

# AGENDA ITEM

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October 27, 2016

To: City Council  
From: Planning & Zoning Manager, Jason Knudsen  
Subject: Arts Center Feasibility Study Update

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## ***STUDY ELEMENTS***

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Council approved the formation of a committee to conduct a feasibility study for an arts center at the historic Simpsonville elementary school. The goal of the study is to determine whether an arts center is an appropriate use, how it may be managed, costs of renovation & upfit, and cost to operate. The study consists of four main components: market analysis, organizational analysis, building and equipment analysis, and financial analysis.

## ***COMMITTEE'S PROGRESS***

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The Committee has established a bi-weekly Thursday night meeting schedule with their next meeting being November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Thus far, the group has completed the market analysis by identifying and researching 11 arts centers/groups within the areas of Greenville, Greer, Mauldin, and Fountain Inn. Each member was tasked with researching one or more entity with the purpose of gaining an understanding of their programming, organizational structure, available venue space(s), and associated costs. With an overall consensus that there is a market for an arts center in Simpsonville, the committee moved on to the next components of the study.

After reviewing area art entities, the study team has determined a recommendation for how the arts center should be legally organized and run. This information will be made available in the final report.

## ***CURRENT STATUS***

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Having completed the market analysis, the committee has begun organizing how to accomplish the organizational analysis and building & equipment analysis simultaneously. The group as a whole have been identifying and discussing various options for the legal organization of the center. It has also been determined that smaller groups will conduct the building and equipment analysis based on individual areas of expertise.

The committee is still working to identify equipment and building needs. Once identified, a cost analysis will be conducted to be used in the financial analysis portion of the study. I've personally gone through the building with the fire marshal and building inspector to identify potential code violations and structural weaknesses. It has been determined that the current violations are minor and easily addressed during renovation. So far, it appears that the building is in good shape and will still be cheaper to renovate than to build from the ground up. Upon completion, the committee will be able to provide basic cost estimates for needed renovations and equipment.

Within the next few weeks an analysis will be done, free of charge, to determine what, if any, mold is present in the building. The group is also currently in talks with a company to get insight into possible lead paint and asbestos remediation.