

**City of Rockville**  
**Culture and Entertainment Plan**  
**Strategic Goals and Objectives**

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# **City of Rockville Culture and Entertainment Plan Strategic Goals and Objectives**

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## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The City of Rockville – One of America’s Leading Small Cities .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The Purpose of the Culture and Entertainment Plan.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Understanding the Plan .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Implementation by Partnership .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Strategic Goals and Objectives .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Vision Statement.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Mission Statement.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1. Goal - Cultivate Rockville as a Destination for Culture and Entertainment</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1. Objective - Consider culture and entertainment in all aspects of city planning and operations, including economic development, land use, and facilities .....	7
1.2. Objective - Strategically plan programming that will bring people to Rockville .....	7
1.3. Objective - Safeguard and promote Rockville’s heritage and use of heritage resources .....	7
<b>2. Goal - Enhance Accessible Programming for Rockville’s Diverse Population.....</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1. Objective - Increase ethnic diversity of culture and entertainment opportunities ....	8
2.2. Objective - Ensure that culture and entertainment programs are accessible to all ages and socio-economic populations.....	8
<b>3. Goal - Raise Awareness of and Participation in Rockville’s Culture and Entertainment Opportunities.....</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1. Objective - Build partnerships to ensure that Rockville is recognized as a center of excellence for arts, entertainment, recreation, heritage, and science and technology.....	8
3.2. Objective - Promote Rockville’s culture and entertainment locally, regionally and nationally.....	9
3.3. Objective - Foster economic development through culture and entertainment.....	9
<b>4. Goal - Develop Sustainable Support for Culture and Entertainment.....</b>	<b>9</b>
4.1. Objective - Provide leadership, advocacy & guidance to sustain financial support	9
4.2. Objective - Increase private sector giving .....	10
4.3. Objective - Maintain and increase public sector funding .....	10
<b>Appendix A - Planning Process.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Appendix B - Contributors to the Culture and Entertainment Plan.....</b>	<b>12</b>

## Introduction

### The City of Rockville – One of America’s Leading Small Cities

Rockville is the third largest city in Maryland. It is the county seat of Montgomery County and home to diverse cultures, rich history, world-class amenities, and a thriving business community. As of the 2010 census, the City’s population had increased to 61,000. Its non-Hispanic white population represents 60.2% of the total population and ethnic diversity continues to increase.

Rockville has long valued culture and entertainment as integral elements of its community and understands that by developing these resources, Rockville can become a preferred destination. Rockville is justifiably regarded as one of America’s leading small cities for work, for play and for life. It is the vibrant, highly educated, business-friendly home to some of the nation’s and the world’s most prominent biomed and technology companies and is blessed by proximity to the resources of one of the world’s most powerful cities, Washington, D.C.

In 2009-2010, Rockville’s prominence and quality of life was reflected in the following recognitions:

- No. 31 of the Top 100 Best Places to Live by *Money Magazine*
- An Editor’s Pick in *U.S. News and World Report* as one of America’s Best Places to Retire
- In the Top 10 of cities in the nation to start a new company by Bloomberg’s *Businessweek*
- No. 8 in America’s Top 25 Towns To Live Well by *Forbes Magazine*

### The Purpose of the Culture and Entertainment Plan

This Culture and Entertainment Plan is the result of a comprehensive planning process (see Appendix A). The purpose of the Plan is to build on the extensive array of existing culture and entertainment resources in order to:

- Make the community a premier destination
- Enhance the economic vitality of the community
- Increase community pride and identity
- Improve quality of life
- Increase opportunities for individual growth
- Commemorate local values, history and progress
- Preserve and enrich the character of the community
- Facilitate collaborative relationships among for-profit and nonprofit community resources
- Create an environment for creativity to thrive

Cities attracting, developing, and nurturing creative practitioners and thinkers also attract companies, new residents and visitors. The City of Rockville recognizes that people choose places to be that emphasize quality of life factors such as:

- the environment

- social offerings
- recreational opportunities
- aesthetic qualities within a place

Vibrant cities that offer a wide variety of culture and entertainment provide both economic and value-driven benefits for their residents.

