

# Signal Mountain MACC Strategic Plan

## ***REPORT***

### Introduction

On July 12, 2011 a group of individuals representing various organizations and the community at large met to develop a 5-year Strategic Plan for the *Mountain Arts Community Center* (MACC). In attendance were:

Norma Witherspoon	Ellen Heavilon
Charles M. Dunlap	Tammy Rardin
Dick Gee	Patrick Emanuel
Sandy McCrea	Matt Fox
Glenn Baird	Barb Storm

The session was facilitated by Pat Hardy with The University of Tennessee's Municipal Technical Advisory Service.

The purpose of the session was to develop a 5-year strategic plan for MACC. The plan was to include a realistic set of 5-year goals as well as action steps required to achieve these (including identification of costs and funding alternatives, responsibility for coordination of the goal's achievement, and a target date for reaching each goal).

### Reviewing Where We Are

The development of the plan began by asking two questions. The questions and answers from the group are below:

- 1. What are the two most significant things you see happening in the next three years that will have a critical impact on MACC?*
  - Funding constraints/limited resources.
  - The cost to operate MACC and to provide for capital improvements.
  - Changes in our population and related demographics.
  - Public/private partnerships.
  - School cutbacks.
  - Local politics and the roles of the each of the agencies /individuals involved with MACC.
  - The relationship between our local governments.
  - Our strategic planning process and how it is used.
  - Community buy-in to MACC.
  - The MACC Foundation and their level of activism.
- 2. What is the community saying about MACC? What suggestions have they made that we should listen to?*

- Comments from people who live “off the mountain” are generally positive.
- Those who live “on the mountain” seem to take MACC more for granted.
- Users of the facility are OK with MACC and appreciate what MACC is all about.
- Many say it’s “Just a facility.”
- Many know about MACC and many do not.
- A lot of people see it as a historic building.
- Many people confuse MACC with Bachman.
- For most folks their view of MACC is associated with their single experience – they don’t have a broad or comprehensive understanding of MACC.

### 5-Year Strategic Goals

This portion of the process began by reviewing the MACC *Mission Statement*. The Statement is important because it provides the foundation against which goals are established. The MACC Mission was established by the MACC Board of Directors at some point in the past. Here is the MACC mission:

*To provide and facilitate opportunities to explore arts, culture, civic and educational activities that foster personal growth and benefit the community.*

The goal-setting process itself then began by reviewing the outcomes of the community-wide “Visioning” sessions conducted in late 2010 and early 2011. The group was then asked a set of three questions:

1. *The single most important goal we could accomplish in the next 5 years is:*
2. *If we could eliminate one problem we will be facing in the next five years it would be:*
3. *If I were King of MACC for 1 year, here’s the first thing I would try to accomplish:*

Based on these questions and the input of the “Visioning” process a series of goals was established. Following establishment of the goals the group prioritized goals in order to identify no more than five which would focus MACC efforts over the next five years. Consideration was also given to the order in which goals should be addressed. Here are the five goals in priority order (please note - goals number 3 and 4 were tied in terms of priority and should be considered the same in that regard):

1. *Improve our governance – work toward a defined MACC structure with defined roles for each related agency or group. Develop the appropriate documents to support this.*
2. *Fix and/or upgrade the basic systems in the MACC facility – to include such things as HVAC, electrical, ceiling repair, plumbing, floor repair, and the kitchen.*
3. *Develop a Business Plan for MACC.*
4. *Bring the MACC facility up to compliance with all relevant codes.*

5. *Develop and implement a public relations and marketing strategy (which should be flexible and responsive to MACC growth as well as changes in community needs).*

A number of additional goals were established which were not included in the initial 5-Year Plan, but which should be considered important. They are:

1. Renovate the MACC auditorium.
2. Increase facility utilization for a wider variety of purposes.
3. Deliver services that exceed expectations – this goal should be applied to those who use the facility as well as to the operation of MACC itself.
4. Develop a comprehensive land-use policy to guide future development of the land around MACC. Development of adequate parking should be a part of this plan.

#### Recommendations for Further Action

The group recommended this Plan be sent to the various agencies involved with MACC (the City, the MACC Foundation, and the MACC Board). Each of the agencies should give a go-ahead for the group to meet later this year in order to develop a proposed structure as stated in Goal #1. It was felt that this should precede the development of action steps accompanying each of the remaining goals.