



MSAC
Arts and Entertainment Districts
Survey Analysis

FY 2024

April 2025

Executive Summary

Founded more than five decades ago, the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) is tasked with ensuring that all Marylanders have access to the arts¹. MSAC is housed within Maryland’s Department of Commerce and engages in a variety of activities to support the arts ecosystem within the state, including awarding grants to non-profit organizations for arts programming and projects, awarding grants to independent artists, and providing technical assistance and professional development to individuals and groups.

Managed by MSAC, the Arts and Entertainment District (A&E District) program strives to “develop, promote, and support diverse artistic and cultural centers in communities across Maryland that preserve a sense of place, provide unique local experiences, attract tourism, and spur economic revitalization and neighborhood pride”².

MSAC requires A&E Districts to complete an annual survey which summarizes activity from the previous fiscal year. These surveys are then provided to Maryland Department of Commerce’s Office of Research, Policy, and Government Affairs (ORPGA) staff for tabulation and analysis. This report is the first of two that ORPGA provides to MSAC; the second document is an economic impact analysis which quantifies the effects of employment and visitor spending within the A&E Districts.

Some key takeaways from the FY 24 (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024) survey analysis include:

- Maryland’s A&E Districts reported:
 - 171 new or completed capital projects
 - 89 new retailers
 - 84 new businesses
 - 98 new restaurants
 - 20 new organizations
- After factoring in various closures, districts reported net changes of:
 - +35 retailers
 - +42 businesses
 - +62 restaurants
 - +17 organizations
- The 27 reporting A&E districts held a combined 6,980 events and 152 festivals in FY24. In total, these events and festivals attracted an estimated 2.7 million attendees.
- Maryland’s A&E districts are home to 825 assets/enterprises. These include 206 public art projects, 144 performance venues, and 142 galleries. Other enterprises include museums, arts organizations, arts education organizations, arts suppliers, and “other” enterprises.
- Eleven of Maryland’s A&E Districts made artist housing available, providing a total of nearly 1,300 units.
- Seventeen of Maryland’s A&E Districts maintained an artist registry. Within those districts, 354 artists registered during FY 24. Across all of Maryland’s A&E Districts, there are an estimated 7,299 artists working within district boundaries.

¹ <https://msac.org/about>

² <https://www.msac.org/programs/arts-entertainment-districts>

- Sixteen businesses took advantage of Admission and Amusement Tax abatement and five businesses utilized property tax credits. Additional incentives available include façade improvement, loans, grants, other types of incentives, and non-financial incentives.
- In total, districts reported receiving nearly \$25.0 million in funding and in-kind support in FY 24.
 - The most common source of funding was from MSAC; all 27 districts which responded to the survey reported receiving a total of \$1.4 million.
 - The largest source of funding (\$14.6 million) came from the federal government. Note, however, that this figure is largely due to \$13.5 million of American Rescue Plan Act funds being awarded to Havre de Grace's A&E District.
 - Additional funding was provided through other state sources (\$5.5 million), local councils or municipalities (\$3.0 million), and in-kind support (\$467 thousand).
- As part of their survey responses, A&E Districts reported some of their major challenges. These included:
 - Staffing – Leadership turnover; difficulty finding employees and volunteers.
 - Funding – Limited resources for programming and operating costs.
 - Real Estate – Lack of appropriate/affordable real estate; scarce parking.
- Types of technical assistance that districts feel would be beneficial include:
 - Communication and collaboration among A&E Districts – Site visits, webinars, and/or an annual conference for staff to share achievements and challenges.
 - Training opportunities – Marketing training, with a focus on social media outreach.
 - Central database of resources – Setting up a hub which contains list of available incentives, commonly used forms, and templates for common initiatives.

Introduction

The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) is a state agency tasked with ensuring that all Marylanders have access to the arts. Housed within the Maryland Department of Commerce (Commerce), the council itself is comprised of 17 Maryland residents appointed by the governor and state legislature and is supported by MSAC program staff.

MSAC engages in a variety of activities to support the arts ecosystem within the state. These include awarding grants to non-profit organizations for arts programming and projects, awarding grants to independent artists, and providing technical assistance and professional development to individuals and groups.

As part of their mission, MSAC runs the Arts & Entertainment District (A&E District) program. A&E Districts are designated areas that promote community involvement, tourism, and revitalization through tax-related incentives. Each district is required to submit an annual report to MSAC which describes their activity over the prior year. MSAC has shared these reports with Commerce's Office of Research, Policy, and Government Affairs (ORPGA) for tabulation and analysis. This document summarizes survey responses from the 27 A&E Districts that completed their fiscal year (FY) 2024 annual report (July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024)³. In a separate report, ORPGA uses survey responses to quantify the economic impact of employment within A&E Districts and visitor spending at events and festivals.

Please note that ORPGA did not validate the self-reported data provided by MSAC and the districts. In cases where there was clearly a mistake (for example, an event was listed with a date that was not in FY 24), ORPGA cleaned the data. However, there was no systematic process to confirm every data point contained in the district annual reports. As such, there may be slight variation in the contents of this report and the true activity in Maryland's A&E Districts in FY 24.

District Entities and Businesses

Districts provided information about new and closed entities within their borders during FY 24. Entities include capital projects, retailers, businesses, restaurants, and organizations. Please note that this is self-reported data from the districts, and there may be variation in how different districts categorized certain entities (for example, one district may have categorized a coffee shop/bookstore as a retailer, while another district may have categorized a coffee shop/bookstore as a restaurant).

Figure 1 lists the new entities in each of Maryland's A&E districts. In FY 24, districts reported 171 new capital projects, 89 new retailers, 84 new businesses, 98 new restaurants, and 20 new organizations. Silver Spring reported the largest number of new capital projects; Frederick reported the largest number of new retailers; Salisbury reported the largest number of new businesses; Silver Spring reported the largest number of new restaurants; Bethesda reported the largest number of new organizations.

