ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS & VISITOR SURVEY
FY 2014 INTERIM REPORT

Prepared By
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Executive Summary

AHA! (Art, History & Architecture) is New Bedford's free Downtown Cultural Night and collaborative cultural organization. The AHA! mission is to be a cooperative venture dedicated to invigorating the downtown New Bedford cultural scene. The project accomplishes this through:

- presenting second Thursday FREE cultural nights,
- inviting local and regional artists, cultural groups and educators to present what they do,
- spearheading cooperative marketing,
- being a forum for the AHA! Partners to convene around shared topics, and
- contributing to the City’s Creative Economy initiatives.

AHA!’s monthly 2nd Thursday events have taken place continuously since July, 1999. These cultural nights are held on the second Thursday of each month from 5:00 to 9:00 PM and involve downtown New Bedford’s museums, galleries, arts organizations, merchants, hotels, and restaurants. Each month’s event is themed so that distinctive cultural programs are presented that allow a wide range of opportunities for performers, artists, and humanitarians of all disciplines and levels to engage the public. It is estimated that there were over 23,000 total visitations to AHA! Thursday Nights in FY 2014.

AHA! receives a portion of its funding from the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) Adams Arts Program, which requires funded organizations to document their performance in terms of outputs (economic impacts, leveraged funds, visibility, etc.) and process (program implementation). To that end, AHA! has retained the Center for Policy Analysis over the past several years to measure the success of AHA! in terms of the economic impacts and program outputs of AHA! sponsored programs. This interim report includes an analysis of AHA! activities for the 2014 fiscal year.\(^1\)

Economic Impact

The economic impact of AHA! Thursday Nights is based on expenditures that were collected from the AHA! organization, in-kind expenditures, and visitor spending. AHA! made a total of $177,498 in expenditures in FY 2014, which includes $111,498 in direct AHA! expenditures and $66,000 in in-kind expenditures. In addition, 79% of AHA! visitors report they spent money in downtown New Bedford during AHA! Thursday Nights and spent an average of $22.34 on items such as art, food/drinks, miscellaneous retail, transportation, gas and parking. The total estimated amount spent by visitors as a direct result of AHA! Thursday Nights is $327,210.

CFPA constructed a model in IMPLAN, a commonly used input-output modeling program that describes the flows of money between sectors within a region’s economy. The data used in the model are for FY 2014 and model outputs are reported in 2014 dollars. The direct, indirect, and induced impacts of AHA! are significant:

- The $496.3K in direct spending by AHA! and its visitors generated an additional $122.1K in sales to vendors who supply AHA! and its partners (indirect impacts) and $188.4K in sales in other areas of the region’s economy from the wages spent by employees (induced impacts) (see Figure 1). Or put another way, AHA! leveraged *an additional* $311.5K in economic output for businesses throughout the region.
- The total output multiplier is 1.6 (total impact/direct impact), which implies that for every $1,000 in direct expenditures, an additional $600 in sales is generated for other businesses in the region.

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\(^1\) AHA! received MCC funding for FY 2014 and FY 2015 (the state’s fiscal year runs from July through June). A final report will be issued after the second fiscal year is completed in July, 2015.
The total employment impact is 13.3, which includes approximately 11 people directly employed by AHA! and its downtown partners, 1 employee who supply inputs to AHA! (indirect impacts), and 2 employees who benefit from wages spent by creative individuals and businesses (induced impacts) (see Figure 2).

In terms of the state’s return on investment, a total of $26,250 of the Massachusetts Cultural Council grant was spent by AHA! in FY 2014. With a total economic impact of $806.8K (including in-kind), nearly 31 dollars have been leveraged for every state dollar spent in grant money.

The estimated total economic impact of AHA! has increased by almost 200 percent from FY 2000 to FY 2014 in terms of inflation-adjusted dollars (see Figure 3). The increase in economic activity since 2000 is primarily driven by four factors: higher attendance at AHA! events, an increase in the number of AHA! partners, an increase in in-kind contributions from AHA! partners, and quality improvements in the reporting of in-kind expenditure data from AHA! partners.
**AHA! Visitor Survey**

A total of 403 intercept surveys were conducted with AHA! visitors at various locations throughout FY 2014, including galleries, restaurants, on the street, and at live performances. The purpose of the visitor survey is to determine a respondent’s place of residence, to establish visitation patterns, to measure satisfaction levels with AHA!, and to obtain expenditure data.