Rockville is a city that remembers and reveres its roots, its commitment to citizen-centric public service, to the planet and to the connectivity of its neighborhoods and residents. Rockville's culture and entertainment should reflect these values. By carefully continuing to develop a cultural environment that reflects its position as a community that has a hometown feeling while at the same time possesses world class amenities, the City can become a preferred destination for businesses, new residents and visitors.

### **Understanding the Plan**

The Culture and Entertainment Plan establishes goals, objectives and recommendations to make Rockville a destination that meets the needs of the City's diverse populations. Additionally, it is intended to raise awareness, participation, and support for culture and entertainment. The phrase "culture and entertainment" is used throughout the Plan to refer collectively to all aspects of culture, including arts, entertainment, recreation, heritage, and science and technology.

**Culture** is the knowledge of our heritage. This includes the history of people and places, past and present activities, communications, values and understanding of the world via the arts and sciences.

**The arts** are a vast subdivision of culture, composed of many creative endeavors and disciplines. The arts encompass original expressions in the visual arts, literary arts and the performing arts, such as music, theatre, dance and film.

**Entertainment** is the engagement of the mind through activities of personal choice. This may be a passive individual diversion during some leisure time, or a shared experience, such as a concert, festival, sports event or other activity. For this plan, much of what is understood to be **recreation** today is viewed here as entertainment.

**Heritage** refers to something inherited from the past. Natural heritage refers to an inheritance of fauna and flora, geology, landscape and landforms, and other natural resources. Cultural heritage refers to the legacy of physical artifacts, such as buildings, historic places, monuments, artifacts, and intangible attributes of a group or society, including social values and traditions, customs and practices, and other aspects of human activity. These places and activities authentically represent the stories and people, past and present, which are considered significant to the archaeology, art, architecture, **science or technology** of a specific culture.

## **Implementation by Partnership**

While this is a City of Rockville plan, successful implementation will require a partnership among all culture and entertainment organizations that leverages the resources, talents and insights of all of the community. Support through policy making, committed and focused leadership, and a wide range of community tools and resources is critical. Upon approval by the Mayor and Council, City staff will reach out to the culture and entertainment organizations and other interested parties to begin a partnership that will lead to prioritization and implementation of the goals, objectives and recommendations in the plan.

This plan focuses on longer term, strategic goals. It does not identify specific roles and responsibilities or needed resources. Those specifics will be incorporated in action plans to be developed and evaluated annually. The pace and approach to implementation of this plan will depend on the resources available through the City Operating and Capital Improvements budget, as well as funding and in-kind support from other organizations.

The partners will participate in developing specific action plans for each objective that include:

- What is to be accomplished
- Who will be responsible for accomplishing it
- The necessary resources
- How long it will take
- Performance targets

## **Strategic Goals and Objectives**

### **Vision Statement**

In ten years, Rockville will be better established as a significant destination for culture and entertainment and offer a wide range of options that appeal to its diverse population and visitors. The community will better understand that culture and entertainment opportunities are vital to quality of life, well-being and to the economy. Rockville will take pride in its community engagement, strong partnership programs and collaborative approach to raise awareness, participation, and support for culture and entertainment opportunities. Rockville will continue to adjust its vision – based on the success of its arts, entertainment, recreation, heritage, and science and technology industry.

### **Mission Statement**

To celebrate and sustain Rockville's diversity and vitality through exceptional culture and entertainment opportunities and collaborations.

### **1. Goal - Cultivate Rockville as a Destination for Culture and Entertainment**

Ensure Rockville is a destination for culture and entertainment to the benefit of its citizens, its creative community, its business sector and its visitors. Culture and entertainment programming and amenities distinguish Rockville from other communities. The unique and innovative opportunities provided by the arts, entertainment, recreation, heritage, and strong science and technology presence are leveraged.

