Survey:

- U.S. Census Bureau
- “Rolling sample” updated annually
- Geographic detail
 - NEA source for Research publications including *Artists in the Workforce* and *Women Artists*
 - Access to the arts

Ms. Pierson led the next group discussion, which included one general question from a participant and then a task for all participants within their break-out groups.

Jobs: The jobs group identified the following public data sources (at the federal, state, and metropolitan levels) that can inform the metrics discussed earlier, including:

- American Community Survey (ACS)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- PricewaterhouseCoopers’ National Economics and Statistics (NES)
- National Center of Charitable Statistics (NCCS)
- Union data
- Economic Census data
- Dun & Bradstreet information
- Employer/employee surveys
- Census analyses of in- and out-migration for a community
- BLS job vacancy rates
- Graduation rates and education levels in a community (degree programs by artistic area—a feature that will be enabled by the American Community Survey)
- BLS’ National Longitudinal Survey data
- McKinsey surveys (CEO/business leader studies) and those of other large consulting groups

Housing: The housing group identified the following public data sources (at the federal, state, and metropolitan levels) that can inform the metrics discussed earlier, including:

- County-level Census data on building permits
- Local data sources from administrative city departments responsible for approving building permits
- Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HDMA) data set (which is free, relevant, and annual)
- Local data sources such as assessors’ or tax offices and realtors

- Community rent surveys
- American Community Survey (ACS).

For proprietary data sources, the group suggested housing sales data from private vendors. Regarding cases studies and surveys, the group suggested that ArtSpace has commissioned surveys of performing art centers and affordable housing for artists, and that these tools may prove useful. The group noted that a case study would be key to assessing zoning-related measurement.

Social Cohesion: The social cohesion group identified the following public data sources (at the federal, state, and metropolitan levels) that can inform the metrics discussed earlier, including:

- Social surveys
- Time-use surveys
- 990 forms
- Art service organizations' reporting of audience attendance
- Contributions data from the IRS
- The Chronicle of Philanthropy
- The National Trust Main Street Center
- Business improvement district data
- Cultural engagement index (e.g., Philadelphia)
- Examples of local initiatives from Dr. Jackson's presentation
- Giving USA Foundation
- The Foundation Center
- National Corporation for Public Service

The group acknowledged the difficulty of capturing data on happiness and well-being. Group members said they are hopeful that Google/Facebook/Twitter will solve some data problems and that international models (e.g., the British "Taking Part" Survey) might prove helpful. They also observed that Sean Safford (University of Chicago) is doing interesting work on knowledge networks.

Commerce: The group highlighted the following public data sources:

- U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey
- Lending data from regional Federal Reserve banks
- Small Business Administration data about small business support
- Bureau of Economic Census' establishment data
- Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae data on property values
- IRS zip code summary data based on 1040s.

For other data sources, the group suggested:

- Surveys conducted by Fractured Atlas
- Dun & Bradstreet
- The Conference Board
- Pew Cultural Data Project's financial data
- Lodging and occupancy reports
- Americans for the Arts' Economic Prosperity reports

The group proposed also that new IRS industry sources or codes could be implemented; an economic model could be developed to capture the value of arts transactions (informal and formal) at the neighborhood level; and more information could be gathered on how businesses make decisions.

BUILDING ON THE BRAINSTORM

The group then focused on “Building on the Brainstorm” and next steps, with closing comments from Mr. Iyengar. He asked the audience if the discussion during the day missed any important questions or ideas. The following are excerpts from the participants’ responses:

- What people love about the arts is that it unites people who would not normally come together to share ideas and learn. This factor should be integrated into measurements of arts and livability.
- The software, AutoDesk is working on three-dimensional models of cities to create a rich picture of what is going on in a city. We should bear in mind that technology will completely change how we are discussing these issues.
- How you represent the data is as important as how you collect it. It should be visually represented through maps and models to create a case for arts and livability.
- The participants did not talk about media: Ownership of local media and the role they play, including FCC changes.
- The National Rural Assembly is a coalition of 500 groups in 49 states looking at the importance of rural economies in this country. The Assembly has developed a policy program around transportation; arts/culture and philanthropy groups will come next. This effort has major support from a number of foundations.
- “Indications” (per Dr. Jackson’s presentation): There are a set of indications – or characteristics – with answers of “yes” or “no” that could serve as basic qualitative measurements. There are likely questions around cultural vitality that we can address simply via checklist.
- Standards: All organizations have their own standards and vocabulary. We need to be able to translate a compelling message and it needs to be consistent across the various arts groups.

