



# Arts, Recreational, and Cultural Opportunities

## Issue Analysis

### **Historical Efforts**

The 2007 Jackson County Strategic Plan included a strand aimed at improving the arts and recreational opportunities in the Jackson community. A loosely knit team was formed to address the goals outlined in the Plan and to implement the strategies with each respective goal. The 2007 vision was:

*Jackson County's wealth of cultural opportunities, recreational activities, community amenities, and neighborly environment makes it one of Michigan's most desirable places to live, work, and play.*

Strategies Developed to Support the 2007 Vision Included:

- *Measure community perception of Jackson County,*
- *Build on identified community strengths using a community coaching approach, and*
- *Launch community relationship renewal campaign.*

One of the accomplishments recognized during this process is Jackson County's participation in the Nation Citizen Survey in 2009 and 2011. The Survey contains questions that directly address the perception of arts, recreation, and culture in the community. The survey results can be viewed on the Jackson County website.

### **Stakeholder Analysis**

The Jackson 2020 "Arts, Recreation, and Culture" (ARC) Strand has been working to identify the stakeholders associated with the ARC group. The term "Quality of Life" is often associated with strands that address issues such as arts, recreation, and culture. Consequently, the stakeholders that enter the conversation are wide-ranging and may include (but are not limited to) the following:



- Tourists and Visitors
- Jackson Residents
- Business and Industry
- Cultural Organizations and Institutions
- Special Event Boards and Supporters
- School-aged children



## **Community Assets**

The Jackson Community enjoys a myriad of special events, cultural institutions, and organizations that provide and support a high quality of life in Jackson. These community assets provide a solid network from which to garner input and support for the strategic planning process and implementation. Representatives from these organized groups, as well as individuals from the community, will provide diversity to the proposed workgroups outlined in the ARC Strand's draft plan.

Jackson is fortunate to have many types of recreation and cultural opportunities that can be found in urban areas much larger than our size. Just to note a few:

*Jackson Symphony Orchestra*  
*Performing Arts at Jackson Community College's Potter Center*  
*Civil War Muster (Reenactment)*  
*Hot Air Jubilee*  
*Jackson County Fair*  
*Michigan International Speedway*  
*Ella Sharp Park and Museum*  
*Cascades Falls Park*  
*More Golf Holes Per Capita Than Any Other County in the Country*  
*Armory Arts Village (unique artist colony in the State's oldest prison)*  
*Michigan Theater*