- Fifty-three percent of respondents (53%) reside in New Bedford, while smaller percentages reside in Dartmouth (14%), Fairhaven (13%), and Acushnet (7%). Ninety-five percent of respondents (95%) reside in the Southcoast and 3% reside outside of Massachusetts.

- Respondents are most likely to have heard/known about AHA! from a friend or family member (57%), because they attended previously (53%), and by word of mouth (45%).

- Just over two-thirds (67%) of respondents in FY 2014 report they have previously been to an AHA! event, which means that a third of AHA! visitors in FY 2014 were new to the event.

- Respondents who report they previously attended AHA! were asked the frequency in which they attend. In FY 2014, 85% of respondents report they attend AHA! more than once per year, with 51% attending 2 to 3 times per year and 35% attending 4 or more times per year.

- Respondents rate AHA! highly; 83% rate that night’s AHA! as an “8” or higher on a 1 to 10 scale and 28 percent rate the event as a “10,” while only 7 percent of respondents rate the event as a 5 or below. Overall, respondents in FY 2014 rate the events they attended an average of 8.5 on the ten point scale, which is consistent with previous years.

- Three-quarters (75%) of respondents report they patronized or planned to patronize one of New Bedford’s downtown restaurants or cafes before, during, or after the event. This percentage has increased steadily since FY 2007. Similarly, 67% of respondents report they shopped or planned to shop at one of downtown’s retail establishments, which has also increased since the baseline year.

- A primary goal of AHA! is to invigorate the downtown New Bedford cultural scene, which in turn promotes economic development in the area. AHA! is succeeding in meeting this goal in that the program attracts people who normally might not visit downtown New Bedford, including out-of-towners. For example, 74% of respondents report they would have not come to downtown New Bedford that night if the event was not held.

- An important component in bringing people to the downtown area is that AHA!’s programming includes a diverse array of programming that appeals to a wide audience. For example, only 14% of respondents report they would come to a gallery night with no additional programming.

- Sixty-six percent (66%) of respondents indicate they have a more positive perception of downtown New Bedford as a result of attending AHA!, while no respondents have a more negative perception, 22% have a perception that has not changed, and 12% of respondents don’t know how their perception has changed.

- Respondents were asked the likelihood that they would recommend AHA! to a friend on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being very unlikely and 10 being very likely. Most respondents are likely to recommend AHA! to a friend; 70% rate the likeliness as an “8” or higher on the 1-10 scale, with 26% rating their likeliness a “10.”
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 AHA! - Arts, History, Architecture

AHA! (Art, History & Architecture) is New Bedford’s free Downtown Cultural Night and collaborative cultural organization. A project of the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts, a 501(c)(3), the AHA! mission is to be a cooperative venture dedicated to invigorating the downtown New Bedford cultural scene. The project accomplishes this through:

- presenting second Thursday free cultural nights,
- inviting local and regional artists, cultural groups, and educators to present their work,
- spearheading cooperative marketing,
- being a forum for the AHA! Partners to convene around shared topics,
- contributing to New Bedford’s creative economy initiatives, and
- collectively branding and presenting the best the city has to offer, providing an easy way for residents and visitors to be a part of the city’s burgeoning cultural scene.

AHA! began in July 1999 and its monthly 2nd Thursday events have taken place continuously since that time. These flagship cultural nights are held on the second Thursday of each month from 5:00 to 9:00 PM and involve over sixty downtown museums, galleries, arts organizations, merchants, restaurants, and hotels. Each month’s event is themed so that distinctive cultural programs are presented. On a typical AHA! Night, several art exhibits open, live music is presented, theater skits or a lecture take place, and interactive family and adult cultural experiences abound. Along with individual donors and partner venue dues, AHA! is funded in part by the following entities and organizations:

