

02

culture & identity

Chapter Overview

The City of Bloomington is fortunate to have a high quality of life which is supported by its rich culture and identity. Multiple sources have identified Bloomington as one of the most livable communities both regionally and nationally. This chapter contains goals, policies, and programs that are informed by the Vision and Goal Statement. This chapter introduces subsections that define the culture and identity that helps make Bloomington such a desirable and attractive community. This Chapter highlights the History and Culture, Indiana University, Big Ten, LGBTQ Pride, Tourism, Technical Education, Elementary and Secondary Education and Equity subsections, which are introduced below:

History and Culture | The City of Bloomington has a rich history as a deeply-rooted community which functions as a cultural hub. This subsection defines Bloomington's historical geography tied to the booming small city that has evolved over the past 200 years.

Indiana University | Bloomington is heavily impacted and owes its vibrancy in part to the existence of Indiana University (IU). IU is a world class higher education institution which has grown with the City of Bloomington

since its inception. This subsection explains the impact and importance of higher education as part of Bloomington's success story and its future as a choice community.

Big Ten | A high quality of life must be maintained by vibrant energy and activity through local events and experiences. IU is a Big Ten university which means sporting events, significant town and gown pride existing within the community. This subsection describes the impact that being a Big Ten community has on the City of Bloomington.

Diversity Bloomington has long been heralded as a community which champions human rights, openness, and tolerance and sets an example both regionally and nationally. This subsection examines the importance that human rights diversity brings to the City.

Tourism | Bloomington is a major tourist destination in the Midwest for IU, Big Ten sporting events, cultural amenities, and nearby natural features. This subsection identifies and seeks to support tourism draws within the community.

Technical Education | Bloomington has long led the region in manufacturing, high-tech industry, and quality of craftsmanship in limestone. As such, the city maintains



a strong commitment to technical education to secure a stable workforce to fill an important aspect of Bloomington's economy. This subsection supports Technical Education in the broad Bloomington community.

Elementary and Secondary Education | Bloomington has one of the strongest high school graduation rates in the State of Indiana and leads public schools regionally. The culture and identity of Bloomington are one of an educated, thoughtful, and forward-thinking community. Furthermore, this subsection supports continued efforts to continue supporting a strong public elementary and secondary educational system.

Equity | The City of Bloomington has long been a leader in promoting itself as a community which is inclusive of people of all abilities, beliefs, races, and orientations. A strength of the community as identified in this subsection is that Bloomington is an equitable community where people want to live.

This chapter also includes Goals, Policies, and Programs that are implementation based and focus on creating quantifiable outcomes. Outcomes and indicators are tailored to track effectiveness and Goals, Policies and Programs with measurable results.

History and Culture

Bloomington is the county seat of Monroe County, Indiana. It was settled in 1816 which is the same year Indiana became a State. President James Monroe chose it as the site of the Indiana Seminary. The new settlement's location on a trading route and the availability of spring water attracted settlers. Following the creation of Monroe County in 1818, the settlement was given the designation of a town.

Although the new town was named Bloomington, there is no precise evidence or record suggesting the basis on which the name was given. Some people say that the town was named so owing to the blooming flowers and foliage, which greeted the early settlers. Another theory suggests that the

name was given in honor of William Bloom, one of the first settlers. A group of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians from South Carolina known as the Covenanters had settled just outside Bloomington by 1821. Believing that slavery was a moral evil, the Covenanters provided a way station for escaped slaves traveling north on the Underground Railroad the period before and during the Civil War.

Limestone quarrying was one of the earlier major industries in Bloomington, but the major reason for the town's growth was and remains to be Indiana University. It was established on the original site of the Indiana Seminary, in 1820. Indiana University attracts students and faculty from across the nation and around the world. The university has greatly contributed to the growth and development of the town. Indiana University gives Bloomington its distinctively progressive, tolerant, diverse, and innovative character of its residents, businesses, and its cultural arts community.

Home of Indiana University

Located in the rolling hills of southern Indiana, Bloomington is fortunate to have a distinct identity, culture, and atmosphere. As home to Indiana University (IU), Bloomington is one of the best known and beloved college towns in America. The influence of IU is felt by the diversity of the residents, the innovation of its businesses and industries, and its breadth and depth in the cultural arts. Bloomington's identity cannot be separated from Indiana University and vice versa. Approximately, half of Bloomington's population is made up of IU students.

