IntermissionDC Kickoff Event
DC Cultural Plan
July 20, 2016

Key Takeaways

Hosted by the DC Office of Planning
Martin Luther King Library
901 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
“I didn’t know OP could have an event this engaging!”

“No ‘art desert.’ These should be opportunities for people to connect to art near where they live”

"DC needs to export its culture."

“It needs to be easier for artists to locate vacant spaces in buildings throughout the city to use as potential exhibition or performance spaces.”

“Development and culture should be integrated. Create space for artists.”

“There should be more public art and arts exchanges happening in the Metro.”

"DC government can make it difficult to be spontaneous."

"Arts can be part of the solution, not just a cute thing to dress up a street, don’t silo the industry"
ATTENDANCE: Over 500 people, representing a mix of community members across the district ranging from artists, arts administrators, and politicians, to students and families.

WHAT: The event was organized as a series of facilitated activity sessions. Attendees could circulate through the following stations:
- What’s in a space?
- Equity Atlas – Digital
- Equity Atlas- Analog
- Collaboration Lounge
- All the City is a Stage
- Switchboard
- The Salon

SO WHAT? At each station, over 60 trained facilitators from HR&A advisors, bcWorkshop, and the Office of Planning guided participants to think about and share:
- How they defined culture
- Where they go to experience culture
- What kind of spaces support culture
- What they’d like to see more of
- What they’d like to see less of
- How they think culture can be made more successful in DC
ACTIVITY STATION TAKEAWAYS
Each station used different activities to provoke conversation around culture in the District. A range of ideas emerged.

Equity Atlas-Analog/Digital
- Affordable art, production, and gallery space across the city
- More cultural resources and venues in Wards 7 and 8

What’s in a Space?
- Permanent and accessible spaces for practice, production and performance
- Affordable production and living artist space
- Collaborative and community-based space
- Informal spaces for cultural production and performance
- Access to technology

The Salon
- Spoken word and poetry as a force for social change
- More investment in youth arts education
- Affordable housing

Collaboration Lounge
- Simplified live music restrictions and permitting process
- Networking events to forge partnerships and build relationships (especially between for-profit and nonprofit organizations)
- Improved outreach and relationships with city agencies

All the city is a stage
- Mixed-use space nonprofit for nonprofit and for-profit organizations
- Affordable housing and live/work spaces
- Integrated arts and transportation planning
- Art in green spaces and businesses

Switchboard
- Preservation of local/neighborhood DC culture in the face of rapid demographic change
- Promoting the history and local culture of the District to new residents and tourists
- Access to youth arts education organizations
WHAT’S IN A SPACE?
An artistic exercise to discuss spatial needs
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An artistic exercise to discuss spatial needs

KEY TAKEAWAYS:
- Increase the permanent and accessible spaces for practice, production and performance (esp. for fashion design and small theatre companies) across the District
- Increase the affordable production and living artist spaces
- Increased access to collaborative and community-based spaces
- Access to informal public spaces for cultural production and performance
- Access to technology (ie. maker spaces, digital fabrication)

DOCUMENTATION:
- Panels from exercise
- Facilitator and staff notes

TOPICS DISCUSSED:
- Textile and fashion arts
- Black box theatre spaces (>100 seats)
- Venues east of the Anacostia River
- Affordability
- Collaborative space and incubators
- Cultural production in outdoor public space
- Access to technology (ie. maker spaces, digital fabrication)
- Use of city-owned space (such as rec centers and schools)
- Metro-accessibility
- Co-location with business and public space
- Preservation of historic and local culture
- Special event permitting and noise ordinance
- Temporary and flexible space
- Literary arts
EQUITY ATLAS
An interactive mapping exercise of cultural assets and participation
KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Increase affordable art, production, and gallery space across the city
- Increase the number of cultural resources and venues in Wards 7 and 8
- People who live within the District and outside the District have different needs/desires of culture

DOCUMENTATION:

- 61 origins (homes)
- 158 destinations (cultural venues)
- Facilitator and staff notes

TOPICS DISCUSSED:

- Notable places of culture within and outside of the District
- Influence of transit on choice
- Density of organizations
- Density of green space
- Access to underserved areas
- Equitable resources across wards
- Different needs of District residents and metro-area residents
- Lack of cultural resources east of the Anacostia River
- Definition of a cultural “stage”
- Mapping of routes to destinations
COLLABORATION LOUNGE
A discussion on collaborative cultural work featuring “Crossing the Street” curators
COLLABORATION LOUNGE
A discussion on collaborative cultural work, featuring “Crossing the Street” curators

KEY TAKEAWAYS:
- Increase networking events that forge partnerships and build relationships
- Transparent live music restrictions and permitting process
- Improve outreach and relationships with city agencies