- City of New Bedford
- Massachusetts Cultural Council
- Island Foundation
- United Way of Greater New Bedford
- New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park
- Bristol Community College
- UMass Dartmouth
- BC/BS/Veolia
- Citizens Union/Bay Coast/BC savings Bank
- JA Apparel
- HallKeen Management
- Southcoast Hospitals
- Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance

Since its inception, AHA! has been a catalyst for downtown development, both cultural and non-cultural. AHA! began with fourteen partners in 1999 and now has sixty partners in various industry sectors, including museums and attractions, galleries and studios, restaurants, retail shops, and cultural organizations. The number of visitors to AHA! and the quality of programming continues to grow each year, as does the excitement and energy generated by the event. For example, respondents from the most recent AHA! Visitor Survey write that that the event “shows that New Bedford is a fun place,” is a “good time and family oriented,” that “showcases what New Bedford has to offer,” while “promoting positive events in the downtown area.”
1.2 Massachusetts Cultural Council Adams Arts Program

The Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC), under its Adams Arts Program, awarded New Bedford’s AHA! Project $26,250 in FY 2014 to support new initiatives and ongoing expansion of the city’s Second Thursday free arts and culture nights.\(^2\) The goal of the Adams Arts Program is to maximize the economic impact of the cultural sector in Massachusetts by funding initiatives that connect artists and cultural organizations to local and state economic development efforts, nurture new arts and cultural enterprise development, raise awareness of the Commonwealth’s cultural products and increase arts and cultural visitors to the state.

This is AHA!’s 15th year of consecutive funding from the MCC. Funding from the Adams Arts Program has allowed AHA! to pursue program rich events, cultural planning initiatives and to pilot new programs. These programs and initiatives include:

- AHA! Nights starting in July 1999
- The Cultural Convening, Spring of 2006
- Summer Saturdays in the City, Summer of 2006
- Summer 7C’s Movie Series, Summer of 2006
- Wings Court programming and stakeholder dialogue, started summer of 2006
- Strategic Planning Sessions, Spring 2007
- Remembering Forward! Symposium, October 2007
- Fire and Ice/First Night, December 2007
- Governance Planning for AHA! and AHA! partners, 2008
- Fast Forward, April 2008
- City Celebrates!, All summer Thursdays in Summer of 2008 and 2009
- City Celebrates! New Year’s Eve, every year since 2007
- The Creatives Party, Meditech, Fall 2009
- Cooperative projects such as the Charles W. Morgan Homecoming (2014), working with the Seaport Cultural District group, and further integrating AHA! with various downtown initiatives.

Meri Jenkins, the MCC’s Adams Program Manager, offers these thoughts on AHA!’s accomplishments. “The AHA! Project has consistently proved that cultural activities can and do play an important part in a community's economic future. The project has helped to attract businesses, development and people into a downtown that was largely dormant seven years ago in the evening hours and is a model for other communities thinking about adopting cultural economic development as a development strategy.”

\(^2\) The 2014 fiscal year ran from July, 2013 through June, 2014.
1.3 AHA! Partners

1.3.1 Active Partners

There were sixty active AHA! partners for the 2014 season (see below). Active partners sign an agreement, pay yearly dues and attend programming meetings.

Museums and Attractions
- Buzzards Bay Coalition
- New Bedford Whaling Museum
- New Bedford Art Museum
- The New Bedford Whaling National Park Visitor Center
- Rotch-Jones-Duff House & Garden Museum
- Seamen’s Bethel
- Working Waterfront Festival
- Zeiterion Performing Arts Center
- Lloyd Center for the Environment

Retail Shops
- Calico
- Celia’s Boutique
- Crush Fine Wine
- Laney Baby & Co.
- Moby Dick Retail
- NBAM’s Gift Shop
- Solstice Skateboarding
- The Bedford Merchant
- TL6 The Gallery
- Travessia Urban Winery
- Whaling Museum Store