³ The Annapolis A&E District did not submit a FY 24 Annual Report. Consequently, it is not covered in the Survey Analysis.

Figure 1: New Entities in Maryland's A&E Districts in FY24

District	Capital Projects		Retailers		Businesses		Restaurants		Organizations	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Bel Air	0	0%	6	7%	9	11%	1	1%	1	5%
Berlin	1	1%	6	7%	1	1%	1	1%	0	0%
Bethesda	4	2%	8	9%	12	14%	11	11%	6	30%
Black Arts	2	1%	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Bromo Tower	13	8%	1	1%	2	2%	5	5%	0	0%
Cambridge	3	2%	1	1%	1	1%	1	1%	0	0%
Catonsville	9	5%	3	3%	1	1%	1	1%	1	5%
Chestertown	3	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Crisfield	6	4%	1	1%	2	2%	2	2%	0	0%
Cumberland	0	0%	9	10%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Denton Artsway	1	1%	3	3%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Easton	4	2%	3	3%	3	4%	1	1%	0	0%
Elkton	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%	1	1%	0	0%
Frederick	15	9%	10	11%	4	5%	5	5%	2	10%
Frostburg	5	3%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Grantsville	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Hagerstown	15	9%	4	4%	5	6%	0	0%	5	25%
Havre de Grace	7	4%	2	2%	2	2%	1	1%	0	0%
Highlandtown	15	9%	8	9%	12	14%	6	6%	0	0%
Leonardtown	8	5%	5	6%	3	4%	4	4%	3	15%
Oakland	2	1%	1	1%	0	0%	3	3%	0	0%
Salisbury	5	3%	0	0%	13	15%	0	0%	0	0%
Silver Spring	22	13%	3	3%	7	8%	37	38%	0	0%
Snow Hill	6	4%	4	4%	1	1%	1	1%	0	0%
Station North	12	7%	2	2%	1	1%	1	1%	1	5%
Stevensville	7	4%	2	2%	0	0%	1	1%	1	5%
Wheaton	6	4%	5	6%	3	4%	15	15%	0	0%
Total	171	100%	89	100%	84	100%	98	100%	20	100%

Sources: A&E Districts, ORPGA

Figure 2 lists the closures (or relocations out of district boundaries) of retailers, businesses, restaurants, and organizations during FY 24.

Figure 2: Entity Closures/Relocations Out of District Boundaries by Type in Maryland's A&E Districts in FY24

District	Retailers		Businesses		Restaurants		Organizations	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Bel Air	5	9%	4	10%	0	0%	0	0%
Berlin	2	4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Bethesda	6	11%	10	24%	10	28%	0	0%
Black Arts	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Bromo Tower	2	4%	0	0%	2	6%	1	33%
Cambridge	1	2%	0	0%	1	3%	0	0%
Catonsville	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Chestertown	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Crisfield	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Cumberland	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Denton Artsway	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Easton	2	4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Elkton	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Frederick	13	24%	5	12%	5	14%	0	0%
Frostburg	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Grantsville	0	0%	2	5%	0	0%	0	0%
Hagerstown	1	2%	2	5%	1	3%	1	33%
Havre de Grace	3	6%	3	7%	1	3%	0	0%
Highlandtown	7	13%	9	21%	2	6%	0	0%
Leonardtown	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Oakland	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Salisbury	2	4%	2	5%	0	0%	0	0%
Silver Spring	2	4%	3	7%	8	22%	0	0%
Snow Hill	2	4%	1	2%	0	0%	1	33%
Station North	0	0%	1	2%	1	3%	0	0%
Stevensville	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Wheaton	1	2%	0	0%	5	14%	0	0%
Total	54	100%	42	100%	36	100%	3	100%

Sources: A&E Districts, ORPGA

Finally, Figure 3 lists the net change in entities in Maryland's A&E Districts. The associated estimated net change in employment is used in the A&E District economic impact analysis.

In FY 24, districts reported a net growth of 35 retailers, 42 businesses, 62 restaurants, and 17 organizations. Cumberland (+9) reported the largest net change in retailers; Salisbury (+11) reported the largest net change in Businesses; Silver Spring (+29) reported the largest net change in Restaurants; and Bethesda (+6) reported the largest net change in organizations.

Figure 3: Net Change in Entities in Maryland's A&E Districts in FY24

District	Retailers #	Businesses #	Restaurants #	Organizations #
Bel Air	1	5	1	1
Berlin	4	1	1	0
Bethesda	2	2	1	6
Black Arts	-1	1	0	0
Bromo Tower	-1	2	3	-1
Cambridge	0	1	0	0
Catonsville	3	1	1	1
Chestertown	-1	0	0	0
Crisfield	1	2	2	0
Cumberland	9	0	0	0
Denton Artsway	3	0	0	0
Easton	1	3	1	0
Elkton	1	1	1	0
Frederick	-3	-1	0	2
Frostburg	-1	0	0	0
Grantsville	1	-2	0	0
Hagerstown	3	3	-1	4
Havre de Grace	-1	-1	0	0
Highlandtown	1	3	4	0
Leonardtwn	4	3	4	3
Oakland	1	0	3	0
Salisbury	-2	11	0	0
Silver Spring	1	4	29	0
Snow Hill	2	0	1	-1
Station North	2	0	0	1
Stevensville	1	0	1	1
Wheaton	4	3	10	0
Total	35	42	62	17

District Events and Festivals

Districts provided information regarding events and festivals that were held within their borders during FY 24. Responses to this prompt varied greatly between districts—some included a few large-scale events, while other districts provided a comprehensive list of all events/programming that occurred at sites such as public libraries within the district.

