

Department Overview

The North Charleston Cultural Arts Department provides a variety of programs and services that help make North Charleston a great place to live, work, and play. A vast array of multi-discipline arts, cultural, and history initiatives touch the lives of an average of 95,000 program participants each year, with an additional 200,000 people served through public facilities.

Our General Public Programs reach residents and visitors from all walks of life through a variety of free and fee-based activities throughout the year. Examples of these programs include:

- North Charleston City Gallery Exhibits, which rotate monthly
- Dinner Theatre Series for adults
- Children's Theatre Series
- Ongoing classes and workshops in all arts disciplines
- Musical entertainment and art demonstrations at the North Charleston Farmers Market
- Visual Art and Drama Summer Arts Camps for children ages 5-13
- North Charleston Arts Festival

Outreach Programs are free programs geared to reach our city's youth, senior citizens, low-income residents, youth at risk, and underserved populations. These programs are generally held on-site in schools and city-owned facilities. Examples of these outreach initiatives include:

- Offering music, dance & theatre performances, workshops, and artist residencies for North Charleston schools
- Providing after-school arts enrichment programs in 13 North Charleston elementary schools
- Presenting patriotic music concerts for Veterans
- Supporting schools seeking to obtain state Arts in Basic Curriculum status
- Hosting an Open Studio Workshop, offered free to adults & seniors on the last Tuesday of each month
- Working with the VSA Arts of South Carolina for people with disabilities

Artist Assistance initiatives serve the dual purposes of strengthening the City's quality of life and building a strong foundation for future economic growth. Our facilities are at full capacity and we are experiencing escalating interest as City initiatives move forward to meet growing facility needs. Examples include:

- Providing artists and cultural organizations with: small grants, technical assistance, publicity assistance, affordable/donated space, information sharing, referrals, and studio/production/performance space relocation assistance
- Organizing and hosting an Annual Fine Art and Craft Co-op
- Co-sponsoring the Lowcountry Quarterly Arts Grants partnership with the City of Charleston and SC Arts Commission

- Providing opportunities for artists and fine craft artisans to sell their work at the Arts Festival, Christmas Festival, Farmers Market, and North Charleston City Gallery and Gift Shop
- Providing internships and shadowing opportunities for college students studying the arts or arts administration

Our Economic Development efforts involve active partnering with the community to develop local and regional initiatives to advance tourism and business. Examples include:

- Participating in local and state organizations that aid in the development of arts related businesses
- Working with map companies and the CVB to create residential and tourism maps
- Providing information for local, state, and national publications
- Promoting tourism development and marketing
- Providing program development information as requested for area government entities
- Assisting the local/state film industry
- Providing arts related office and studio incubator spaces
- Working with developers and merchants associations as requested

The department's City History initiatives focus on increasing public knowledge of the area's unique history, tourism development, and working as requested with city officials and contracted professionals on projects related to history, preservation, and aesthetics. Examples include:

- Establishing a City History and Archive Room in the new City Hall and developing an inventory/implementation system
- Incorporating donated historic street markers into a city park landscape
- Assisting various groups that are actively involved in the research, documentation, and appreciation of history as it pertains to our city
- Collecting appropriate photographs, documents, and other items that pertain to North Charleston