DOCUMENTATION:
- Facilitator and staff notes

TOPICS DISCUSSED:
- “Crossing the Street” initiative
- Special event permitting process
- Benefit of facilitated discussions
- Tools of partnership
- Inclusion of engagement in grants
- Outreach (strengths and challenges)
- Connecting arts and the economy
- Urban agriculture
- Incubator space
- Nontraditional network/collaborative events
- Funding - Is there enough? Where is it?
- Opportunities to collaborate
- Next steps in cultural planning process
ALL THE CITY IS A STAGE

A tactile “build your own block” exercise
ALL THE CITY IS A STAGE
A tactile “build your own block” exercise

KEY TAKEAWAYS:
- Increase mixed use space available for thriving for-profit and nonprofit art organizations
- Provide affordable housing and live/work spaces
- Integration of the arts into transportation planning
- Integration of arts, commercial, and green spaces

TOPICS DISCUSSED:
- Affordable live-work, production, and performance space
- Integration of green space with mixed use space
- Concept of “art deserts”
- Need for collaborative incubator space
- Access to green/public space
- Arts districts
- Informal meeting space
- Use of public infrastructure for art, music and culture
- Broaden the concept of art institutions (beyond museums)
- Cultural arts communities (without geography and digital)
- Transportation influences access
- Arts and culture as the source of community
- Utilize buildings during off-peak hours
- Neighborhood connections

DOCUMENTATION:
- Photos
- Marking flags
- Facilitator and staff notes
SWITCHBOARD
An open-ended “cultural diary” to record personal definitions of culture and envision DC’s future
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An open-ended “cultural diary” to record personal definitions of culture and envision DC’s future

KEY TAKEAWAYS:
- Reveal and promote the history and local culture of the District to new residents and tourists
- Preserve local/neighborhood DC culture in the face of rapid demographic change
- Increase access to youth arts education organizations across the District

DOCUMENTATION:
- Video/audio recordings
- Staff notes

TOPICS DISCUSSED:
- Afro-Trinidadian culture
- Changing demographics in neighborhoods
- Public murals/street art movement
- Dupont Underground
- U-Street jazz culture
- Affordable and accessible spaces (such as public library)
- Power of arts and culture to shape neighborhoods
- Role of park service
- Economics of culture
- Culture as a factor in quality of life
- African American culture, go-go, “chocolate city”
- Nightlife
- Storytelling
- Fashion design space
- Public safety
- Neighborhood arts education programs
- Dance and music scene
THE SALON
Facilitated discussion on various topics
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Facilitated discussion on various topics

KEY TAKEAWAYS:
- Focused investment in spoken word and poetry (reflects the identity/unique character of DC)
- Increased investment in youth arts education (in schools and in arts organizations)
- Affordable housing

DOCUMENTATION:
- Staff notes

TOPICS DISCUSSED:
- What is culture?
- How do you identify with culture?
- What is DC culture?
- How can we build DC culture?
- How do we preserve DC culture? What should be preserved?
- How do you play a role in DC culture?
- Activities of culture
- Affordability
- What is threatened?
- Equitable access to the arts
- Role of technology in arts and culture
- Web platform/app for all cultural events
- Integration of arts in transit
- Local media networks
- Arts education
Across all stations, space and connectivity were top of mind.

**Affordable production space and housing**

**Mixed use and live/work space**

**Metro beautification**

**Parks and open space**

**In person connections**

**Cross-pollination of people and ideas**

**Informal public gathering spaces**
PRINCIPAL TAKEAWAYS
Key areas of importance emerged.

Percentage of Responses
~420 impressions

Share of impressions by key themes
- Support for Creatives: 4%
- Neighborhood Livability: 11%
- Real Estate and Infrastructure: 49%
- Arts Education: 36%
**PRINCIPAL TAKEAWAYS**

Key areas of importance emerged.

### Infrastructure and Real Estate

- Most comments on real estate and infrastructure were concerned with the city and neighborhood scale:
  - Share/flex studio spaces and collectives
  - Affordable production space and housing
  - Flexible public open areas
  - Accessible transportation to arts venues

- 214 impressions

### Support for Creatives

- Most comments on professional development were concerned with the city scale:
  - Seed money for artists
  - Artist professional networking
  - Incentives for artists to work with the community

- 47 impressions

### Neighborhood Livability

- Most comments on neighborhood livability were concerned with the city and neighborhood scale:
  - Integrating the arts into local businesses
  - Safety
  - Pop up street events
  - DC heritage self-awareness and preservation

- 156 impressions

### Arts Education

- Most comments on arts education were concerned with the city scale:
  - Youth exposure to culture
  - Arts organization ambassadors
  - Mixed learning spaces

- 18 impressions