ORPGA collated the lists from each district and lightly cleaned the responses—for example, removing entries that did not occur in FY 24 or programming that was a virtual event. Note, however, ORPGA did not validate nor systematically clean the event or festival data. Attendance data from events and festivals will be used for the economic impact study of A&E Districts.

ORPGA used the average of supplied data (i.e. average event/festival attendance) in cases where A&E Districts did not provide information.

A&E Districts reported hosting almost 7,000 events with attendance of nearly 1.7 million in FY 24. Bel Air reported the largest number of events, at 1,217. Two other districts, Bromo Tower and Station North, also reported hosting more than 1,000 events in FY 24. In terms of event attendance, Silver Spring reported the largest number of visitors to events, with 300,000. The next highest attendance levels were reported in Bel Air (260,750) and Frederick (231,642).

Figure 4: A&E District Events, FY 24

District	Number of Events	Share of Events	Attendance	Share of Attendance
Bel Air	1,217	17.4%	260,750	15.7%
Berlin	34	0.5%	55,500	3.3%
Bethesda	34	0.5%	16,300	1.0%
Black Arts	47	0.7%	6,433	0.4%
Bromo Tower	1,094	15.7%	174,560	10.5%
Cambridge	46	0.7%	9,652	0.6%
Catonsville	324	4.6%	69,473	4.2%
Chestertown	527	7.6%	29,194	1.8%
Crisfield	105	1.5%	9,733	0.6%
Cumberland	22	0.3%	8,543	0.5%
Denton Artsway	22	0.3%	1,614	0.1%
Easton	28	0.4%	22,850	1.4%
Elkton	21	0.3%	25,961	1.6%
Frederick	0	0.0%	231,642	14.0%
Frostburg	50	0.7%	228	0.0%
Grantsville	4	0.1%	3,458	0.2%
Hagerstown	42	0.6%	23,748	1.4%
Havre de Grace	225	3.2%	43,483	2.6%
Highlandtown	584	8.4%	87,476	5.3%
Leonardtown	120	1.7%	101,405	6.1%
Oakland	12	0.2%	21,993	1.3%
Salisbury	19	0.3%	14,800	0.9%
Silver Spring	850	12.2%	300,000	18.1%
Snow Hill	27	0.4%	10,759	0.6%
Station North	1,007	14.4%	41,364	2.5%
Stevensville	7	0.1%	4,885	0.3%
Wheaton	512	7.3%	82,000	4.9%
Total	6,980	100.0%	1,657,804	100.0%

Sources: A&E Districts, ORPGA Calculations

Figure 5 shows that Maryland's A&E Districts reported 152 festivals being held within their borders in FY 24. At 21, Havre de Grace reported hosting the largest number of festivals. Other districts hosting significant numbers of festivals include Frostburg (16) and Hagerstown (15). In terms of attendance levels, the top districts were Silver Spring (200,000), Station North (154,942), and Havre de Grace (113,062).

Figure 5: A&E District Festivals, FY 24

District	Number of Festivals	Share of Festivals	Attendance	Share of Attendance
Bel Air	3	2.0%	30,000	2.9%
Berlin	1	0.7%	4,000	0.4%
Bethesda	3	2.0%	65,000	6.2%
Black Arts	2	1.3%	3,700	0.4%
Bromo Tower	2	1.3%	9,942	1.0%
Cambridge	10	6.6%	41,084	3.9%
Catonsville	9	5.9%	5,645	0.5%
Chestertown	7	4.6%	19,350	1.9%
Crisfield	11	7.2%	39,775	3.8%
Cumberland	5	3.3%	16,042	1.5%
Denton Artsway	2	1.3%	8,400	0.8%
Easton	8	5.3%	44,500	4.3%
Elkton	7	4.6%	6,552	0.6%
Frederick	8	5.3%	39,768	3.8%
Frostburg	16	10.5%	14,900	1.4%
Grantsville	4	2.6%	7,800	0.7%
Hagerstown	15	9.9%	13,766	1.3%
Havre de Grace	21	13.8%	113,062	10.8%
Highlandtown	4	2.6%	25,750	2.5%
Leonardtown	1	0.7%	73,150	7.0%
Oakland	1	0.7%	2,800	0.3%
Salisbury	4	2.6%	77,500	7.4%
Silver Spring	1	0.7%	200,000	19.2%
Snow Hill	1	0.7%	6,000	0.6%
Station North	5	3.3%	154,942	14.8%
Stevensville	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Wheaton	1	0.7%	20,400	2.0%
Total	152	100.0%	1,043,828	100.0%

Sources: A&E Districts, ORPGA Calculations

District Enterprises

Figure 6 describes the numbers and types of arts-related enterprises found in each district. Survey respondents were asked to categorize enterprises as:

- galleries/co-ops;
- performance venues;
- museums;
- arts organizations;
- arts education organizations;
- public art;
- arts suppliers/services;
- or other (Note that ‘other’ contains a wide variety of establishments such as foodways, historic sites, and breweries.)

Districts reported a total of 825 arts enterprises within their districts in FY 24.

Public art was the most common type of enterprise, with 206 works throughout all districts. At 144, performance venues were the second most frequently reported enterprise. Galleries and co-ops were the third most common enterprise, with 142 being reported.

Among districts, Silver Spring reported the largest number of enterprises, at 188. Other top districts include Wheaton (70 total enterprises) and Station North (68 total enterprises).