### **1.1. Objective - Consider culture and entertainment in all aspects of city planning and operations, including economic development, land use, and facilities**

#### ***Recommendations***

- 1.1.1. Continue to protect, enhance, manage and facilitate development of public and private facilities for culture and entertainment
- 1.1.2. Support and advocate for adequate community-based facilities to provide office, meeting, rehearsal, exhibition and performance spaces for community-based groups
- 1.1.3. Preserve parks, natural spaces and historic sites for culture and entertainment activities
- 1.1.4. Integrate the goal of making Rockville a destination in the development and implementation of neighborhood plans, master plans, bikeway plans, parks/recreation/open space plans
- 1.1.5. Use the annual operating budget and Capital Improvements Plan to implement the goal of making Rockville a destination
- 1.1.6. Establish criteria for evaluating the economic impact of programs, incorporating fact-based, data-driven criteria when possible

### **1.2. Objective - Strategically plan programming that will bring people to Rockville**

#### ***Recommendations***

- 1.2.1. Develop criteria to evaluate all programming in order to ensure that it is contributing to Rockville as a destination
- 1.2.2. Integrate culture and entertainment programming into public and private venues in different parts of Rockville, including the civic center, community centers, parks, streets, and open spaces
- 1.2.3. Foster the continued evolution of Hometown Holidays and other city-sponsored events
- 1.2.4. Identify, develop and implement signature cultural undertakings to attract people and recognition to Rockville
- 1.2.5. Support Town Center as a community culture and entertainment destination
- 1.2.6. Identify additional opportunities to integrate the science and technology sector in programs and offerings

### **1.3. Objective - Safeguard and promote Rockville's heritage and use of heritage resources**

#### ***Recommendations***

- 1.3.1. Encourage preservation, adaptive use and stewardship of buildings, attractions, architectural styles, patterns of development and sites that reflect Rockville's history
- 1.3.2. Conserve natural and manmade areas important to the community's character, environment and quality of life
- 1.3.3. Secure funds, develop programs and promote Rockville's heritage and heritage resources, using mechanisms such as membership in the Montgomery County Heritage Area

## **2. Goal - Enhance Accessible Programming for Rockville's Diverse Population**

Culture and entertainment programming in Rockville meets the interests of the diverse population, including the wide range of ethnicities and ages in the community. The programming is also accessible to people with disabilities and those with low incomes.

### **2.1. Objective - Increase ethnic diversity of culture and entertainment opportunities**

#### ***Recommendations***

- 2.1.1. Facilitate public and private festivals and celebrations throughout the community that reflect Rockville's diverse populations
- 2.1.2. Involve diverse populations in the planning and implementation of activities that highlight Rockville as a cultural destination
- 2.1.3. Create and communicate cultural and entertainment opportunities to effectively reach the city's diverse population

### **2.2. Objective - Ensure that culture and entertainment programs are accessible to all ages and socio-economic populations**

#### ***Recommendations***

- 2.2.1. Cultivate opportunities for all ages for creative learning, self-expression, social development and constructive community engagement
- 2.2.2. Make programs accessible to low-income residents by offering scholarships and no-cost or low-cost opportunities
- 2.2.3. Enhance accessibility for senior citizens by offering programs and events at venues and in formats convenient to seniors
- 2.2.4. Assure that programs are accessible to people with disabilities and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

## **3. Goal - Raise Awareness of and Participation in Rockville's Culture and Entertainment Opportunities**

Rockville collaborates with interested parties to coordinate programming, communication, outreach and promotion of culture and entertainment opportunities to increase citizen and visitor participation. Together, they will promote awareness among government, businesses and the public that culture and entertainment resources are integral to a strong economy and quality of life.

