

# New Partners for Smart Growth Conference Baltimore 2015



Singing and Dancing on Main Street: Building a National Practice for Creative Placemaking.  
OR

Creative Placemaking in Delta South: Philanthropy/Government Supporting Towns via Arts Investments.

## Panelists:

- Lyz Crane, Deputy Director, ArtPlace America, New York City
- Nathan Purath, Co-Director, Coleman Arts Center, York, AL
- Nia Umoja, Lead Organizer, Cooperative Community of West Jackson, Jackson, MS
- Tim Lampkin, Comm Dev Officer Southern Bancorp Community Partners, Clarksdale, MS
- Mark Stodola, Mayor, Little Rock, AR

Moderator: Chris Beck, Senior Projects Advisor, USDA Rural Development, Washington DC.  
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# Goals for Session

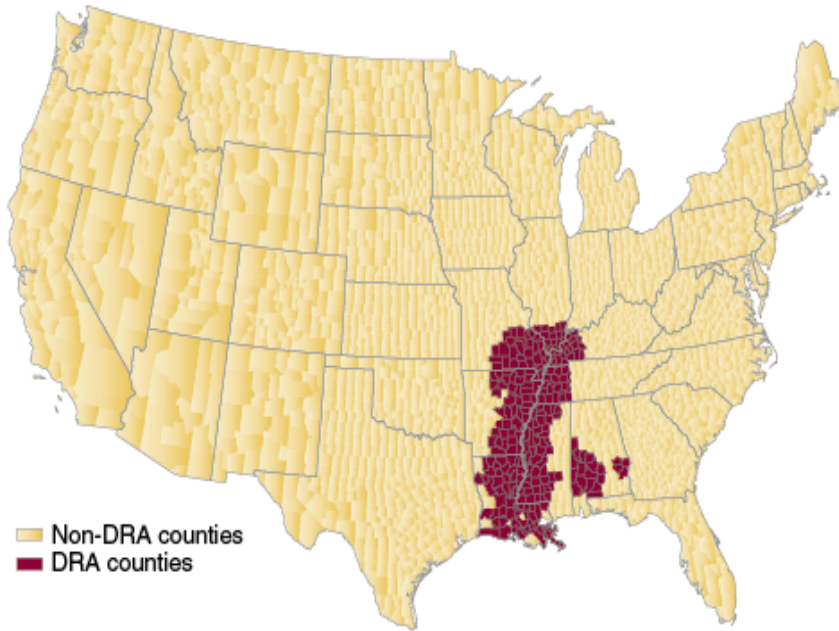


- Initial overview of current Place-based initiatives with the federal government and some context about the Delta Region.
- Learn about ArtPlace and role that foundations are playing in creating vibrant communities and how they are trying to leverage public funds
- Four really cool examples of recently funded ArtPlace projects in the Delta Region that hope to be models for other communities
- Your questions and lively conversation.

# Delta Region



**Delta Regional Authority (DRA) targets 252 economically distressed counties in 8 States**



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the Delta Regional Authority.

A few statistics:

- Total: popn: 9.8 million
- Popn in poverty: 20%
- Popn under 18yrs in poverty: 29%
- Persistent poverty (over 20% in last four decennial censuses): 46% (12.3% nat'l)
- Children in single parent families: 42% (32% nationally).
- Obese adults: 34% (27% nat'l)
- Median household income: \$39k (\$51k nat'l)

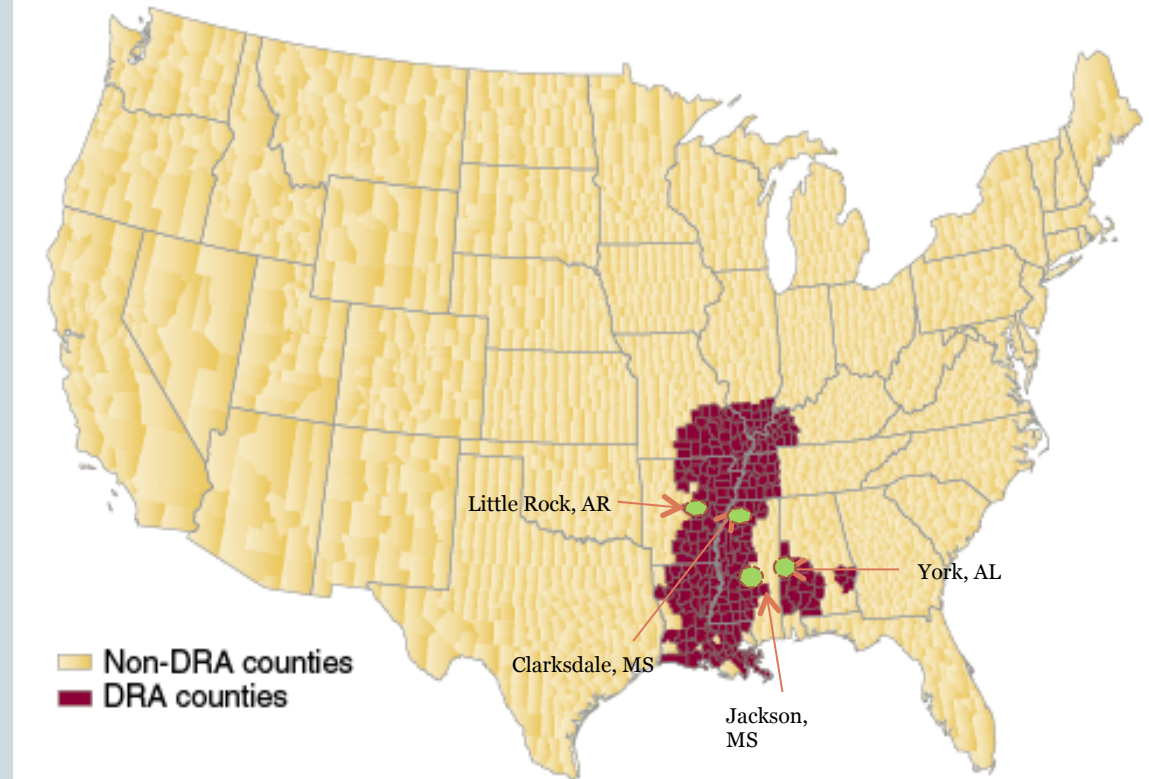
Source: "Today's Delta." September 2012  
[http://dra.gov/images/uploads/content\\_files/web\\_DRA\\_TodaysDelta.pdf](http://dra.gov/images/uploads/content_files/web_DRA_TodaysDelta.pdf)