Figure 6: Arts Enterprises by Type and District, FY 24

District	Galleries/Co-ops	Performance venues	Museums	Arts organizations	Arts education organizations	Public Art	Arts suppliers/services	Other	Total
Bel Air	1	6	2	1	2	0	0	0	12
Berlin	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	6	11
Bethesda	12	5	0	0	9	0	3	2	31
Black Arts	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	3	7
Bromo Tower	0	4	3	7	0	0	5	3	22
Cambridge	3	3	2	2	1	12	0	2	25
Catonsville	2	5	0	3	6	12	19	0	47
Chestertown	5	3	0	1	3	4	2	0	18
Crisfield	3	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	6
Cumberland	5	5	6	0	0	0	0	0	16
Denton Artsway	2	5	1	2	0	1	2	0	13
Easton	6	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	10
Elkton	4	5	1	1	4	0	14	0	29
Frederick	14	0	1	7	0	24	4	0	50
Frostburg	5	5	0	1	4	5	7	0	27
Grantsville	4	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	11
Hagerstown	4	6	0	0	4	0	3	4	21
Havre de Grace	6	3	6	2	0	24	0	0	41
Highlandtown	12	2	1	1	1	2	0	1	20
Leonardtown	5	7	2	0	3	11	2	0	30
Oakland	2	5	1	1	0	0	3	1	13
Salisbury	4	3	0	3	4	0	3	0	17
Silver Spring	10	27	2	13	6	81	16	33	188
Snow Hill	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Station North	20	17	0	4	13	8	6	0	68
Stevensville	3	5	0	4	0	0	2	0	14
Wheaton	5	10	0	6	2	21	2	24	70
Total	142	144	32	62	63	206	95	81	825

Sources: A&E Districts

Artist Housing

Districts provided information on housing opportunities for artists within their boundaries, presented below.

As seen in the figure below, 11 of Maryland's A&E Districts reported that artist housing (and/or moderate-income housing) was available within their district's boundaries in FY 24. Overall, 41 buildings or complexes contained a total of 1,278 housing units. Please note that many districts reported that artist/moderate-income housing was available just outside of district boundaries. While these units are not captured in Figure 7, they would likely provide similar benefits to artists as units within districts.

Figure 7: Artist Housing Availability in Maryland's A&E Districts, FY 24

District	Housing?	Buildings/Complexes	Units
Bel Air			
Berlin			
Bethesda	YES	1	
Black Arts			
Bromo Tower	YES	5	330
Cambridge			
Catonsville			
Chestertown			
Crisfield	YES	2	8
Cumberland			
Denton Artsway			
Easton			
Elkton			
Frederick	YES	1	152
Frostburg			
Grantsville	YES	1	1
Hagerstown	YES	8	88
Havre de Grace			
Highlandtown	YES	1	9
Leonardtwn	YES	11	75
Oakland			
Salisbury			
Silver Spring			
Snow Hill			
Station North	YES	4	214
Stevensville	YES	2	60
Wheaton	YES	5	341
Total	11	41	1,278

Sources: A&E Districts, ORPGA

Occupancy Rates

Districts reported occupancy rates for several types of spaces. These rates are presented below.

Figure 8: Occupancy Rate by Real Estate Type in Maryland's A&E Districts in FY 24

District	Storefront/Commercial	Residential	Industrial/Manufacturing	Mixed Use
Bel Air	89%	99%	0%	90%
Berlin	90%	100%	0%	100%
Bethesda	95%	90%	0%	80%
Black Arts	20%	75%	0%	5%
Bromo Tower	97%	87%	0%	96%
Cambridge	80%	90%	0%	100%
Catonsville	96%	97%	100%	100%
Chestertown	98%	99%	100%	95%
Crisfield	51%	79%	80%	50%
Cumberland	85%	95%	85%	85%
Denton Artsway	0%	0%	0%	0%
Easton	85%	100%	0%	100%
Elkton	92%	90%	0%	95%
Frederick	90%	97%	97%	83%
Frostburg	85%	80%	0%	85%
Grantsville	25%	70%	0%	5%
Hagerstown	70%	90%	95%	70%
Havre de Grace	0%	0%	0%	0%
Highlandtown	90%	98%	77%	77%
Leonardtown	98%	98%	2%	98%
Oakland	65%	30%	0%	5%
Salisbury	70%	80%	0%	50%
Silver Spring	93%	90%	0%	83%
Snow Hill	75%	95%	0%	100%
Station North	76%	89%	60%	90%
Stevensville	85%	95%	0%	80%
Wheaton	97%	90%	0%	91%

Sources: A&E Districts

Districts reported a wide variety of occupancy rates throughout the state. Of districts that provided non-zero occupancy rates, storefront/commercial space ranged from 20 percent (Black Arts) to 98 percent (Leonardtown) occupied; residential space ranged from 30 percent (Oakland) to 100 percent (Berlin and Oakland) occupied; industrial/manufacturing space ranged from 2 percent (Leonardtown) to 100 percent (Catonsville and Chestertown) occupied; mixed use ranged from 5 percent (Black Arts, Grantsville, and Oakland) to 100 percent (Berlin, Cambridge, Catonsville, Easton, and Snow Hill) occupied.

Of note, industrial/manufacturing space was the least common real estate type reported, with only 9 districts reporting a non-zero value for this type of space.

Artist Registry

As seen below, 17 of Maryland's A&E Districts reported that they maintained an artist registry in FY 24. Within those districts, 354 artists registered during FY 24. Leonardtown reported the largest number of registrations in FY 24, with 107 artists. Overall, these 17 districts report that 1,633 artists are registered within their districts. Frederick, with 380 artists, reported the largest number of registered artists among districts that maintain a registry.

Across all of Maryland's A&E Districts, there are an estimated 7,299 artists working within district boundaries. Hagerstown reported the highest number of estimated artists (1,200).