This large research university population brings with it people of all races, ethnicities, and backgrounds that enrich the entire Bloomington community. Of the 7,875 incoming freshmen arriving at Indiana University in 2015, almost all of Indiana's 92 counties will have a resident enrolled for classes. Additionally, more than 1,000 incoming freshmen are underrepresented minority students, and over 1,000 are from outside of the US. A brief look at the 2010 US Census helps to further illustrate the effect that IU students have on Bloomington. Many of the international students are from Asian nations, such as China, South Korea, and India. According to the 2010 Census, Bloomington had an Asian population of 8%; compared with the Asian population of the rest of Indiana, which was 1.6%. Clearly, there is more diversity in Bloomington, thanks to IU.

Big Ten

Being a college town also brings a number of other distinct traits. With so many students and professors living in Bloomington along with local alumni and the many people employed at the University, the link between "town and gown" is very strong. As a venue for Big Ten athletics, Bloomington and Indiana University sports teams are synonymous. This is especially true for the basketball team, which is often a symbol for the entire state.

Similarly, the renowned IU Jacobs School of Music attracts world-class musical talent and performances from around the world. Stage performances, concerts, and famous entertainment personalities can be enjoyed both at the Musical Arts Center and the Indiana University Auditorium. There are also world-class art exhibits and showcases available at the IU Art Museum.

Diversity

One area where Bloomington's diversity is well established is its history of embracing the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer or Questioning (LGBTQ) communities. Over twenty years ago, the City Council passed a Human Rights Ordinance, which took a stand against denying people basic rights because of their sexual orientation. Additionally, the City of Bloomington was one of the first municipal governments in the Midwest and the nation to extend same-sex partner insurance benefits to its employees. In fact, Bloomington is able to boast one of the highest per-capita populations of same-sex couples in the nation. According to the Williams Institute, a think-tank organization at UCLA Law School, the 2010 US Census data showed that there are approximately 500 same-sex couples living in Monroe County, with 16% of those families raising children. The Advocate, an LGBTQ news source, rated Bloomington as the "fourth gayest city" in the US. IN 2012, the Huffington Post included Bloomington in their list of the top 10 national LGBTQ travel destinations. IU was recognized for creating an LGBTQ-Friendly campus climate and received a five-star rating, the highest possible, from the LGBT-Friendly Campus Pride Index in 2012. These outside accolades help to highlight Bloomington's friendly and inviting atmosphere toward all people, building upon its historical tradition of inclusion. This open and collaborative culture and environment attract all types of



creative individuals which provide Bloomington an economic advantage in developing those industries that need innovative and creative employees.

Tourism

While Indiana University represents the major tourism draw, there are many non-university amenities that attract tourists, as well. Bloomington enjoys many attractions and cultural offerings as supported by the Bloomington Entertainment and Arts District (BEAD) which is located in downtown Bloomington. BEAD is a focused arts area in downtown designed to promote tourism and economic development. BEAD was formally recognized as an official Indiana Cultural District by the Indiana Arts Commission. It promotes a very robust grouping of festivals and events that draw thousands to downtown Bloomington. These regional events include the Lotus World Music & Arts Festival, the Fourth Street Festival of the Arts, the Taste of Bloomington, and the Arts Fair on the Square.

All of these amenities offer not only wonderful entertainment and enjoyment options for local residents but also tourists. According to VisitBloomington, over 1.84 million visitors travel to Bloomington every year. These visits include vacations, business trips, convention travel, visiting family and friends, and attending various sporting events. The economic impact generated by these visitors during 2013 included \$325 million in total gross sales, which directly supports over 4000 jobs in Monroe County and contributes about \$97 million in wages. It also contributed \$45 million to the county tax base. One example that helps illustrate the economic impact of tourism is the ASA/USA Girls' A12 and Under National Softball Championship. This week-long tournament was held in Bloomington in the summer of 2014 and more than 100 teams, along with many family members and well-wishers from around the nation attended. The economic impact from this tournament alone was estimated to be over \$1 million dollars. Tourism is a major industry for Bloomington. If tourism continues to grow, it can provide a number of excellent benefits for both local residents and businesses. Finding creative ways to further showcase Bloomington as a prominent Midwestern travel destination should be developed and aggressively pursued.

Technical Education

There is more to education in Bloomington than just Indiana University. Bloomington has a long history as a manufacturing hub. Though manufacturing employment has shrunk, today's employees must have access to advanced technical training that results in employable skills in the 21st Century. IVY Tech works closely with area employers to design curriculum and training programs that are advanced enough to provide the skills necessary for employment. As a result, it's extremely important that robust opportunities are created for people to access cutting-edge workforce educational and formal training programs. Allowing people to be better prepared for emergent career fields that will allow existing Bloomington employers to stay and expand, and to attract new employers to Bloomington.