Galleries and Studios
- Arthur Moniz Gallery
- ArtWorks! Partners for the Arts and Community, Inc.
- Crowell’s Fine Art and Custom Framing
- Cummings Building Artist Studios
- Studio 3 Arts – Artist Alison Wells
- Studio 10 Arts- Artist Karen Graca
- Duff Gallery
- Gallery 65 on William
- Gallery X
- Gatlin Framing and Photography
- Judith Klein Art Gallery
- Mediumstudio
- Paradise McFee Gallery
- TL6 the Gallery
- The University Gallery. UMass Dartmouth
- College of Visual and Performing Arts STAR STORE Campus
- UGLY Gallery

Cultural Organizations
- First Unitarian Church in New Bedford
- New Bedford Free Public Library
- New Bedford Historical Society
- New Bedford Preservation Society, Inc.
- New Bedford Public School Paul Roderigues Administration Building
- Pilgrim United Church of Christ, UCC
- Waterfront Historic Area LeaguE

Live/ Stay
- Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott New Bedford

Restaurants
- Cafe Arpeggio
- Café Balena
- Cork Wine and Tapas Bar
- Freestone’s City Grille
- Hibernia Irish Pub
- No Problemo

Be Well
- Boutique Fitness
- New Bedford YMCA
- Yoga on Union
- Carabiner’s Indoor Climbing
1.32 AHA! Community Programming Groups

In addition to active partners, there are also 36 community programming groups who work in collaboration with the AHA! mission to present public programming, but do not pay dues or contribute on a monthly basis. These include:

- Alphagraphics – New Bedford
- Baker Books
- Bank 5
- BayCoast Bank
- Boston Medical Center Health Plan
- Bristol Community College
- Bristol County Savings Bank
- City of New Bedford
- CORK Wine & Tapas
- Cuttyhunk Ferry Company
- Domino’s Pizza
- Edible South Coast
- Fiber Optic Center Inc.
- First Citizens
- Hall Keen Real Estate Mngt. & Investment
- Island Foundation
- Joseph Abboud
- Mass Cultural Council
- Morgan Homecoming Project
- National Endowment for the Arts
- New Bedford Credit Union
- New Bedford Local Cultural Council
- New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park
- Reynolds Dewalts
- Riccharrdi Development
- Sam’s Club
- SEEAL
- Southcoast Health System
- Subtext Bookshop
- Summer Fund of the United Way
- True Bounce
- UMass Center for Civic Engagement
- UMass Dartmouth CVPA
- Wanderer
- Whaling City Sound
- Morgan Homecoming Project

1.4 Analysis of AHA! Sponsored and Supported Programs

The MCC Adams Arts Program requires that funded organizations document their performance in terms of new revenues, job creation, revitalized communities, and increased participation and engagement in cultural activities by residents and visitors. To measure these outcomes, AHA! retained the Center for Policy Analysis (CFPA) at UMass Dartmouth to conduct an economic impact analysis, program evaluation, and visitor survey of AHA! sponsored and supported activities for FY 2014 and FY 2015. This interim FY 2014 report includes a preliminary economic impact analysis and results of a year-long visitor survey conducted at various locations during AHA! events.

1.41 Economic Impact Analysis

Economic impacts measure the importance of an economic activity primarily in terms of the employment and personal (labor) income generated by that activity. Economic impacts consist of direct impacts, indirect impacts, and induced impacts. The direct, indirect and induced economic impacts in this report are calculated using IMPLAN (IMpact Analysis for PLANing), which is an econometric modeling system developed by applied economists at the University of Minnesota and the U.S. Forest Service.

Specifically, the Center for Policy Analysis estimated the direct, indirect, induced and total annual economic impacts of AHA!, based on expenditures that were collected from the following sources:

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3 CFPA has conducted seven economic impact analyses, program evaluations, and/or visitor surveys for AHA! since 2000.
AHA! Expenditures. Includes expenditures necessary to organize and hold the AHA! event such as spending on staff salaries, payments to artists, office supplies, travel, advertising, and printing. This data is provided by AHA!

In-kind Expenditures. Includes donated items such as printing, signage, advertising, City work crews, volunteers, space rental, and web site design.

Visitor Expenditures. Includes the amount spent by visitors on items such as food and drinks, art, retail, parking and transportation. This data was obtained from intercept surveys administered at the events.