### **3.1. Objective - Build partnerships to ensure that Rockville is recognized as a center of excellence for arts, entertainment, recreation, heritage, and science and technology**

#### ***Recommendations***

- 3.1.1. Develop a leadership council of culture and entertainment providers from diverse genres to lead the coordination, planning and promotion of culture and entertainment opportunities

- 3.1.2. Create a reputation as a culture and entertainment destination in collaboration with partners in public, nonprofit and private sectors within Rockville and across the region
- 3.1.3. Facilitate collaboration, scheduling, and co-marketing among citywide and regional public, nonprofit and private organizations
- 3.1.4. Partner with the local universities and colleges, public schools and science and technology sector to ensure Rockville is recognized as a center of excellence

### **3.2. Objective - Promote Rockville's culture and entertainment locally, regionally and nationally**

#### ***Recommendations***

- 3.2.1. Include culture and entertainment opportunities and resources in the Strategic Marketing Plan prepared by the City of Rockville
- 3.2.2. Create and implement detailed marketing strategies specifically for Rockville culture and entertainment opportunities and resources
- 3.2.3. Utilize the Internet for cost-effective and timely information sharing, including the development of one comprehensive online culture and entertainment website and calendar that lists all offerings in Rockville
- 3.2.4. Ensure that all ages and Rockville's ethnicities are incorporated in marketing and promotional materials

### **3.3. Objective - Foster economic development through culture and entertainment**

#### ***Recommendations***

- 3.3.1. Educate government, businesses and the public about the value, economic impact and economic development opportunities that arise from culture and entertainment
- 3.3.2. Promote culture and entertainment as critical to encouraging the creativity and innovation necessary for the community's academic and workplace success
- 3.3.3. Connect with and utilize scientific and technical organizations that contribute to the creativity of the community
- 3.3.4. Use arts, entertainment, recreation, heritage, and science and technology activities to attract visitors and increase economic activity

## **4. Goal - Develop Sustainable Support for Culture and Entertainment**

Establish predictable, sustainable funding to assist Rockville in maintaining and enhancing a unique and vibrant culture and entertainment environment that will continue to deliver both economic and non-economic benefits to the community.

### **4.1. Objective - Provide leadership, advocacy and guidance to sustain financial support**

#### ***Recommendations***

- 4.1.1. Coordinate with interested parties to develop and implement a strategic plan to secure sustainable funding for culture and entertainment

- 4.1.2. Use the Recreation and Parks Foundation to build increased community leadership and financial support for culture and entertainment
- 4.1.3. Use the Cultural Arts Commission to advocate for arts-related funding and activities and advise the Mayor and Council on programs and projects benefitting Rockville

#### **4.2. Objective - Increase private sector giving**

##### ***Recommendations***

- 4.2.1. Increase individual philanthropy by articulating the value of and building excitement around culture and entertainment
- 4.2.2. Encourage local businesses to support culture and entertainment organizations and providers
- 4.2.3. Increase corporate sponsorships for City-sponsored events
- 4.2.4. Leverage public funds to stimulate more giving from the private sector
- 4.2.5. Recognize donors and other supporters for their contributions

#### **4.3. Objective - Maintain and increase public sector funding**

##### ***Recommendations***

- 4.3.1. Assess the City of Rockville's investment in culture and entertainment and recommend changes in programming and funding to be innovative, relevant, strategic, and competitive
- 4.3.2. Identify additional strategies to fund and support culture and entertainment in Rockville, including naming rights, contribution check-off boxes on bills, and state and local tax incentives for giving
- 4.3.3. Maintain multi-year funding strategies such as the Art in Public Places (AIPP) program, the Art in Public Architecture (AIPA) ordinance and the Publicly Accessible Art in Private Development (AIPD) ordinance
- 4.3.4. Seek non-monetary and in-kind support for culture and entertainment programs
- 4.3.5. Research, identify and apply for available grants

## Appendix A - Planning Process

The City initiated this plan by contracting the Minor Group to identify the culture and entertainment resources in the community. It included resources provided, operated and funded by the City of Rockville, non-profit organizations, and for-profit entities. As a next step, culture and entertainment providers and participants (as named in Appendix B) shared their vision and goals for the future through focus groups and surveys.