Elementary and Secondary Education

The Monroe County Community School Corporation (MCCSC) is the public K-12 educational provider for Bloomington area and serves nearly 11,000 students. According to federal data, the overall high school graduation rate in the US has reached 80% for the first time. Bloomington high schools exceed a 90% graduation rate. It is obvious that the community must be strong partners with the public school system that is the bedrock of Bloomington educational success outside of IU. Bloomington has a number of private schools as well such as the Harmony School, the Project School, etc.

Teaching students that have language barriers and integrating them into the educational system is another very important issue facing public schools. MCCSC had classified 340 students with having limited English Proficiency. Finally, five MCCSC schools received the prestigious 4-star designation from the Indiana Department of Education in 2014.

Early childhood education is another critical area for support. The City supports not for profit organizations who provide the backbone of services to early education opportunities. This is especially true for children from low to moderate income families. These early education support programs are very important to preparing young children for regular school programs.



Equity

The City of Bloomington works closely with the Monroe County Health Department and other not for profit social service organizations to provide all persons access to affordable health care services. These services may include but not be limited to substance abuse counseling, mental health evaluations, and general health care services. Bloomington is a regional healthcare center for much of South Central Indiana. As such, IU Health will be building a new hospital by 2019 to be located near East 10th Street and the SR45/46 Bypass. Both IU Health Bloomington Hospital and Monroe Hospital are regional hospitals. Bloomington Meadow Hospital provides mental and behavioral health care services. Volunteers in Medicine of Monroe County provide free and preventive care to medically underserved for chronic and acute illnesses. It is operated by volunteers and receives support from the community and IU Health Bloomington Hospital. Finally, the Bloomington community works to make sure all have access to healthy food for emergency food relief and supplemental assistance. Across a number of entities, food is being provided to those in need.

They included 11,000 recipients from Monroe County Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in 2014. The City works with Monroe County and not for profit agencies to ensure that those residents who need food have access to it.

Chapter 2 | Culture & Identity

Goals, Policies, and Programs

Goal 2.1 Support cultural spaces in all regions of Bloomington, especially urban centers, and neighborhood villages, where they are accessible to a broad range of people and can help activate the public realm.



Policy 2.1.1: Place an emphasis on public space design within the private development realm including but not limited to the pedestrian and active transportation environments surrounding the sites, any opportunities for public art or engagement within the development, and how the development aesthetically blends in with its surroundings through UDO amendments and incentives.

 Policy 2.1.2: Ensure culturally significant places and spaces are preserved and celebrated.

- Program: Maintain a cultural asset map as an inventory to be utilized in development and redevelopment decision making.

 Policy 2.1.3: Encourage the designation of existing clusters of cultural spaces as cultural districts.

 Policy 2.1.4: Encourage partnerships with the public, private and nonprofit sectors to engage in creative placemaking projects.

 Policy 2.1.5: Encourage the use of public art to create a neighborhood identity.

 Policy 2.1.6: Support the temporary re-use of vacant and/or underutilized spaces or building facades for art production, exhibitions and murals.

 Policy 2.1.7: Create infrastructure and signage for better transportation connections to and among cultural venues.

Goal 2.2 Preserve assets of historical, architectural, archaeological or social significance.

 Policy 2.2.1: Continue to work with the department of Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) and the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to aid in the advocacy and monitoring of historic structures and places.

 Policy 2.2.2: Continue to explore opportunities to enhance and expand the Bloomington/Monroe County Convention Center to create additional venue and activity space.

- Program: Explore the possibility of a joint partnership/endeavor with the Monroe County CVB by analyzing the 2011 market and feasibility study for convention center expansion.

Goal 2.3 Ensure public spaces are of high-quality, engaging and active.

 Policy 2.3.1: Incorporate a visual arts component into the planning, construction, or renovation of all city facilities as deemed feasible.

 Policy 2.3.2: Consider the use of natural art and beauty through the preservation of trees, waterways, and other environmental features.