1.42 Visitor Survey

Direct intercept surveys of visitors to AHA! Thursday Nights were administered at each event. Student Research Assistants from the Center for Policy Analysis conducted face-to-face interviews at a cross-section of locations that were determined by AHA! staff. Interviewers were trained intensively before they began interviewing, including practice interviews. A copy of the survey instruments can be found in Appendix A.

The visitor surveys were conducted to achieve four objectives:

- To develop a basic profile of visitors, including where they live and what they do when they attend the event.
- To measure visitor satisfaction with the event and to use this data to optimize the visitor experience.
- To measure visitors’ perceptions of the event and of New Bedford.
- To provide expenditure data for the purpose of estimating the economic impacts of the event.
2.0 Economic Impact Analysis

Cultural economic impact analysis estimates the total effect of cultural tourism by tracking the flows of spending associated with an event.\(^4\) Importantly, economic impact analysis measures the total spending that occurs both on-site (direct impacts) and in the economy as a whole as subsequent spending occurs (indirect and induced impacts). Estimates of the direct, indirect, induced and total annual economic impacts of AHA! Thursday Nights are based on expenditures that were collected from the following sources:

- **Organizational Expenditures.** Includes AHA! expenditures necessary to organize and hold the event such as spending on staff salaries, payments to artists, office supplies, travel, advertising and printing.

- **Visitor Expenditures.** Includes the amount spent by AHA! visitors on items such as food/drinks, art, retail, parking and transportation. This data was obtained from intercept surveys administered each month at various AHA! locations during the year.

- **In-kind Expenditures.** Donated items such as printing, signage, advertising, city work crews, volunteers, space rental and web site design.

2.1 Organizational Expenditures

AHA! made a total of $177,498 in expenditures in FY 2014, which includes $111,498 in direct AHA! expenditures and $66,000 in in-kind expenditures that were provided by the AHA! partners. In-kind items include staff, marketing, goods, and space and facilities rental (see Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Expense</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>$52,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>$8,577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overhead</td>
<td>$5,262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Fees &amp; Services</td>
<td>$21,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programming/Event Expenses</td>
<td>$22,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>$2,214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$111,498</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Kind</td>
<td>$66,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$177,498</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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2.2 Visitor Expenditures

It is estimated that there were over 23,000 total visitations to AHA! Thursday Nights in FY 2014.\(^5\) Seventy-nine percent (79%) of AHA! visitors report they spent money in downtown New Bedford during AHA! Thursday Nights and spent an average of $22.34 on items such as art, food/drinks, miscellaneous retail, transportation, gas, and parking. The total estimated amount spent by visitors as a direct result of AHA! Thursday Nights is $327,210 (see Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Avg. Amount Spent on Item</th>
<th>Total Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>On-Site Expenditures</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galleries/Art</td>
<td>$22.34</td>
<td>$37,691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food/Drinks</td>
<td>$34.56</td>
<td>$216,571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Retail</td>
<td>$23.72</td>
<td>$59,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Items</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>$803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>$402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>$7.67</td>
<td>$616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total/Average:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$22.34</strong></td>
<td><strong>$315,159</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Off-Site Expenditures</strong></td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$12,051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>NA</strong></td>
<td><strong>$327,210</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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\(^5\) Visitations are not the same as visitors since patrons may attend AHA! more than one time annually. Results of the Visitor Survey show that 66% attend AHA! Thursday Nights more than once per year. The number of unique AHA! visitors is estimated to be 8,300.
2.3 Economic and Employment Impacts

CFPA constructed a model in IMPLAN, a commonly used input-output modeling program that describes the flow of money between sectors within a region’s economy. The data used in the model are for FY 2014 and model outputs are reported in 2014 dollars. The direct, indirect, and induced impacts of AHA! are significant:

- The $496.3K in direct spending by AHA! and its visitors generated an additional $122.1K in sales to vendors who supply AHA! and its partners (indirect impacts) and $188.4K in sales in other areas of the region's economy from the wages spent by employees (induced impacts) (see Figure 4). Or put another way, AHA! leveraged an additional $311.5K in economic output for businesses throughout the region.
- The total output multiplier is 1.6 (total impact/direct impact), which implies that for every $1,000 in direct expenditures, an additional $600 in sales is generated for other businesses in the region.
- The total employment impact is 13.3, which includes approximately 11 people directly employed by AHA! and its downtown partners, 1 employee who supply inputs to AHA! (indirect impacts), and 2 employees who benefit from wages spent by creative individuals and businesses (induced impacts) (see Figure 5).
- In terms of the state’s return on investment, a total of $26,250 of the Massachusetts Cultural Council grant was spent by AHA! in FY2014. With a total economic impact of $806.8K (including in-kind), nearly 31 dollars have been leveraged for every state dollar spent in grant money.

