

# New Partners for Smart Growth Conference Denver 2014



## **Creative Placemaking in Rural America: Philanthropy/Government Supporting Rural Towns via Arts Investments.**

### Panelists:

- Jamie Bennett, President, ArtPlace America, New York City
- Tracy Taft, Executive Director, Int'l Sonoran Desert Alliance, Ajo, AZ
- John Davis, Executive Director, Lanesboro Art Center, Lanesboro, MN
- Nancy Barton, Prattsville Art Center, Prattsville, NY

Moderator: Chris Beck, Senior Projects Advisor, USDA Rural Development, Washington DC.  
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# Goals for Session



- Initial overview of current Place-based initiatives with the federal government and some context about rural .
- Learn about ArtPlace and role that foundations are playing in creating vibrant communities and how they are trying to leverage public funds
- Three really cool examples of recently funded ArtPlace rural projects that hope to be models for other communities
- Your questions and lively conversation.

# Federal Place-Based Initiatives



- Aimed at promoting collaboration between federal agencies and coordinating federal policies and investments.
- Helping use scarce federal \$ more effectively by focusing on higher needs (e.g. persistent poverty) and existing built environment, transportation corridors, etc.

Some current examples:

- Partnership for Sustainable Communities (since 2009)
- Strong Cities Strong Communities (since 2011)
- Promise Zones (new)
- NEA's Our Town and Citizen's Institute on Rural Design

# Placemaking as a tool



- Placemaking. An effective place-based strategy should include understanding the power of creating built environments where people WANT to be--live/work/consume/play.
- Aimed at making strategic investments into communities that have or are interested in developing a strategy which recognizes the unique assets and opportunities associated with their “place.” A street, a neighborhood, a town, a city, or a multi-county region.
- Lots of considerations to make a good place. Walkability, slow traffic/street diets, good design of buildings and public places, quality open space, vibrant commerce, etc. ARTS!
- Rural: Unique challenges of rural. Less resources, so even more important to make good place-making decisions. Cultural opportunities are essential to attracting and retaining diverse citizenry.

Partners to help rural communities and small towns.

America's rural infrastructure bank:

- Affordable housing
- Broadband installation
- Clean water—drinking and waste
- Community and civic buildings (incl education/libraries)
- Business loans
- Renewable energy (incl bio fuels)
- Capacity building grants (Rural Bus Enterprise Grants)

Contact Rural Development State Offices:

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/StateOfficeAddresses.html>

# Rural ArtPlace Grants



## Other 2011-13 grants

- Higher Ground, Cumberland, KY \$273k
- Whirligig Project, Wilson, NC \$500k
- Red Cloud Indian School, Pine Ridge, SD \$110k
- Yolo County, California \$63k
- Sauk County, WI \$100k/\$75k
- Minot, ND \$600k
- Makah Tribe Village Longhouse Commons, Neah Bay, WA \$500k
- Walter Soboleff Center, Sealaska Heritage Institute, Juneau, AK \$475k
- Old Town Artists Residency, Homer, AK \$150k
- Sonoran Desert Retreat Ctr and Residencies, Ajo, AZ \$536k
- Lanesboro Arts Campus, Lanesboro, MN \$313k
- Prattsville Art Ctr and Residency, Prattsville, NY \$200,000
- UniontownCreativity Ctr. Uniontown, WA \$362,000
- Mad River Industrial Art Park, Blue Lake, CA \$350k
- Rainforest Theatre Festival, Douglas, AK \$250k
- Defiant Gardens, Plains Art Museum, Fargo/Moorehead ND/MN \$260k

# Artsipelego --Tides Institute and Museum Eastport, Maine



- \$250k to renovate key historic building in heart of town and working to build StudioWorks facility complete with printmaking, letterpress, and digital equipment and technologies on the ground floor with its big storefront windows. It looks right out to the downtown and waterfront, out to Passamaquoddy Bay and to Canada. We'll develop housing on the second floor of this facility and develop a new year round visiting artist residency program.
- Opportunities with USDA Community Facilities program, possibly small business loans or enterprise grants. Received \$50k USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant in 2013.

# Magic City Lofts--ArtSpace

## Minot, North Dakota



- \$ 600k to support large artists housing in central downtown Minot.
- \$99k Rural Business Enterprise Grant 2013





# Sitka Arts Campus Sitka, Alaska



- \$350k grant to renovate historic buildings on an old college campus for arts learning programming.
- Longtime USDA investments in college facilities.