Chapter 2 | Culture & Identity

Outcomes & Indicators

2.1 Historical and culturally significant places are preserved and celebrated.

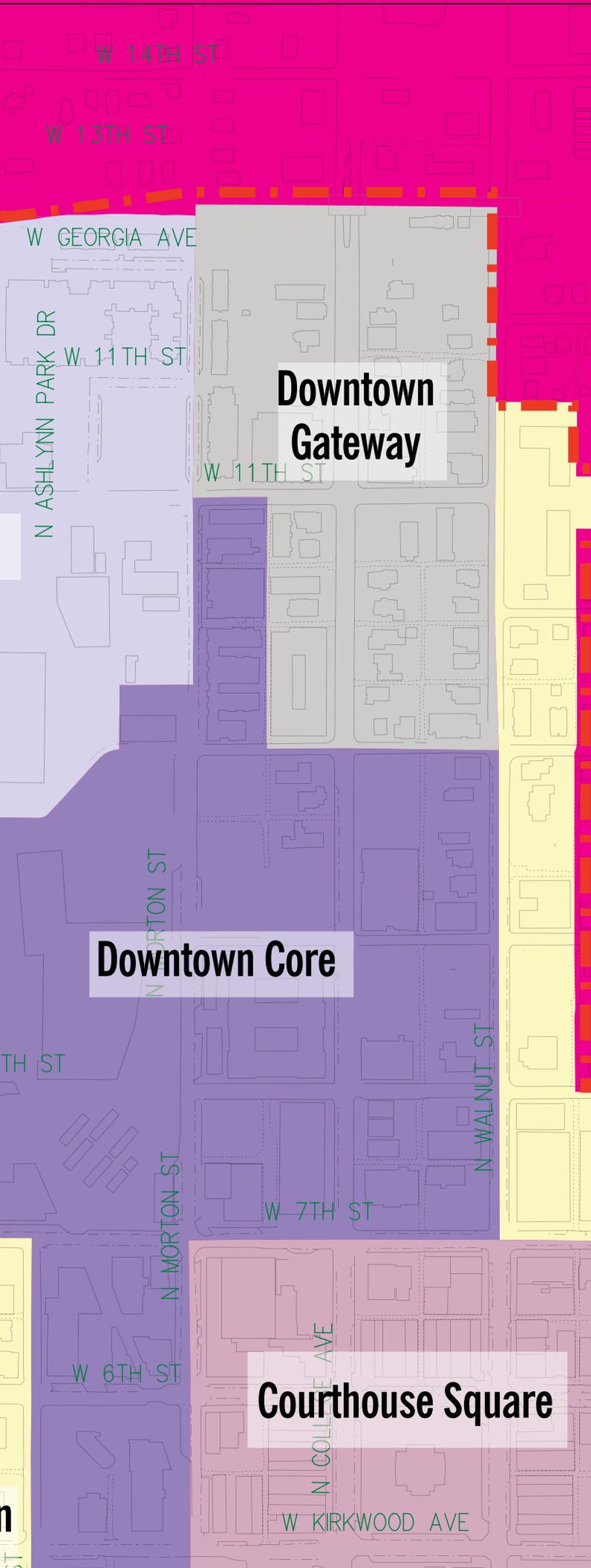
- A number of historical / cultural preservation projects completed and program operated annually
- A number of public art and cultural interpretive installations annually

2.2 Participation in cultural events is high.

- Percent of residents and number of non-residents participating annually in cultural events within the City
- A number of public spaces available for cultural events

2.3 Public spaces are high-quality, engaging and active.

- A number of activities programmed annually for public spaces, including streets downtown and in neighborhoods and parks
- A number of people using public places daily, at peak and off-peak periods