Figure 9: A&E District Artist Registry Information, FY 24

District	Registry?	Registered in FY 24?	Total Registered Artists	Estimated Artists
Bel Air	No			150
Berlin	Yes	0	17	22
Bethesda	No			1,000
Black Arts	Yes	100	300	500
Bromo Tower	Yes	11	35	350
Cambridge	No			20
Catonsville	No			80
Chestertown	No			19
Crisfield	Yes	13	119	119
Cumberland	Yes	0	2	20
Denton Artsway	Yes	15	75	75
Easton	No			450
Elkton	Yes	0	12	100
Frederick	Yes	24	380	850
Frostburg	Yes	14	65	150
Grantsville	Yes	1	13	23
Hagerstown	No			1,200
Havre de Grace	Yes	15	60	350
Highlandtown	Yes	16	97	125
Leonardtown	Yes	107	161	210
Oakland	Yes	24	19	61
Salisbury	No			15
Silver Spring	Yes	1	85	100
Snow Hill	No			50
Station North	Yes	11	41	1,000
Stevensville	Yes	2	152	160
Wheaton	No			100
Total	17	354	1,633	7,299

Sources: A&E Districts

Incentive Utilization

As seen in Figure 10, businesses within eight different districts reported utilizing Admission and Amusement Tax abatement. With four businesses taking advantage of the Admission and Amusement Tax abatement, Hagerstown housed the plurality of businesses abating this tax.

Five businesses in A&E Districts submitted applications for property tax credits; one each in Bethesda, Easton, Hagerstown, Salisbury, and Stevensville.

Figure 10: A&E District Tax Incentive Utilization, FY 24

District	Admission and Amusement Tax abatement		Property Tax Credit Applications	
	#	%	#	%
Bel Air	0	0%	0	0%
Berlin	2	13%	0	0%
Bethesda	2	13%	1	20%
Black Arts	0	0%	0	0%
Bromo Tower	3	19%	0	0%
Cambridge	0	0%	0	0%
Catonsville	0	0%	0	0%
Chestertown	0	0%	0	0%
Crisfield	0	0%	0	0%
Cumberland	0	0%	0	0%
Denton Artsway	0	0%	0	0%
Easton	0	0%	1	20%
Elkton	0	0%	0	0%
Frederick	0	0%	0	0%
Frostburg	0	0%	0	0%
Grantsville	0	0%	0	0%
Hagerstown	4	25%	1	20%
Havre de Grace	0	0%	0	0%
Highlandtown	0	0%	0	0%
Leonardtown	1	6%	0	0%
Oakland	1	6%	0	0%
Salisbury	0	0%	1	20%
Silver Spring	2	13%	0	0%
Snow Hill	0	0%	0	0%
Station North	0	0%	0	0%
Stevensville	0	0%	1	20%
Wheaton	1	6%	0	0%
TOTAL	16	100%	5	100%

Sources: A&E Districts

As seen in Figure 11, districts reported that a variety of incentives beyond Admission and Amusement Tax abatement and property tax credits were available in Maryland's A&E Districts in FY 24.

The most common type of additional incentive was “other tax credits/abatements”, with 18 districts reporting that there were 60 other credits/abatements available. The next-most-common incentive type reported was grants, with 12 districts reporting 39 total grants.

Please note that the same incentives may be available in multiple districts and are counted separately—for example, nine districts reported that Enterprise Zone incentives were available in their borders, and these were counted as nine “other tax credit/abatement” incentives.

Examples of “other” financial incentives include discounted incubator space, environmental-focused programs, and local general economic development support. Non-financial incentives include marketing support, parking/public transit benefits, and workshops.

Figure 11: Other Incentives Available in Maryland's A&E Districts, FY 24

District	Façade	Loan	Other tax credit/abatement	Grant	Other	Nonfinancial
Bel Air	0	0	1	2	2	2
Berlin	1	0	0	0	0	1
Bethesda	0	0	0	1	0	1
Black Arts	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bromo Tower	0	0	2	1	0	0
Cambridge	0	0	4	0	0	0
Catonsville	0	2	3	3	0	2
Chestertown	1	1	2	0	1	1
Crisfield	0	0	9	0	0	0
Cumberland	0	1	5	0	0	0
Denton Artsway	0	0	2	0	0	1
Easton	0	0	0	0	0	0
Elkton	0	0	0	0	0	0
Frederick	1	0	10	3	1	0
Frostburg	0	0	4	1	0	1
Grantsville	1	0	0	6	0	1
Hagerstown	0	1	5	9	1	2
Havre de Grace	0	0	0	0	0	0
Highlandtown	0	0	3	0	0	1
Leonardtown	1	0	0	0	0	1
Oakland	1	0	0	6	0	1
Salisbury	0	0	3	0	0	0
Silver Spring	0	2	2	2	3	6
Snow Hill	0	1	1	2	0	0
Station North	0	0	2	0	0	0
Stevensville	0	0	1	0	0	0
Wheaton	0	2	1	3	2	4
Total Number of Incentives	6	10	60	39	10	25
Total Districts with Incentive Type Available	6	7	18	12	6	14

Sources: A&E Districts

Communication Tools

Districts also provided information about the types of communication tools that they use. Tabulations of communication tools are provided below in Figure 12.

All twenty-seven districts surveyed reported using a Facebook page. Other commonly used communication tools included websites (96%), online events calendar (93%), and Instagram (85%). Examples of “other” communication tools include print materials, YouTube, email newsletters, and TikTok.

Figure 12: Communication Tools Used by A&E Districts, FY 24

District	Facebook	Twitter	Website	Instagram	On-line Events		Other
					Calendar	Artist Registry	
Bel Air	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Berlin	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Bethesda	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Black Arts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Bromo Tower	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Cambridge	Yes		Yes				Yes
Catonsville	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Chestertown	Yes			Yes	Yes		
Crisfield	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cumberland	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Denton Artsway	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Easton	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		
Elkton	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Frederick	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Frostburg	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Grantsville	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Hagerstown	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		
Havre de Grace	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Highlandtown	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Leonardtown	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Oakland	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes	
Salisbury	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		
Silver Spring	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Snow Hill	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Station North	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
Stevensville	Yes		Yes		Yes		
Wheaton	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Total	27	5	26	23	25	16	12

Sources: A&E Districts

District Funding

Districts reported information on the types of funding they received in FY 24. A summary of this funding is presented in Figure 13 below. Additional funding details are available in the Appendix.