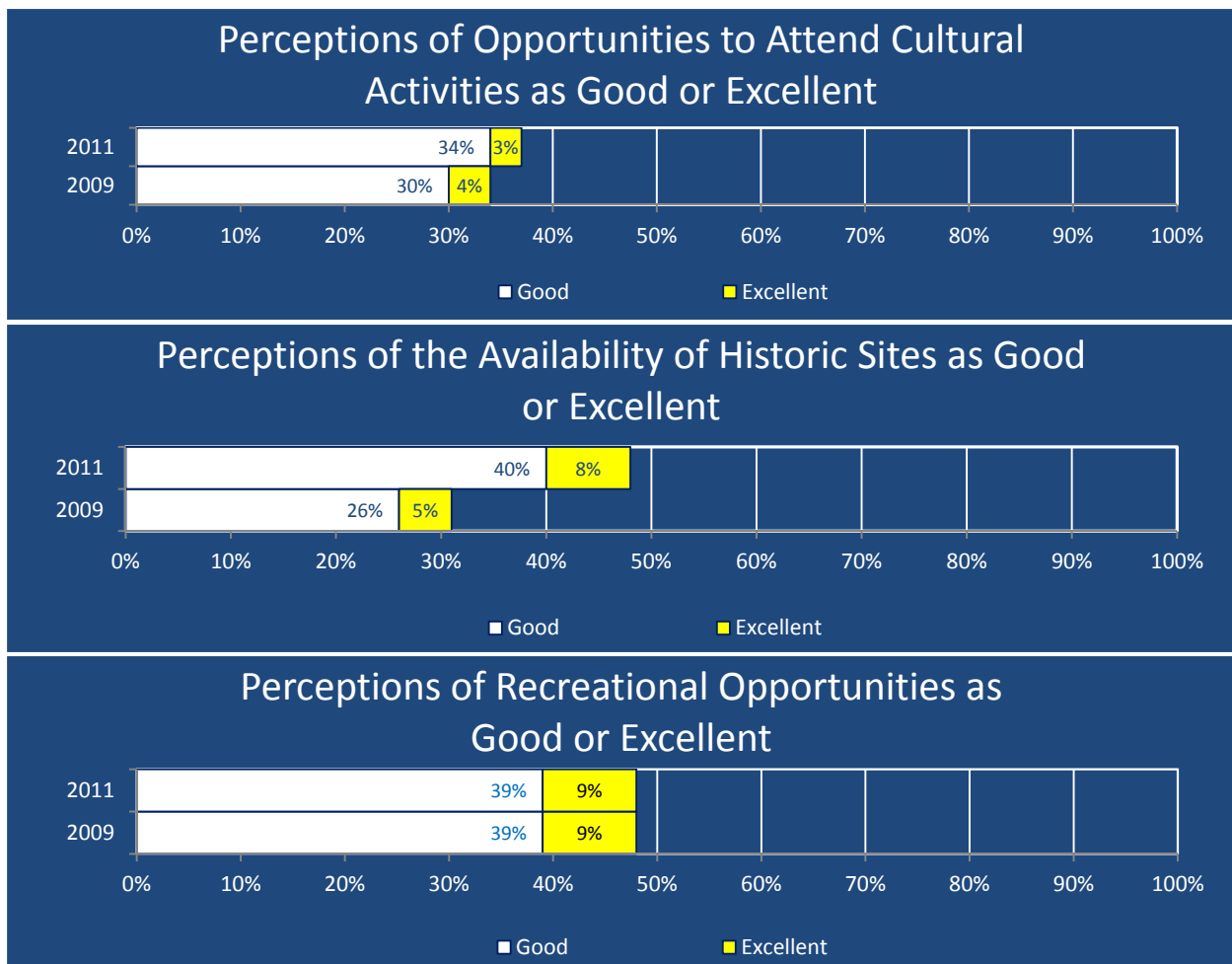
## **Current Reality**

Jackson 2020's ARC Strand has been diligently working to identify measurable goals and objectives that can be accomplished through the hard work and dedication of workgroups. These workgroups will be comprised of diverse members of the community. Members will represent a myriad of interests ranging from individuals to highly organized institutions and everything between.



As mentioned above, Jackson County participated in the National Citizen Survey in 2009 and 2011 and is scheduled to take part in 2013 as well. There are several questions in the Survey that address arts, recreation, and culture. Key indicators such as participation and access to programs and facilities may be monitored in the process of measuring the perceptions of the community as it relates to quality of life issues. Two iterations of the National Citizen Survey have provided us with some excellent base line data.