# Sauk County, Wisconsin--Wormfarm D'Tour



- \$100k/\$75k to support Wormfarm's newly created annual Fermentation Fest and Road D'Tour.
- Mixes temporal art projects into farm landscape for 10 days in Autumn, promoting local foods, farmland protection, and rural economic development



# ArtForce

## Siler City/Greenville/Sanford NC



- \$485k to support integrative economic development strategies which engage artists in partnership with manufacturers to stimulate new products and invigorate downtowns by siting artist product in civic spaces.
- **Cross-Currents of Production : Artists + Manufacturers Strengthening Place**
- *Art-Force works to stimulate and diversify economic development in distressed communities by allying artists, artisans, and designers with entrepreneurs, small businesses, educational institutions, and local agencies to accelerate cross-currents of artistic design and production. The Program originates, develops, and manages creative partnerships that serve as community change-agents – creating new products, jobs, and a sense of belonging. For additional information, please visit: <http://art-force.org>.*



# Paradise Garden (Howard Finster site) Chatooga Co. Georgia



\$445k grant to assist with restoration of Finster's home and studio

Opportunities for USDA financing for wastewater, possibly business loans to businesses in Summerville



# Some Other Examples



- Cultural Civic Buildings
- Cultural Tourism
- Artist in Residence

# Raton, New Mexico--Theater



USDA Renewable energy grant for solar panels to reduce energy costs at local theater.

# Lake Village Arkansas



Renovation of historic building on Main Street for City Hall—with help from USDA Community Facilities Loan Program.



# SW Virginia—Crooked Road Heritage Trail

Cultural Tourism—regional economic development strategy.



Program: Rural Jobs Accelerator (Funds from Economic Development Admin, Appalachian Regional Commission, and USDA's Rural Community Development Initiative).



# Other ways federal gov't can help



- NEA's OurTown,
- NEA's Citizen's Institute for Rural Design
- Nat'l Endowment for the Humanities
- Appalachian Regional Commission
- Delta Regional Authority
- Dept of Commerce--Economic Development Administration (regional cluster strategies)
- National Park Service/Historic Preservation
  
- And just building sustained dialogue with passionate and able federal staff whenever you find them.

# A few stray ideas...



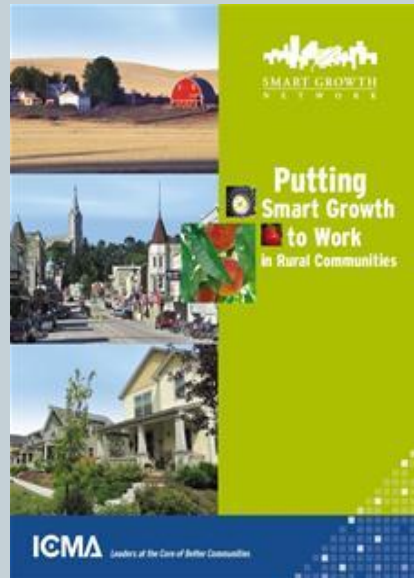
- Always think regional, join arms with neighbors in other towns and counties. If rural is to thrive we absolutely have to be smart about this.
- Sometimes, however, focus on one street or block, but get everyone on that block involved. And help the region understand the value of that block to the whole region.
- And explore ways your project connects with urban popn, too. Find urban partners if you can. How can you bring aspects of your project to the city?
- Involve local foundations. Get their advice early. Help them figure out how your project helps build their long-term capacity.
- Let your local and federal leaders (and their staff!) know what you are up to. Make it interesting to them. Give them public praise when they have been supportive. And help them figure out how their leadership around your project can scale to better statewide and national cultural policy.
- Explicitly ask your supporters (e.g. foundations) to set aside \$ to support your civic outreach (above) aspect of your work--if they truly want to help you, and all of us, move the needle for more reliable and robust public arts funding.

# ArtPlace, NEA and Creative Placemaking: Key weblinks



- ArtPlace (general) [www.artplaceamerica.org/](http://www.artplaceamerica.org/)
- National Endowment for the Arts [www.nea.gov/](http://www.nea.gov/)
- Citizen Institute for Rural Design <http://rural-design.org/>
- Our Town <http://arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town>
- Research Article: ***The rural growth trifecta: outdoor amenities, creative class and entrepreneurial context***  
<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1719&context=usdaarsfacpub>

# Online Resources— Partnership for Sustainable Communities



[http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/pdf/federal\\_resources\\_rural.pdf](http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/pdf/federal_resources_rural.pdf)

[http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge\\_network/documents/kn/Document/301483/Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities](http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/documents/kn/Document/301483/Putting_Smart_Growth_to_Work_in_Rural_Communities)

[http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/pdf/Supporting Sustainable Rural Communities FINAL.PDF](http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/pdf/Supporting_Sustainable_Rural_Communities_FINAL.PDF)