# Four Delta Projects Supported by ArtPlace



- York, AL where the Coleman Center for the Arts is utilizing a vacant building to incubate arts, food, and other businesses as part of an effort to revitalize main street.
- Jackson, MS where Cooperative West Jackson is building an artistically designed community garden to revitalize a deeply poor and partially abandoned neighborhood.
- Clarksdale, MS where a main street building is going to be renovated to serve as a demonstration facility for local artists in an already rejuvenating creative district.
- Little Rock, AR where the once thriving, then moribund, Main Street downtown core is being transformed again as a vibrant arts/residential/business corridor.

## Delta Regional Authority (DRA) targets 252 economically distressed counties in 8 States



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the Delta Regional Authority.

# Federal Place-Based Initiatives



- Aimed at promoting collaboration between federal agencies and coordinating federal policies and investments.
- Helping use scarce federal \$ more effectively by focusing on higher needs (e.g. persistent poverty) and existing built environment, transportation corridors, etc.

## Some current examples:

- Partnership for Sustainable Communities (since 2009)
- Our Town—NEA (since ?)
- Strong Cities Strong Communities (since 2011)
- Promise Zones (since 2014)
- Local Foods Local Places (new)
- NEA's Our Town and Citizen's Institute on Rural Design

# Placemaking as a tool



- Placemaking. An effective place-based strategy should include understanding the power of creating built environments that inspire people to WANT to be there--live/work/consume/play.
- Aimed at making strategic investments into communities that have or are interested in developing a strategy which recognizes the unique assets and opportunities associated with their “place.” A street, a neighborhood, a town, a city, or a multi-county region.
- Lots of considerations to make a good place. Walkability, slow traffic/street diets, good design of buildings and public places, quality open space, vibrant commerce, etc. ARTS!
- Rural: Unique challenges of rural. Less resources, so even more important to make good place-making decisions. Cultural opportunities are essential to attracting and retaining diverse citizenry.

# USDA Rural Development



Committed to the future of rural communities.

Partners to help rural communities and small towns.

America's rural infrastructure bank:

- Affordable housing
- Broadband installation
- Clean water—drinking and waste
- Community and civic buildings (incl education/libraries)
- Business loans
- Renewable energy (incl bio fuels)
- Capacity building grants (Rural Bus Enterprise Grants)

Contact Rural Development State Offices:

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/StateOfficeAddresses.html>

# Rural ArtPlace Grants



## Other 2011-13 grants

- Higher Ground, Cumberland, KY \$273k
- Whirligig Project, Wilson, NC \$500k
- Red Cloud Indian School, Pine Ridge, SD \$110k
- Yolo County, California \$63k
- Sauk County, WI \$100k/\$75k
- Minot, ND \$600k
- Makah Tribe Village Longhouse Commons, Neah Bay, WA \$500k
- Walter Soboleff Center, Sealaska Heritage Institute, Juneau, AK \$475k
- Old Town Artists Residency, Homer, AK \$150k
- Sonoran Desert Retreat Ctr and Residencies, Ajo, AZ \$536k
- Lanesboro Arts Campus, Lanesboro, MN \$313k
- Prattsville Art Ctr and Residency, Prattsville, NY \$200,000
- Uniontown Creativity Ctr. Uniontown, WA \$362,000
- Mad River Industrial Art Park, Blue Lake, CA \$350k
- Rainforest Theatre Festival, Douglas, AK \$250k
- Defiant Gardens, Plains Art Museum, Fargo/Moorehead ND/MN \$260k