The Culture and Entertainment Plan was developed in two phases. All products associated with the plan are available for review at [www.rockvillemd.gov](http://www.rockvillemd.gov).

### Phase 1 – Conduct Research and Produce Analyses Reports

- Create Inventory of Existing Cultural and Entertainment Resources of Rockville
- Interview Rockville’s Cultural Organization Representatives’
- Analyze 11 Other Cities’ Cultural and Entertainment Plans and Interviews
- Develop Cultural Districts Cost/Benefit Analysis
- Develop Heritage Areas Cost/Benefit Analysis

### Phase 2 – Review Additional Documents and Create the Draft Plan

- Review and analyze additional relevant documents including:
  - City of Rockville Master Plan for the Arts 2002-2008
  - Art in Public Places (AIPP) Program
  - Art in Public Architecture (AIPA) Ordinance
  - Publicly Accessible Art in Private Development (AIPD) Ordinance
  - Rockville’s Demographic, Economic and Social Analysis (Strategic Scan 2010)
  - Branding Report
  - Bikeway Master Plan
  - Feasibility Study for a Rockville Science Center
  - Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan, Adopted March 15, 2010
  - Rockville Department of Recreation and Parks Senior Services Long Range Plan, Summary of Recommendations
- Create Draft Plan - city staff and a citizen committee appointed by the Mayor and Council took the lead to prepare a Draft Plan, using the input and guidance provided by culture and entertainment providers and participants
- Gather public comments from Rockville residents, business representatives and culture and entertainment providers
- Revise Draft Plan to incorporate many of the public comments for presentation to the Mayor and Council

### Strategic Plan Elements Defined

The following terms are used throughout the plan:

- Vision – The dream of what you want to be. Vivid mental image of the Rockville community in its full and optimized maturation.
- Mission – Broad description of the community’s commitment—what it does, with/for whom, its distinctive competence, and why; the ultimate end.

- Strategic Plan – Set of Goals and Objectives that are intended to help move the Rockville community toward its Vision, as it works through its mission.
- Goals – Broad statements of what the community hopes to achieve in the next ten years, focused on outcomes or results and qualitative in nature.
- Objectives – Specific policies and actions to be implemented. Projected achievements to be implemented within a specific timeframe.

## **Appendix B - Contributors to the Culture and Entertainment Plan**

Early in the development of this plan, focus groups and personal interviews were conducted with individuals from the following organizations, incorporating representatives from among the community's diverse populations as much as possible. The information and recommendations obtained from these meetings was instrumental in the development of this document.

### **Arts, Cultural, Heritage and Entertainment Organizations**

Maryland State Arts Council

Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County

Montgomery County's Heritage Area

Rockville Sister Cities Corporation

Cultural Arts Commission

Rockville Consortium for Science

Performing Arts Groups

- Rockville Little Theatre
- Rockville Musical Theatre
- Victorian Lyric Opera Company
- HST Cultural Arts
- The Musical Theater Center
- Round House Theatre
- Rockville Concert Band
- Rockville Chorus
- Rockville Civic Ballet
- Rockville Regional Youth Orchestra
- The Finest! Youth Performance Troupe
- Potomac Valley Youth Orchestra

Visual Arts Groups

- VisArts at Rockville
- Rockville Art League

Literary Arts

- F. Scott Fitzgerald Literary Conference, Inc.
- Friends of the Library of Montgomery County
- Rockville Library
- Twinbrook Library

Historical

- Peerless Rockville
- Montgomery County Historical Society
- Lincoln Park Historical Foundation

**Educational Institutions**

Montgomery College, Rockville Campus  
Montgomery County Public Schools

**Business and Economic Development Groups**

Rockville Economic Development Inc.  
Rockville Chamber of Commerce  
Regional Chambers of Commerce  
Science and Technology Community  
Visitor & Tourism Bureaus

**Community Groups**

House Concert Community  
Churches

**Sports / Recreation Organizations**

**Surrounding Governments**