Figure 13: A&E District Funding by Source/Type, FY 24

District	Funding Source/Type					Total
	Federal	MSAC	Other State	Local	In-Kind	
Bel Air		\$17,847		\$9,022	\$75,453	\$102,322
Berlin		\$20,247	\$75,000	\$4,500	\$100,000	\$199,747
Bethesda		\$17,000				\$17,000
Black Arts		\$38,000		\$700,593		\$738,593
Bromo Tower		\$36,324	\$230,369	\$10,000	\$70,000	\$346,693
Cambridge		\$17,846		\$8,339		\$26,185
Catonsville		\$45,568	\$3,829	\$170,475		\$219,872
Chestertown		\$36,324		\$16,000		\$52,324
Crisfield		\$17,846	\$12,500	\$1,000	\$19,800	\$51,146
Cumberland		\$17,454		\$70,000	\$10,500	\$97,954
Denton Artsway		\$210,558	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,000	\$217,558
Easton		\$10,000	\$325,000	\$436,000	\$12,000	\$783,000
Elkton		\$34,936	\$50,000	\$48,000	\$54,500	\$187,436
Frederick	\$52,500	\$108,154	\$120,000	\$597,719		\$878,373
Frostburg	\$30,000	\$85,568	\$50,000	\$35,000		\$200,568
Grantsville		\$25,646	\$54,986	\$4,000	\$15,000	\$99,632
Hagerstown	\$25,000	\$46,621		\$5,000		\$76,621
Havre de Grace	\$13,500,000	\$47,062		\$25,000		\$13,572,062
Highlandtown		\$35,300	\$608,000	\$100,000		\$743,300
Leonardtwn		\$36,324	\$387,991	\$167,860	\$15,000	\$607,175
Oakland		\$45,343		\$6,000	\$15,000	\$66,343
Salisbury		\$73,475	\$625,000			\$698,475
Silver Spring		\$17,000		\$435,000		\$452,000
Snow Hill		\$17,847			\$10,000	\$27,847
Station North	\$1,000,000	\$317,846	\$2,870,000	\$174,000	\$43,000	\$4,404,846
Stevensville		\$17,846	\$50,000	\$500	\$25,000	\$93,346
Wheaton		\$17,000		\$0		\$17,000
Total	\$14,607,500	\$1,410,982	\$5,465,175	\$3,026,509	\$467,253	\$24,977,418

Sources: A&E Districts

Districts reported receiving nearly \$25 million in funding and in-kind support in FY 24. At over \$14.6 million, the bulk of funding was from the federal government; a closer look shows that this is predominantly due to \$13.5 million in support through the American Rescue Plan Act for the Havre de Grace A&E District. The second largest source of funding (\$5.5 million) came from state sources other than MSAC, driven by \$2.9 million awarded to Station North from the Department of General Services and the Department of Housing and Community Development.

Funding from MSAC was the most common type of funding received, with all districts reporting that they received MSAC funding.

Examples of in-kind funding include marketing support, event security/police services, venue rentals, and administrative/staffing support.

Challenges and Technical Assistance

Districts provided narratives about the challenges facing their districts as well as the types of technical assistance that they feel would be beneficial. While each district is unique in its needs, several themes emerged regarding both challenges and technical assistance.

Challenges

- Staffing - Several respondents noted how turnover of leadership positions led to organizational challenges. Other districts reported insufficient staffing levels overall, as well as having trouble attracting volunteers.
- Financial - Survey respondents described difficulties securing adequate funding for programming and operations from both public and private sources.
- Real Estate – A lack of available/affordable artist housing and studio space spaces was highlighted in numerous surveys; this hindered the district’s ability to attract artists to their locality. Several other surveys noted how scarce parking impacted patronage of businesses or attendance at events.

Requested Technical Assistance

- Communication and Collaboration Among A&E Districts – Numerous survey respondents requested site visits at other districts to learn more about their successes, challenges, and goals. Other similar requests included an in-person annual conference, networking opportunities, and webinars.
- Training Opportunities – Multiple districts requested training on marketing strategies, with a focus on social media outreach. Others requested assistance to define best practices for strategic planning and fundraising.
- Central Database of Resources – Survey respondents suggest they would benefit from a database of available incentives, important forms, inventory of properties, templates for common initiatives, and other information pertinent to A&E Districts.

Appendix: Detailed Funding Information

Figure 14: Federal Funding

District	Agency/Funder	Type of Funding	Award/Grant Amount
Frederick	National Endowment for the Arts	Project Support	\$40,000
	Keep America Beautiful	Operating Support	\$12,500
Havre de Grace	American Rescue Plan Act	Project Support	\$13,500,000
Hagerstown	ARPA	Project Support	\$25,000
Station North	Bloomberg Philanthropies Public Art Challenge	Project Support	\$1,000,000
Frostburg	USDA	Project Support	\$30,000