# Rural ArtPlace Grants



## 2014 Rural Communities (20 grants, \$5.6 million, 31 locations)

- Wisconsin Rapids, WI (\$400k)
- Clarksdale, MS (\$350k)
- Ashland, MA (\$75k)
- Haines, AK (\$217k)
- Bastrop, TX (\$488k)
- Star, NC (\$400k)
- Marion, Iowa (\$350k)
- Huntington, WV (\$350k)
- York, AL (\$200k)
- New London, MN (\$262k)
- Hazard, KY (\$50k)
- Fergus Falls, MN (\$100k)
- Marion/Galax/Blacksburg/Bristol/Clintwood/Pulaski/Abingdon/Stuart Gap/Pennington Gap, VA (\$160k)
- Juneau, AK-Willoughby (\$250k)
- Juneau, AK-Soboleff (\$475k)
- Putney, VT (\$370k)
- Eastport, ME (\$150k)
- San Domingo Pueblo, NM (\$478k)
- North Shore, CA (\$300k)
- Macy/Decatur/Lyons/Oakland, Nebraska (\$200k)

# Other ways federal gov't can help



- NEA's OurTown,
- NEA's Citizen's Institute for Rural Design
- Nat'l Endowment for the Humanities
- Appalachian Regional Commission
- Delta Regional Authority
- Dept of Commerce--Economic Development Administration (regional cluster strategies)
- National Park Service/Historic Preservation
  
- And just building sustained dialogue with passionate and able federal staff whenever you find them.

# A few stray ideas...



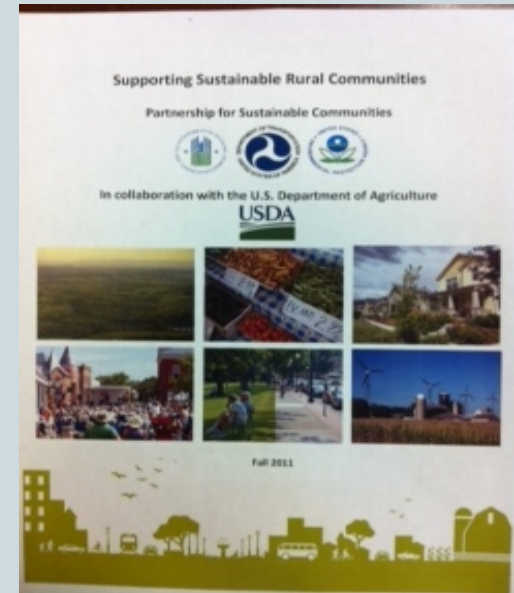
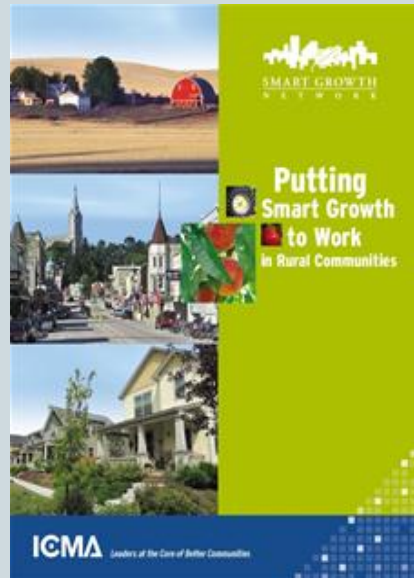
- Always think regional, join arms with neighbors in other towns and counties. If rural is to thrive we absolutely have to be smart about this.
- Sometimes, however, focus on one street or block, but get everyone on that block involved. And help the region understand the value of that block to the whole region.
- And explore ways your project connects with urban popn, too. Find urban partners if you can. How can you bring aspects of your project to the city?
- Involve local foundations. Get their advice early. Help them figure out how your project helps build their long-term capacity.
- Let your local and federal leaders (and their staff!) know what you are up to. Make it interesting to them. Give them public praise when they have been supportive. And help them figure out how their leadership around your project can scale to better statewide and national cultural policy.
- Explicitly ask your supporters (e.g. foundations) to set aside \$ to support your civic outreach (above) aspect of your work--if they truly want to help you, and all of us, move the needle for more reliable and robust public arts funding.

# ArtPlace, NEA and Creative Placemaking: Key weblinks



- ArtPlace (general) [www.artplaceamerica.org/](http://www.artplaceamerica.org/)
- National Endowment for the Arts [www.nea.gov/](http://www.nea.gov/)
- Citizen Institute for Rural Design <http://rural-design.org/>
- Our Town <http://arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town>
- Research Article: ***The rural growth trifecta: outdoor amenities, creative class and entrepreneurial context***  
<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1719&context=usdaarsfacpub>

# Online Resources— Partnership for Sustainable Communities



[http://  
www.sustainablecommunities.gov/pdf/  
federal\\_resources\\_rural.pdf](http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/pdf/federal_resources_rural.pdf)

[http://icma.org/en/icma/  
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Putting Smart Growth to  
Work in Rural Commu  
nities](http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/documents/kn/Document/301483/Putting_Smart_Growth_to_Work_in_Rural_Communities)

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munities FINAL.PDF](http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/pdf/Supporting_Sustainable_Rural_Communities_FINAL.PDF)