The total impacts of AHA! are conservative estimates for three reasons:

- Some AHA! visitors who would normally not shop in downtown New Bedford return to make purchases when AHA! is not taking place. In other words, the AHA! event attracts new people to downtown by raising awareness about the quality and types of businesses offered in the downtown area. This is one of the central missions of AHA!; to create a vibrant and economically vibrant downtown during all periods of the day, not simply when an AHA! event is taking place. Estimates of these economic activities are not included in the economic impact estimate.

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6 A detailed methodology can be found in Appendix C.
• Visitations on AHA! night may result in future sales as visitors return to purchase items later in the week (delayed effect sales). For example, many business owners have commented that their businesses have experienced significant patron traffic on AHA! nights, though not all customers are buying during AHA!. Owners feel that a number of visitors are returning at other times to make purchases and thus the sales data collected from the intercept surveys does not entirely reflect their total sales as a result of AHA!.

• AHA! provides an opportunity for performers, business owners, artists and other AHA! participants who are not located downtown to increase their exposure and sales in other locations. For example, participants in the farmer’s market may see an increase in sales at their normal location, artists may see more visitors to their studios in other locations and cultural institutions may gain new members from the cross-marketing exposure that AHA! offers. Estimates of these economic activities are not included in the economic impact estimate.

2.4 Historical Economic Impacts

The estimated total economic impact of AHA! has increased by almost 200 percent from FY 2000 to FY 2014 in terms of inflation-adjusted dollars (see Figure 6). The increase in economic activity since 2000 is primarily driven by four factors: higher attendance at AHA! events, an increase in the number of AHA! partners, an increase in in-kind contributions from AHA! partners, and improvements in the reporting of in-kind expenditure data from AHA! partners.

![Figure 6: Historical Total Economic Impacts of AHA!](image-url)
3.0 Visitor Survey

A total of 403 intercept surveys were conducted monthly with AHA! visitors at various locations, including galleries, restaurants, on the street, and at live performances. A similar survey was conducted in previous years and results are presented side-by-side where data is available. The purpose of the visitor survey is to determine a respondent’s place of residence, to establish visitation patterns, to measure satisfaction levels with AHA!, and to obtain expenditure data.

3.1 Place of Residence

Fifty-three percent of respondents (53%) reside in New Bedford, while smaller percentages reside in Dartmouth (14%), Fairhaven (13%), and Acushnet (7%) (see Table 3). Ninety-five percent of respondents (95%) reside in the Southcoast and 3% reside outside of Massachusetts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City/Town</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Bedford</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dartmouth</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairhaven</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acushnet</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall River</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wareham</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattapoisett</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freetown</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakeville</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A copy of the survey questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

The 2007, 2008, and 2014 reports are based on fiscal year data (July through June), while 2009 and 2010 data is based on the calendar year (January through December).
3.2 Source From Which Respondent Heard About AHA!

Respondents are most likely to have heard/known about AHA! from a friend or family member (57%), because they attended previously (53%), and by word of mouth (45%) (see Figure 7). Table 4 presents historical results for this question going back to 2007.

![Figure 7: Where Did You Hear About AHA? (FY 2014)](image)

Table 4
How Did You Hear about AHA?  
FY 2007 to FY 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friend/Family member</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended previously</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>56.0%</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word-of-mouth</td>
<td>39.2%</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>44.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saw a poster/card</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received an email</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (see list below)</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Table sorted by 2014 percentages.  
Percentages do not add to 100% because respondents were allowed to choose more than one response.
3.3 Attendance Patterns

Have Previously Attended AHA!

