

Lens on Atlanta

Development Plan

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline the sources and the approach to raise the necessary funds to sustain the Lens on Atlanta initiative. Currently Lens on Atlanta consists of the *Public Square* application and will soon include a cultural component in *Atlanta PlanIt*. The plan will include funding sources for both civic engagement and the arts as follows:

- Private Foundations
- Government Grants
- Individual Donors
- Corporate Donors

A detailed grants calendar, including both private and public sources is included as Exhibit A. In addition, Exhibit B will detail the cultivation and solicitation timeline for both individual and corporate prospects.

As the Lens on Atlanta site matures and the user developed content grows, additional funding and grant opportunities should emerge. This plan and the Exhibits will be updated as potential new sources are identified.

Background and History

The Lens on Atlanta, Public Square site is currently in the Beta phase of testing, yet steps to secure funding have already been taken. Most significantly, Public Broadcasting Atlanta was successful in securing an initial project grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) in the amount of \$200,000. This grant, payable in phases, requires updated reporting and deliverables during the period July – December, 2009. These deadlines will be incorporated into the overall timeline.

PBA has also engaged outside resources to assist in preparing prospect lists and to research foundation opportunities. The *Prospect Research Report* prepared by Coxe Curry & Associates in July, 2008 will serve as the starting point for additional foundation research, as well as the basis for cultivation plans built from the individual prospect list. A Feasibility Study was completed by John Ahmann in 2008 and will be used to meet one of the requirements of the CPB grant.

Atlanta PlanIt was previously part of the Metropolitan Atlanta Arts and Cultural Coalition (MAACC) and was the beneficiary of funding from the Woodruff Foundation. PBA will partner with MAACC representatives to secure additional grants to support *Atlanta PlanIt* during the transition from a standalone application to the cultural component of Lens. Key individuals from MAACC have offered to assist PBA and Lens representatives as they establish connections with the Woodruff Foundation and explore prospective funding during the startup phase of *Atlanta PlanIt* and Lens.

Private Foundations

Atlanta PlanIt and Lens on Atlanta, Public Square are potentially eligible for a wide variety of grants from private foundations. Initially, Lens will focus on funding from foundations that have historically supported public broadcasting, new media and civic engagement. As the content on Lens, Public Square builds, success stories should emerge that will illustrate how this new use of a social media site is making a clear difference for those who are engaged. These stories will help drive the pursuit of additional targeted funding in areas such as education, at risk youth, the environment, as well as others. *Atlanta PlanIt's* main opportunity for initial funding is believed to be the Woodruff Foundation. An action plan is already in place to pursue a grant to provide adequate funds to support this endeavor over a two year bridge period, as it becomes incorporated into Lens on Atlanta.

Coxe Curry & Associates completed a comprehensive review of potential foundations in July 2008. This report is serving as the framework for identifying candidate foundation grants to pursue. Additional research will also be conducted utilizing the databases and tools available via the Internet and the Atlanta branch of the Foundation center in an ongoing effort to expand the list of possible foundation grants to be pursued. The viable opportunities will become part of the Grants Calendar (Exhibit A).

The criteria suggested by the Coxe Curry & Associates report and adopted as the methodology for identifying foundation prospects are as follows:

- **Geographic Focus** - Georgia or national
- **Type of Support** – Seed money, startups, program expansion, operating, management development/capacity building
- **Field(s) of Interest** – Media/communications, public broadcasting, social media, public affairs, civic engagement, arts & culture (added for Atlanta PlanIt)

As the list of candidate foundations is developed additional research is necessary to determine which prospects have the most potential. Key steps include obtaining the most recent Form 990, exploring the Foundation's website, reviewing the most recent annual report, and researching the grants awarded to identify any that are similar to the current project. In addition, it is advisable to scan the Foundation Board of Directors list and review it to determine if there are any existing relationships which may be beneficial.

Government Funding

Potential sources for government funding apply primarily to the Lens on Atlanta, Public Square site, with future possibilities to include MetroCast and some of the Education initiatives. Federal, state, county, and municipal government funding offer potential sources for Lens on Atlanta, especially during the initial phases of operation. The following areas will be pursued:

- Federal – The National Endowment for the Arts is a potential source for the cultural components of Lens on Atlanta, and in particular *Atlanta PlanIt*. As the Metrocast feature is developed, ongoing research into federal stimulus programs may yield

potential funding. Partnerships with local entities will be explored to determine the best course of action. One possibility already identified is the Atlanta chapter of the American Red Cross.

- State – The strongest opportunity for state funding will be through the Georgia Council for the Arts which has historically supported PBA programs and initiatives. As the Lens on Atlanta, Public Square site evolves; additional state sources may be identified.
- County – The Lens on Atlanta site is intended to serve the entire Metropolitan Atlanta region. Potential funding will be based on how the Lens on Atlanta, Public Square is adopted throughout the region. The goal is to monitor closely the early success stories of Lens, as well as the announcements of any competitive grants available from the following counties:
 - Cobb
 - Fulton
 - Gwinnett
 - DeKalb
 - Cherokee
 - Clayton
 - Fayette
 - Fulton
 - Henry
 - Paulding
- Municipalities – The strategic partnerships formed during the Beta phase of Lens has provided a foundation for potential funding in this category in the future. The pilot projects and their outcome will be monitored closely to identify opportunities. The partners and the pilots are as follows:
 - Atlanta Education Fund – Online community conversations about high school reform to support the AEF’s public engagement initiative.
 - Beltline – Online forum to stimulate discussion about density and transit.
 - Atlanta Development Authority – Forum on affordable home buying programs with a goal of developing a marketing brochure.
 - Georgia Center for Nonprofits – Forum to evaluate recent legislative actions effecting NPOs with the goal to develop strategies for future success.
 - Green Chamber – Forum to develop content for monthly
 - Atlanta Regional Commission – Plan 2040 will be an approach for land use policy and mobility in metro Atlanta. It is in the beginning stages, and ARC will initiate the process of seeking community input thru Lens.
 - MAACC – Lens will be the means to collect questions and continue the conversation about the Mayoral Candidate forum to be hosted in the fall by MAACC and center on issues affecting Atlanta arts organizations.
 - PBA – Atlanta Sounds online pilot.

Individual Donors

In July 2008 Coxe Curry & Associates prepared a preliminary Prospect Research Report of potential donors who have a special interest in new media. This list has been reviewed by PBA senior management to determine the best approach with each individual, if at all. The list will be expanded on an ongoing basis to include additional potential supporters of Lens. Atlanta PlanIt supporters have also been added to the list, as this feature becomes a part of the Lens site. A cultivation plan for all potential individual donors will be imperative to determine the most appropriate approach on a case by case basis.

Corporate Supporters

Potential corporate supporters of Lens and Atlanta PlanIt will be those organizations who have an affinity for social media, the arts, and Public Broadcasting Atlanta. In addition, current underwriters may be interested in expanding their support to these new initiatives.

A prospect list has been developed and will be used as a tool to further develop relationships and evaluate the potential for major support. Key elements to the corporate support program will include research into the company's philosophy and history of donations to other organizations, and careful identification of the key individuals responsible for community support. PBA senior management and AETC, Inc. Board members will be critical to the success of any solicitation for corporate sponsorship or support.