Sources: A&E Districts

Figure 15: MSAC Funding

District	MSAC Program	Type of Funding	Award/Grant Amount
Bel Air	MSAC	Operating Support	\$17,847
Berlin	MSAC Operating Grant	Operating Support	\$17,847
	Touring Grant	Project Support	\$2,400
Bethesda	Arts & Entertainment District Support	Operating Support	\$17,000
Black Arts	Arts and Entertainment District	Operating Support	\$38,000
Bromo Tower	A&E District Operating Support	Operating Support	\$17,846
	Arts Relief Support	Other State	\$18,478
Cambridge	Operating Grant	Operating Support	\$17,846
Catonsville	Arts and Entertainment- Off Year	Operating Support	\$17,089
	Arts Relief Funding General Operating Support	Operating Support	\$18,478
	Public Arts Across	Project Support	\$10,000
Chestertown	A&E Operating Grant	Operating Support	\$36,324
Crisfield	A&E Operating Grant	Operating Support	\$17,846
Cumberland	A & E General Operating Support	Operating Support	\$17,454
Denton Artsway	MSAC CAD and A&E	Operating Support	\$210,558
Easton	Technical Support	Project Support	\$10,000
Elkton	Arts and Entertainment Operating Grant	Operating Support	\$17,847
	Arts and Entertainment Operating Grant - Off-Year	Operating Support	\$17,089
Frederick	A&E District	Operating Support	\$17,846
	Grants for Organizations	Operating Support	\$40,308
	Public Art Across America	Project Support	\$50,000
Frostburg	ARGOS FY24	Operating Support	\$18,478
	Operating Assistance Grant	Operating Support	\$17,089
	PAAM Implementation	Project Support	\$50,000
Grantsville	MSAC A&E District General Operating Support	Operating Support	\$17,846
	Public Art Across Maryland Planning Grant	Project Support	\$7,800
Hagerstown	Arts and Entertainment Operating Grant	Operating Support	\$17,846
	Arts Relief	Project Support	\$18,478
	Grants for Organization	Operating Support	\$5,297
	Presenting and Touring	Project Support	\$5,000
Havre de Grace	Arts and Entertainment Operating Grant	Operating Support	\$17,846
	Grants for Organizations	Operating Support	\$29,216
Highlandtown	MSAC - A&E Operating FY24	Operating Support	\$17,846
	MSAC - A&E Operating FY25	Operating Support	\$17,454
Leonardtown	FY24 MSAC ARGOS Funding	Operating Support	\$18,478
	FY24 MSAC Operating Support Grant	Operating Support	\$17,846
Oakland	MSAC A&E District General Operating Support	Operating Support	\$17,846
	Public Art Across Maryland Implementation Grant - Conservation	Project Support	\$19,170
	Public Art Across Maryland Planning Grant - Conservation	Project Support	\$8,327
Salisbury	A&E Grant	Project Support	\$17,836
	Creativity Grant	Project Support	\$4,000
	Grants for Organizations	Operating Support	\$51,639
Silver Spring	Gen Operating Grant	Operating Support	\$17,000
Snow Hill	OAG	Operating Support	\$17,847
Station North	FY 24 Arts and Entertainment Operating Grant - Off-Year	Operating Support	\$17,846
	FY24 Arts Capital Grant	Other	\$300,000
Stevensville	Off Year Operating Grant	Operating Support	\$17,846
Wheaton	Gen Operating Grant	Operating Support	\$17,000

Sources: A&E Districts

Figure 16: Other State Funding

District	Agency/Funder	Type of Funding	Award/Grant Amount
Berlin	DHCD	Project Support	\$50,000
	DHCD	Operating Support	\$25,000
Bromo Tower	MD Dept. Housing and Community Development Project Restore 2.0	Project Support	\$230,369
Catonsville	Patapsco Heritage Greenway	Project Support	\$3,829
Crisfield	DHCD Circuit Rider Grant	Operating Support	\$12,500
Denton Artsway	Maryland Humanities	Operating Support	\$2,500
Easton	DHCD Project Restore	Other	\$300,000
	DHCD Main Street	Operating Support	\$25,000
Elkton	MD DHCD Façade Improvement Program	Project Support	\$50,000
Frederick	Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development	Operating Support	\$95,000
	Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development	Operating Support	\$25,000
Frostburg	Department of Housing and Community Development	Operating Support	\$25,000
	Department of Housing and Community Development	Project Support	\$15,000
	MD Humanities	Operating Support	\$10,000
Grantsville	Rural Maryland Council	Project Support	\$54,986
Highlandtown	MD DHCD Project Restore	Project Support	\$300,000
	MD DHCD BRNI – Patterson Park Academy of Music	Project Support	\$200,000
	MD DHCD BRNI – A&E Restaurant Fit Out	Project Support	\$100,000
	MD DHCD Main Street Improvement Grant	Project Support	\$8,000
	MD DHCD Operating Assistance Grant – Conkling Plaza designs	Project Support	\$0
Leonardtown	FY24 DHCD Project Restore 2.0	Project Support	\$288,600
	FY24 DHCD MD Facade Improvement Program	Project Support	\$50,000
	FY24 DHCD Main Street Improvement (MIP)	Operating Support	\$25,000
	FY24 MD State Aid for Police Protection	Project Support	\$22,891
	FY24 MD Critical Areas Grant	Project Support	\$1,500
Salisbury	DHCD	Project Support	\$300,000
	MD Dept. of General Services	Project Support	\$250,000
	DHCD	Operating Support	\$50,000
	DHCD	Project Support	\$25,000
Station North	DGS Capital Funding	Other	\$2,000,000
	MD DHCD SEED	Other	\$800,000
	FY24 DHCD Community Safety Works - Community Placemaking	Project Support	\$50,000
	FY24 DHCD Technical Assistance Grant	Project Support	\$20,000
Stevensville	DHCD	Project Support	\$50,000