One of the strengths of AHA! is that the program is able to attract new visitors to downtown New Bedford, while also continuing to maintain a core of repeat visitors. Just over two-thirds (67%) of respondents in FY 2014 report they have previously been to an AHA! event, which means that a third of AHA! visitors in FY 2014 were new to the event (see Figure 8).

![Figure 8](image)

Frequency Respondent Attends AHA!

Respondents who report they previously attended AHA! were asked the frequency in which they attend. In FY 2014, 85% of respondents report they attend AHA! more than once per year, with 51% attending 2 to 3 times per year and 35% attending 4 or more times per year (see Figure 9).

![Figure 9](image)
3.4 Rating of AHA! Event

Respondents were asked to rate that night’s AHA! event on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent. Respondents rate AHA! highly; 83% rate that night’s AHA! as an “8” or higher and 28 percent rate the event as a “10,” while only 7 percent of respondents rate the event as a 5 or below (see Figure 10). Overall, respondents in FY 2014 rate the events they attended an average of 8.5 on the ten point scale, which is consistent with previous years (see Figure 11).

![Figure 10](image1.png)

**Figure 10**
Overall, How Would You Rate Tonight’s AHA! Event
On a scale of 1 to 10, With 1 Being Poor and 10 Being Excellent?
FY 2014

![Figure 11](image2.png)

**Figure 11**
Average Rating On 1 to 10 Scale
3.5 Visits to Downtown Restaurants, Cafés, and Shops and Events Attended

Three-quarters (75%) of respondents report they patronized or planned to patronize one of New Bedford’s downtown restaurants or cafes before, during, or after the event. This percentage has increased steadily since FY 2007 (see Table 5). Similarly, 67% of respondents report they shopped or planned to shop at one of downtown’s retail establishments, which has also increased since the baseline year (see Table 6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5</th>
<th>Do You Plan to or Have You Patronized One of the Downtown Restaurants or Cafes Tonight? (% Yes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>69%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6</th>
<th>Do You Plan to or Have You Shopped At One of the Downtown Retail Establishments? (% Yes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average number of programs and events attended by respondents in FY 2014 was 2.8, which has remained relatively consistent since 2007 (see Table 7). In FY 2014, 18% report they attended one event, while 30% attended two events, 23% attended three events, and 29% attended four or more events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7</th>
<th>Number of Programs/Venues Respondent Attended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># Programs/Events Attended</td>
<td>FY 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Event</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Events</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Events</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 or More Events</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.6 Attracting Visitors to Downtown New Bedford

A primary goal of AHA! is to invigorate the downtown New Bedford cultural scene, which in turn promotes economic development in the area. AHA! is succeeding in meeting this goal in that the program attracts people who normally might not visit downtown New Bedford, including out-of-towners. For example, 74% of respondents report they would have not come to downtown New Bedford that night if the event was not held (see Figure 12).

![Figure 12](image)

An important component in bringing people to the downtown area is that AHA!’s programming includes a diverse array of programming that appeals to a wide audience. For example, only 14% of respondents report they would come to a gallery night with no additional programming (see Figure 13).

![Figure 13](image)
3.7 Visitor Expenditures

Seventy-nine (79%) of respondents report they spent money in downtown New Bedford during AHA! events and spent an average of $22.34 on items such as art, food/drinks, miscellaneous retail, transportation, gas and parking (see Figure 14). This compares to just 53% of respondents who spent money in FY 2009.

The highest per capita dollar amount was spent on galleries/art ($27.76), followed by food and drinks ($11.52), miscellaneous retail ($10.02), other items ($10.02), transportation ($5.00), and parking ($3.00). In terms of the percentage of visitors who spent money, the highest percentage spent money on food and drinks (78%), followed by miscellaneous retail (31%), galleries/art (21%), other items (1%), parking (1%), and transportation (0.5%) (see Figure 14).

Figure 14
Visitor Expenditures, FY 2014

3.8 Respondents’ Perceptions of Downtown New Bedford and AHA!

Perception of Downtown New Bedford

Sixty-six percent (66%) of respondents indicate they have a more positive perception of downtown New Bedford as a result of attending AHA!, while no respondents have a more negative perception, 22% have a perception that has not changed, and 12% of respondents don’t know how their perception has changed (see Figure 15).