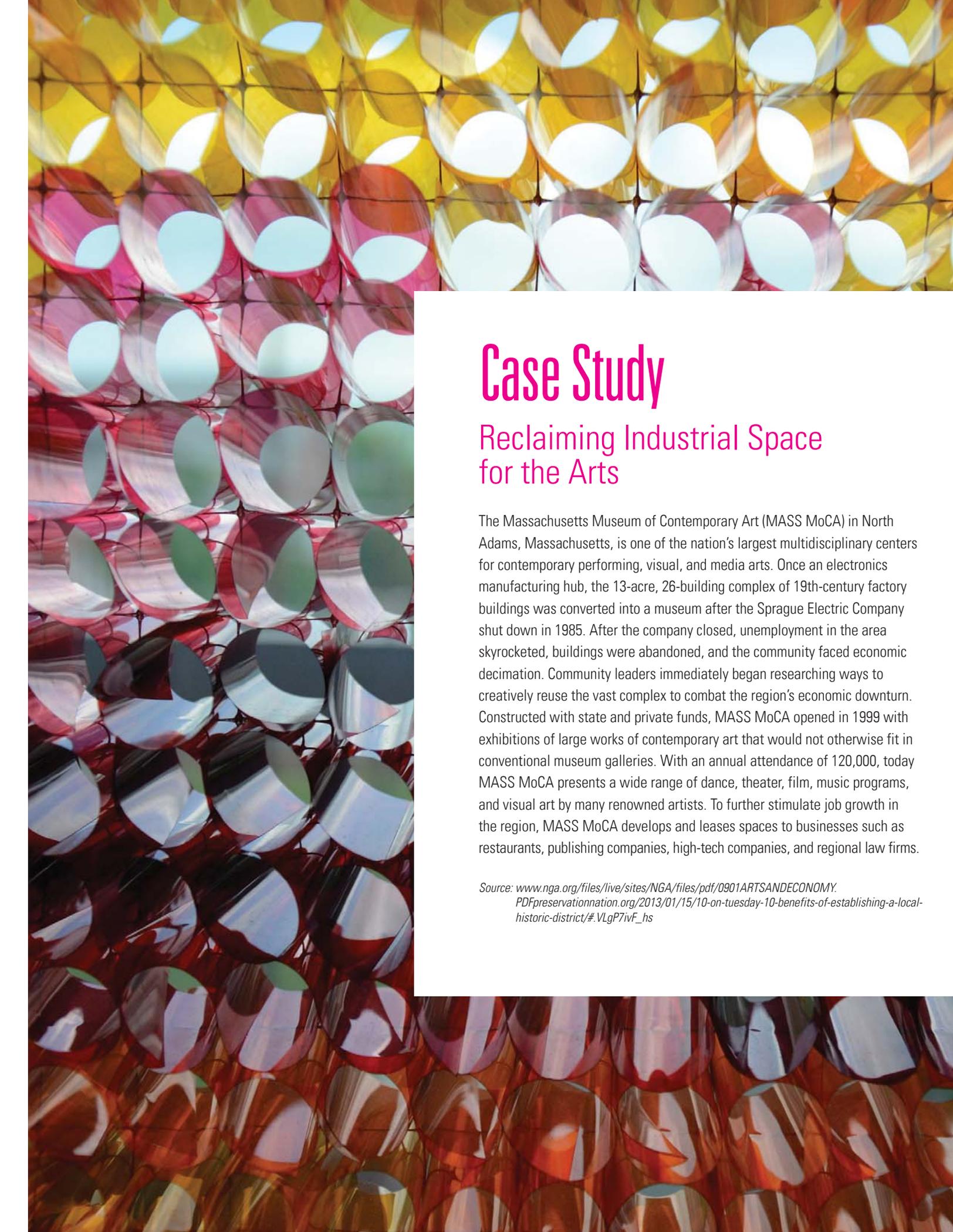
Profile

Economic Benefits of the Arts

Arts and culture impact the community directly and indirectly with a multitude of benefits including the following:

- **Bolstering Areas Needing Investment:** Creative industries are by nature decentralized and can have a broad impact on the economy and culture of a community. Creative individuals live, work and play within their community, are well connected, and invest in local goods and services.
- **Recruiting and Developing a Skilled Workforce:** Creative jobs and the arts provide a high quality of life, access to local amenities and play a significant role in attracting young professionals to an area.
- **Attracting Tourism Dollars:** People are drawn to arts, and cultural events, venues, and businesses. These may help attract visitors that contribute to the local economy by attending these events, dining in restaurants, staying in hotels, and shopping.
- **Leverage the Arts for a Competitive Edge in Business:** American companies are increasingly competing with the international marketplace. The quality of life, place and the arts and culture have a direct impact on where companies locate. Many companies are looking to attract a workforce to a particular geographic area and are finding a competitive advantage in arts and design.

Source: www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/0901ARTSANDECONOMY.PDF
preservationnation.org/2013/01/15/10-on-tuesday-10-benefits-of-establishing-a-local-historic-district/#.VLgP7ivF_hs



Case Study

Reclaiming Industrial Space for the Arts

The Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA) in North Adams, Massachusetts, is one of the nation's largest multidisciplinary centers for contemporary performing, visual, and media arts. Once an electronics manufacturing hub, the 13-acre, 26-building complex of 19th-century factory buildings was converted into a museum after the Sprague Electric Company shut down in 1985. After the company closed, unemployment in the area skyrocketed, buildings were abandoned, and the community faced economic decimation. Community leaders immediately began researching ways to creatively reuse the vast complex to combat the region's economic downturn. Constructed with state and private funds, MASS MoCA opened in 1999 with exhibitions of large works of contemporary art that would not otherwise fit in conventional museum galleries. With an annual attendance of 120,000, today MASS MoCA presents a wide range of dance, theater, film, music programs, and visual art by many renowned artists. To further stimulate job growth in the region, MASS MoCA develops and leases spaces to businesses such as restaurants, publishing companies, high-tech companies, and regional law firms.

*Source: www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/0901ARTSANDECONOMY.PDF
preservationnation.org/2013/01/15/10-on-tuesday-10-benefits-of-establishing-a-local-historic-district/#.VLgP7ivF_hs*