Sources: A&E Districts

Figure 17: Local Funding

District	Agency/Funder	Type of Funding	Award/Grant Amount
Bel Air	Town of Bel Air Cultural Arts Commission Marketing, Event & Misc. Support	Operating Support	\$5,940
	Town of Bel Air Cultural Arts Commission Public Art Projects/Sponsorships	Project Support	\$2,298
	Town of Bel Air Economic Development Marketing	Operating Support	\$476
	Town of Bel Air Economic Development Web Hosting & Services	Operating Support	\$307
Berlin	Worcester County Arts Council	Project Support	\$4,500
Black Arts	ARPA	Project Support	\$272,093
	Mellon Foundation	Project Support	\$250,000
	ClIctivly	Operating Support	\$50,000
	Planning Department	Operating Support	\$50,000
	Jacob and Hilda Blaustein	Project Support	\$25,000
	Poetry Foundation	Project Support	\$20,000
	Baltimore City	Project Support	\$18,500
	Civic Fund	Project Support	\$15,000
Bromo Tower	PNC Bank	Project Support	\$10,000
	Baltimore City - ARPA Community Arts Grant	Project Support	\$0
Cambridge	City of Cambridge	Other	\$8,339
Catonsville	Baltimore County Arts and Sciences Commission	Operating Support	\$150,000
	Baltimore County Department of Planning	Project Support	\$19,975
	Catonsville Women's Giving Circle	Project Support	\$500
Chestertown	Town of Chestertown	Operating Support	\$16,000
Crisfield	American Legion Post # 16	Project Support	\$1,000
Cumberland	Allegany County Government	Project Support	\$20,000
	City of Cumberland	Project Support	\$20,000
	Sandra Saville	Project Support	\$20,000
	Frostburg State University	Project Support	\$10,000
Denton Artsway	Avery Hall Insurance	Project Support	\$1,000
	Kat Thompson, Benson & Mangold	Project Support	\$300
	Pizza Empire	Project Support	\$300
	Simmons	Project Support	\$300
	Mainstreet Sweets/Taxi	Project Support	\$200
	Not A Phase/Terea Warner	Project Support	\$200
	Heather Yoc-Santos, LLC. Law Firm	Project Support	\$100
	Private Banner Sponsorship	Project Support	\$100
Easton	Town of Easton	Operating Support	\$436,000
Elkton	Town of Elkton	Operating Support	\$30,000
	Cecil County VLT Local Community Impact Grant Program	Other	\$18,000
Frederick	City of Frederick	Operating Support	\$185,000
	City of Frederick	Operating Support	\$101,311
	City of Frederick	Project Support	\$50,000
	City of Frederick	Project Support	\$50,000
	Frederick County	Project Support	\$45,000
	Ausherman Family Foundation	Operating Support	\$40,000
	Visit Frederick	Operating Support	\$40,000
	Delaplaine Foundation	Operating Support	\$25,000
	City of Frederick	Operating Support	\$17,488
	Joseph D Baker Fund	Operating Support	\$15,000
	Visit Frederick	Operating Support	\$10,000
	William E Cross Foundation	Operating Support	\$10,000
	Frederick County Office of Economic Development	Operating Support	\$5,000
	William E Cross Foundation	Project Support	\$2,000
	Impact Club Frederick	Operating Support	\$1,920

District	Agency/Funder	Type of Funding	Award/Grant Amount
Frostburg	City of Frostburg	Operating Support	\$35,000
Grantsville	Town of Grantsville	Operating Support	\$4,000
Hagerstown	Washington County Arts Council	Project Support	\$5,000
Havre de Grace	City of Havre de Grace	Operating Support	\$25,000
Highlandtown	Baltimore City A&E operating support FY24	Operating Support	\$50,000
	Baltimore City A&E operating support FY25	Operating Support	\$50,000
Leonardtown	FY24 Commissioners of Leonardtown	Operating Support	\$132,410
	FY24 Commissioners of Leonardtown - Trolley	Project Support	\$30,450
	FY24 St. Mary's County Arts Council Dev Grant	Project Support	\$5,000
Oakland	Town of Oakland	Operating Support	\$3,000
	Town of Oakland	Project Support	\$3,000
Silver Spring	Montgomery County Government	Project Support	\$435,000
Station North	Baltimore City	Operating Support	\$50,000
	JHU	Operating Support	\$30,000
	JHU	Project Support	\$30,000
	Goldseker Foundation	Operating Support	\$25,000
	BOPA Community Art Grant	Project Support	\$19,000
	PNC	Project Support	\$15,000
	First National Bank	Project Support	\$5,000
Stevensville	Queen Anne's County Arts Council	Operating Support	\$500

Sources: A&E Districts

Figure 18: In-Kind Support

District	Agency/Provider	Type of Support	Estimated Value
Bel Air	Town of Bel Air	Police & DPW Staff for Events	\$54,715
	Town of Bel Air	Staff Salary	\$19,538
	Town of Bel Air	Office Space & Services	\$1,200
Berlin	Town of Berlin	Events, Staffing, Advertising, Marketing, Salary	\$100,000
Bromo Tower	Downtown Partnership of Baltimore	Salary, office space	\$70,000
Crisfield	City of Crisfield	Use of Corbin Studio & Gallery, 4 E. Main St., Crisfield	\$12,000
	City of Crisfield	Utilities at Corbin Studio and Gallery	\$6,000
	City of Crisfield	Crisfield A&E District Insurance	\$1,800
Cumberland	Allegany Arts Council	Administrative	\$10,000
	City of Cumberland	Administrative	\$500
Denton Artsway	The Retreat House	Hosting Poetry Reading for BHAC	\$1,000
	The Chesapeake Heartland Bus	Traveling Black History Museum	\$1,000
Easton	Town of Easton	office space	\$12,000
Elkton	Town of Elkton	Office Space, Police & Public Works for Events	\$50,000
	Margie Blystone	Volunteer A&E Chairman	\$4,500
Grantsville	Garrett County Arts Council	General Operating and Project Support	\$15,000
Leonardtown	Leonardtown Business Association	The LBA provides funding and volunteers for many of our District events throughout the year.	\$15,000
Oakland	Garrett County Arts Council, Inc.	General Operating Support and Programming/Event Support	\$15,000
Snow Hill	Town of Snow Hill	Public Works, office, admin.	\$10,000
Station North	Neighborhood Design Center	Conceptual design and code analysis	\$30,000
	Art District Volunteers	Event support	\$5,000
	Present Company	architectural and design assistance	\$5,000
	MICA Globe Poster and Press	Pro bono graphic design	\$3,000
Stevensville	Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development	Administrative Support	\$25,000

Sources: A&E Districts