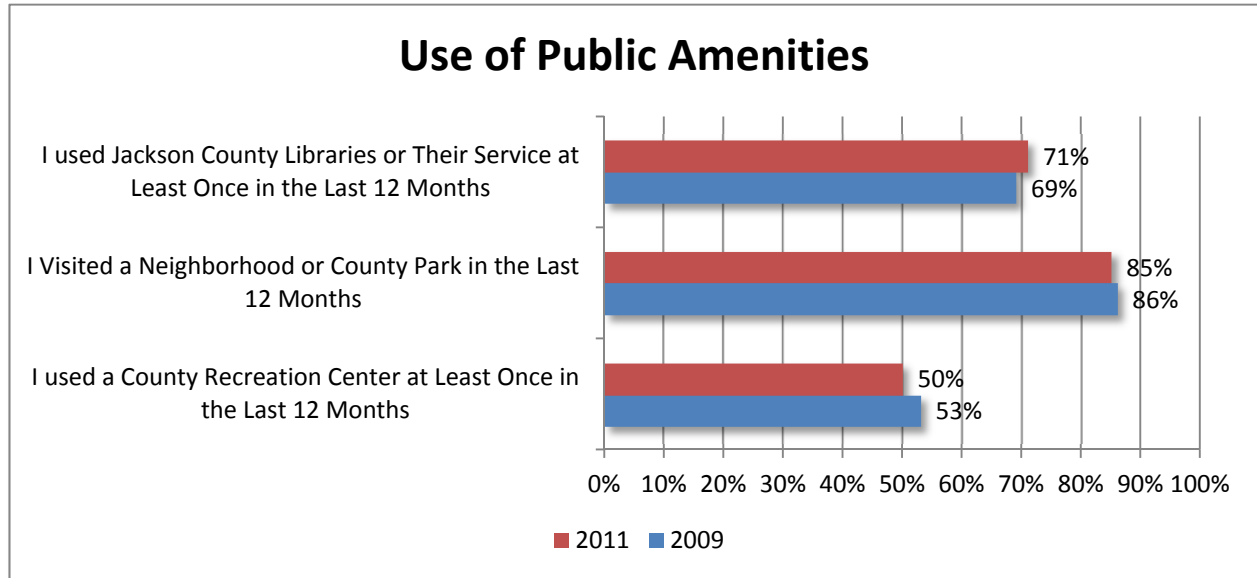
As can be seen from the following graphs perception of opportunities for Cultural Activities, Historic sites to visit, and recreational opportunities is relatively low. Recreational opportunities received the highest perceived availability, which is not surprising given the vast acreage of parks and open space available in Jackson County.



Improvement can be observed from 2009 to 2011. The number of respondents who responded positively to the perception of opportunities to attend cultural activities increased from 34% to 37%. The number of respondents who responded positively to the perception of the availability of historical sites increased from 31% to 48%. Both of these data points indicate some success in the attempt to communicate better with members of our community, which was a strategy



of the existing strategic plan. Notwithstanding the low perception of the availability of things to do, citizens respond differently when they are asked how often they use public amenities such as parks and libraries. The next chart shows the use of public amenities as fairly high with little change from 2009 to 2011.



**Future Considerations**

Jackson 2020 is a collaborative community effort whose aim is to “transform Jackson County into one of the nation’s most desirable places to live, work, and play for people of all ages, backgrounds, and cultures”. The Jackson 2020 effort is comprised of eight (8) strands focused on topics such as health, economic development, and community safety. The “Arts, Recreation, and Culture” (ARC) Strand is focused on quality of life. The group has developed the following vision statement:

***New Vision Statement for ARC***

*Develop Jackson County as the Crossroads of Michigan for Arts, Recreation, and Culture through collaboration among providing organizations for the benefit of residents, businesses, and visitors*

The ARC vision, goals, and strategies are very broad and certainly reach beyond the traditional direct oversight of the County’s governance structure. With, however, direct supervision of entities such as the Jackson County Fairgrounds and the Jackson County Parks Department, it should be noted that the County of Jackson plays a large role in many of the events and activities throughout the county. Recognition of this fact alone makes Jackson County an integral part of the Arts, Recreation, and Culture (ARC) Strand.



**Participants**

1. *Arts and Cultural Alliance of Jackson County (ACAJC)*
2. *Art 634*
3. *The Ella Sharp Museum of Art and History (The Ella)*
4. *Experience Jackson*
5. *Jackson Community Foundation (JCF)*
6. *Jackson County Parks Commission*
7. *Jackson District Library (JDL)*
8. *Jackson Symphony Orchestra (JSO)*
9. *Jackson Community College (JCC)*
10. *Michigan International Speedway*
11. *Spring Arbor University (SAU)*
12. *Other Institutions and Individuals*