In closing, Ms. Shigekawa thanked the participants and indicated that Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa are completing a white paper on creative placemaking that the NEA will share with this group.

Appendix A

Arts and Livability: The Road to Better Metrics An NEA Research Forum

AGENDA

Monday, June 7, 2010

8:00 a.m. Coffee and Light Breakfast

8:30 a.m. Welcome and Goals of the Forum

Joan Shigekawa, Sunil Iyengar

Introductions and Review of Schedule
How the group will work

Jane Pierson

8:45 a.m. **Core elements of livability**

Results from pre-forum survey and interviews

Small Group Discussions

- i. What are the core elements of a livable community?
- ii. What are some widely recognized ways to measure those core elements?
- iii. How might arts and design relate to your answers to the first two questions?

10:00 a.m. **Tracking the Presence of Arts, Design, and Cultural Assets in Communities**

Introduction
Presentation

Sunil Iyengar

Maria Rosario Jackson, The Urban Institute

Topic: *Arts and Culture Indicators Project: Insights from the Field*

Questions

10:45 a.m. Break

11:00 a.m. **Measuring the Impact of Arts, Design, and Cultural Assets on Communities**

Introduction
Presentations

Sunil Iyengar

- i. *Stephen Sheppard, Center for Creative Development, Williams College*
Topic: *Infusing aesthetics into property value measurement*
- ii. *Mark Stern, Social Impact of the Arts Project, University of Pennsylvania*
Topic: *SIAP's Cultural Asset Index*
- iii. *Emily Axelrod, Rudy Bruner Foundation*
Topic: *Case studies using pre- and post- data*

12:15 p.m. Lunch

1:00 p.m. **Developing a Comprehensive Set of Metrics**

Presentation

Dan Lurie, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Topic: HUD-DOT-EPA metrics for Sustainable Communities Initiative

Introduction to the Task

Sunil Iyengar

Small Group Discussions

- i. What are measurable units of impact that we can identify for the arts with respect to the following domains? Within each domain, what might be priority units of impact to measure?
 - a. Housing
 - b. Jobs
 - c. Social cohesion
 - d. Commerce
 - e. Other
- ii. How might those units be tracked over the short-term (1-2 years) versus long-term (5-10 years)?
- iii. What are the appropriate geographic units for measuring such impacts? Whole Group Discussion: Prioritization and cost-effectiveness of listed metrics

3:00 p.m. Break

3:15 p.m. **Connecting the Metrics to Data Sources**

NEA Research: Relationships with Other Federal Datasets

Bonnie Nichols

Small Group Discussions

- i. What are some public data sources at the federal, state, and metropolitan levels that can inform these metrics?
- ii. What proprietary data sources can help?
- iii. How can surveys and case studies be deployed to inform these metrics?

4:40 p.m. **Building on the Brainstorm**

4:45 p.m. Next Steps

Sunil Iyengar

Closing Comments

Joan Shigekawa

5:00 p.m. Adjourn

Appendix B

NEA Arts and Livability Forum Survey Conducted by Jane Pierson

Summary of Responses

What descriptive words would you use to define livable communities? Please provide at least one example.

Respondents most commonly noted safety, cleanliness, vibrancy, diversity (race, age, gender), and proximity to social opportunities, jobs, and businesses as the most important elements of a livable community.

What are the most important cultural assets in a livable community? Please provide at least one cultural asset. Examples are museums, public art works, commercial art districts, etc.

Respondents noted a community's human capital, both in terms of artists and lovers of the arts, as being particularly important. They also noted the importance of having spaces, both formal (galleries, performing art centers, artist workshops) and informal (parks, outdoor stages, public gathering places) spaces for cultural expression. There was also an emphasis on the local, so that the residents of the community can feel ownership of and connection to the art being produced.

What broad types of metrics should be used to measure the impact of the arts on livability? Please provide at least one example.

In this section, there was an emphasis on the economic impact of the arts on livability. Respondents noted that factors such as job creation, per capita income, and property values are all tangible manifestations of a community that has derived economic livability from the arts. There was also a theme of the arts' positive impact on the public sphere, particularly in terms of its safety, vibrancy, quality of education, and participation in the arts.

What are data sources that you would recommend be used to gather information? Please provide at least one example.

There was generally less unity in this section than in the others, but most of the data sources cited in this section relate to the metrics described in question #3. Respondents pointed to crime reports, U.S. Census Bureau data, and statistics of the number of artists and level of use of arts centers and resources, as well as economic data such as real-estate reports, property values, and per capita income as being useful data resources to measure livability.

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