

Peggy R. McConnell Arts Center of Worthington

Frequently Asked Questions

4 June 2007

1/ What is the purpose of the McConnell Arts Center (MAC)?

The Peggy R. McConnell Arts Center of Worthington (MAC) is being established to enhance and secure the future of the arts and culture for the greater Worthington community through a partnership of the Worthington Arts Council, the City of Worthington, and the Worthington Schools.

The McConnell Arts Center will bring community members together through performances, exhibits, receptions, classes, community forums, social events, lectures, and dialogue; expand on arts and cultural opportunities already provided in the city; rejuvenate the culturally significant, historic Packard Annex, carrying its heritage as a community gathering place into the future; make Worthington a destination location and enhance its reputation as one of northern Franklin County's leading suburbs; and offer a range and variety of arts experiences that are accessible to all members of the community.

In addition, the Arts Center will contribute to an increased "quality of life" for residents, as well as having a positive economic impact on the City through increased tourism and additional jobs.

2/ Who took the initiative to establish the Arts Center?

Following a three-year exploration by the board of the Worthington Arts Council (WAC), the arts council, City of Worthington, and Worthington School District formed a partnership in 1998 to determine the feasibility of establishing an arts center. At that time, a Core Planning Committee of nineteen members was formed, comprised of representatives from the Worthington City Council, Worthington Schools, area arts organizations, practicing artists, local businesses, the community-at-large, and the banking, architecture, design, and construction industries. Since the year 2000, the WAC Capital Campaign Committee has been earnestly raising funds to renovate and furnish the building. Over the years, plans have evolved with the input of various coalitions of community leaders and community members, representing over 1,100 citizens interested in the arts. These committed community volunteers have worked together to make this vision a reality.

A Core Partners Committee representing the Arts Council, City, and Schools currently meets on a monthly basis to review all areas of progress and discuss future needs.

3/ What will happen at the MAC?

Four targeted program categories will be offered at the Arts Center: 1/ Education: public classes offered on a fee basis to the community; 2/ Outreach & Support: programs designed to enhance the MAC's relationship with the schools, local artists, arts organizations, and other civic groups; 3/ Visual & Performing Arts: series presented and hosted by the WAC; and 4/ Other: ancillary programs designed to meet the needs of targeted community audiences and initiated from time to time.

4/ How much money has been raised to date?

- Just over \$4.15 million has been raised since the start of the campaign. More than 500 gifts have been received from individuals, families, and foundations throughout central Ohio. This figure includes a pledge of \$1 million from the City of Worthington; additional governmental support has been secured from Franklin County and the State of Ohio. John H. McConnell also made a \$1 million gift to name the center in honor of his late wife.

5/ How much money has been spent to date?

- Just under \$300,000 has been spent on fundraising expenses, which is less than 10% of total funds raised, and well within the national average of 10-20% for most capital campaigns.

6/ How much money still needs to be raised?

- \$900,000 of in-kind contributions is being sought to help complete the Phase I construction of the facility. (\$350,000 has already been promised.)
- An additional \$400-750,000 needs to be raised to equip the building (Furniture, Fixtures, & Equipment). We anticipate that some of these funds will be raised through in-kind gifts as well.
- If an additional \$300,000 were raised, the Phase II addition would be possible. (This addition increases the size of the lobby, and adds a warming kitchen and a digital imaging/photography studio.)

- An operating endowment campaign will follow closely on the heels of the completion of the above fundraising. The endowment campaign will likely have a \$1 million goal, which would—using conservative estimates—generate \$50,000 annually towards the arts center’s operations.

7/ What is the plan for raising the remaining funds?

The capital campaign committee members have all committed to continue their fundraising efforts until all monies are in place for the arts center. This committee approaches private individuals, corporations, and foundations for contributions. There are working lists in each of these categories of names still to be approached for capital campaign support. The committee meets approximately every two weeks to discuss ongoing progress and future strategies.

8/ Who will operate the McConnell Arts Center of Worthington?

- The Worthington Arts Council proposes that the Arts Council manage all day-to-day operations of the facility, as well as provide all programming. This arrangement would be facilitated through a long-term lease with the City of Worthington, the length and terms of which are to be determined.
- The City of Worthington would continue to own the building and the property, and to be responsible for major structural and capital upkeep and expenditures.

9/ How will the MAC be supported and sustained?

The opening of the McConnell Arts Center will be preceded by an aggressive Arts Council annual fund campaign designed to increase contributed income over the next 3-5 years. Planning is also in place for additional programming activities well in advance of the Arts Center’s opening.

The Worthington Arts Council will be responsible for raising all additional operating and programming funds over and above the City of Worthington’s annual investment. Revenue would be generated from class registration fees and ticketed events at the Arts Center, as well as from ongoing contributions to the Arts Council’s annual fund. In addition, WAC secures numerous grants and corporate sponsorships each year. The City’s investment would be used toward payment of utilities, custodial staff, and benefits.

10/ When will the Arts Center open?

Approximately 12-18 months after groundbreaking, which is currently slated for June, 2008.

11/ Who is leading the design effort for the building?

The Arts Center building committee is chaired by local resident and architect Mick Ball. Design Group is the architect of record.

12/ Who is leading the capital campaign for the Arts Center?

The campaign is co-chaired by Nancy Goorey and Larry France. The committee works in tandem and coordination with the Worthington Arts Council’s Board of Trustees. Dr. Goorey was recognized in 2006 as the Association of Fundraising Professionals Volunteer Fundraiser of the year for her efforts to raise funds for the McConnell Arts Center.

The other members of the capital campaign committee are: John Bader (Attorney-at-Law), Michael Ball (Karlsberger), Mark Eisenman, Michelle Geissbuhler (Goathill Productions), Lou Goorey, M.D. (Worthington City Council), Elizabeth Jewell (Worthington Arts Council), Jerry Katz, James Lorrimer (City of Worthington), Harvey Minton (City of Worthington), Darnell Perkins (Lincoln Financial Advisors), Steve Potter (Potter Construction), Rosemary Pomeroy (Attorney-at-Law), Milton Schott (The Schott Foundation), Misti Stewart (The Guernsey Bank), and Marlene Wells (Campaign Administrator).

Current members of the Arts Council’s Board of Trustees are: Jeffrey Byars (Wexner Center for the Arts), Vesta Daniel (The Ohio State University), Mark Eisenman, Lucy Godman (Columbus College of Art & Design), Eric Gnezda (Gnezda Communications), Jerry Katz, James May (DLZ Corporation), Neil Mortine (Fahlgren Mortine), Lori Overmyer (Goettler Associates), Robert E. Reber, Misti Stewart (The Guernsey Bank), Bradley Sowash (Musician), Donn Vickers (The Academy for Leadership & Governance), and Paul Watkins.