<b>Strand: Arts, Recreation &amp; Culture</b>							
<b>Goal: Events and Institutions</b>							
<b>Measurements of Success for the Goal:</b>							
<b>Goal (Long Version): Increase awareness, alignment, and access to Events and Institutions in the Jackson Community</b>							
Strategy	Create an inventory of festivals and special events						
<b>Activities</b>	Resources Needed (e.g. Cost, Equip- ment)	Timeline		Person/Entity Responsible & Involved	Measurable Outcome/ Evidence of Success		
		Start Date	End Date		Description	Present	Target
List all events on "Experience Jack- son's" Community Calendar							
Expand/promote usage of the web- site in the community							
Strategy	Increase cooperation and collaboration among existing organizations						
<b>Activities</b>	Resources Needed (e.g. Cost, Equip- ment)	Timeline		Person/Entity Responsible & Involved	Measurable Outcome/ Evidence of Success		
		Start Date	End Date		Description	Present	Target
Identify opportunities to collaborate							
Inventory organizations and institu- tions							

<b>Strand: Arts, Recreation &amp; Culture</b>							
<b>Goal: Art and Artists</b>							
<b>Measurements of Success for the Goal:</b>							
<b>Goal (Long Version): Increase awareness, alignment, and access to Art and Artists in the Jackson Community</b>							
Strategy	Continue to develop public art						
<b>Activities</b>	Resources Needed (e.g. Cost, Equip- ment)	Timeline		Person/Entity Responsible & Involved	Measurable Outcome/ Evidence of Success		
		Start Date	End Date		Description	Present	Target
	Develop a Public Art Strategic Plan						
Strategy	Annual Art Events (new or grow existing)						
<b>Activities</b>	Resources Needed (e.g. Cost, Equip- ment)	Timeline		Person/Entity Responsible & Involved	Measurable Outcome/ Evidence of Success		
		Start Date	End Date		Description	Present	Target
	Investigate Possibilities						
	Integrate with existing special events						
Strategy	Performing Arts						
<b>Activities</b>	Resources Needed (e.g. Cost, Equip- ment)	Timeline		Person/Entity Responsible & Involved	Measurable Outcome/ Evidence of Success		
					Description	Present	Target

<b>Strand: Arts, Recreation &amp; Culture</b>							
<b>Goal: Parks, Recreation and Trails</b>							
<b>Measurements of Success for the Goal:</b>							
<b>Goal (Long Version): Increase awareness, alignment, and access to Parks, Recreation, and Trails in the Jackson Community</b>							
Strategy	Continue to improve the non-motorized System in the Jackson Community.						
Activities	Resources Needed (e.g. Cost, Equipment)	Timeline		Person/Entity Responsible & Involved	Measurable Outcome/ Evidence of Success		
		Start Date	End Date		Description	Present	Target
Help facilitate the update of the <u>Jackson County Non-Motorized Transportation Plan</u>							
Develop the Sparks Park/Inter-City Trail Connector							
Develop more statewide connection trails (Lakelands Trail to Stockbridge)							
Strategy	Continue to update existing and develop new parks facilities.						
Activities	Resources Needed (e.g. Cost, Equipment)	Timeline		Person/Entity Responsible & Involved	Measurable Outcome/ Evidence of Success		
		Start Date	End Date		Description	Present	Target
Help facilitate the implementation and update (as needed) of new and existing recreation plans in Jackson County							



<b>Strand: Arts, Recreation &amp; Culture</b>							
<b>Goal: Community Engagement (Marketing)</b>							
<b>Measurements of Success for the Goal:</b>							
<b>Goal (Long Version): Increase awareness, alignment, and access to Arts, Culture, and Recreation in the Jackson Community through successful community engagement (marketing) techniques</b>							
Strategy	Facilitate the implementation of the <u>Greater Jackson Community Cultural Plan</u> (2006).						
Activities	Resources Needed (e.g. Cost, Equipment)	Timeline		Person/Entity Responsible & Involved	Measurable Outcome/ Evidence of Success		
		Start Date	End Date		Description	Present	Target
Strategy	Market "Experience Jackson's" Community Calendar						
Activities	Resources Needed (e.g. Cost, Equipment)	Timeline		Person/Entity Responsible & Involved	Measurable Outcome/ Evidence of Success		
		Start Date	End Date		Description	Present	Target