Figure 15
How Has AHA! Changed Your Perception of Downtown New Bedford?

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9 Average does not include respondents who did not spend money.

10 This question was not asked in FY 2007.
Perceptions of Various Aspects of AHA!

Respondents were provided four statements and asked the degree to which they agree with each on a scale of strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, and strongly disagree. Overall, respondents agree strongly with each statement; 68% strongly agree that AHA! provides a positive benefit to the city, 60% strongly agree that AHA! is a fun place to take their family, 51% agree that AHA! exceeded their expectations, and 41% strongly agree that they feel safe when at AHA! events (see Figure 16).

![Figure 16](image1)

Likelihood to Recommend AHA! to a Friend

As noted earlier, 57% of respondents heard about AHA! from a friend or family member, and thus word of mouth remains an important marketing tool for AHA! Respondents were asked the likelihood that they would recommend AHA! to a friend on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being very unlikely and 10 being very likely. Most respondents are likely to recommend AHA! to a friend; 70% rate the likeliness as an “8” or higher on the 1-10 scale, with 26% rating their likeliness a “10” (see Figure 17).

![Figure 17](image2)

11 A higher percentage of repeat visitors strongly agree with this statement, with 58% reporting they strongly agree that AHA! exceeded their expectations.
3.9 **Open-End Comments**

*Primary Reason Respondents Enjoy Attending AHA!*

Respondents were asked to indicate the primary reason they enjoy coming to AHA! Responses were numerous and varied and are grouped into the themes listed below.

- Going into the shops/Shopping (N=31)
- Fun activities with friends/family (N=29)
- Something different to do (N=24)
- Being with friends/family (N=20)
- Nice night out (N=20)
- Walking around downtown (N=18)
- Food/dining/drinks (N=15)
- Art/Galleries/Artisans/Exhibits (N=14)
- Student art work (N=13)
- Seeing what AHA is all about (N=9)

*Suggestions for Improving the Formatting of AHA! Night*

Respondents were asked to provide suggestions for improving the format of AHA! night. Many of the suggestions reference a desire for additional entertainment and events, particularly more music (N=43), as well as additional seating (N=28), and more events (n=3). In addition, a significant number of respondents feel that AHA! is fine the way it is and that nothing should be changed. A detailed list of responses can be found in Appendix B.

*What Do You Feel AHA! Contributes to the Community?*

Respondents were asked what they feel AHA! contributes to the community. Responses are varied and the major themes are presented below. The complete list can be found in Appendix B.

- Brings business to the stores (N=15)
- Brings people to New Bedford (N=12)
- Shows what New Bedford has to offer (N=12)
- Family fun (N=10)
- Shows that New Bedford is a fun place (N=10)
- Free/something to look forward to doing (N=6)
- Community spirit (N=3)

---

12 A detailed list of responses can be found in Appendix B.
APPENDIX A – SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Please take a few moments to tell us about your experience at AHA! Your responses are very important in assuring the continued success of the program. All information is confidential.

1. Zip code? _____________

2. Age _____________

3. How many people are with you tonight? ________

4. Where did you hear about AHA!? (please check all that apply)
   - Have attended previously
   - Newspaper
   - Radio
   - Friend/family member
   - School
   - Work
   - Saw a poster/card
   - Word-of-mouth
   - Received an email/ AHA! Website/ Internet
   - Social Media
   - Other ________________________________

5. Have you previously attended AHA!?  
   - Yes
   - No

6. If yes, how often do you attend AHA!?  
   - Once a year
   - 2-3 times a year
   - 4 or more times a year

7. Overall, how would you rate tonight’s AHA! event on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent? (please circle)  
   - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
   - Please check here if you have not seen enough to rate the event

8. Do you plan to/or have you patronized one of the downtown restaurants or cafes tonight?  
   - Yes
   - No

9. Do you plan to/or have you shopped at one of the downtown retail establishments?  
   - Yes
   - No

10. How many AHA! programs/venues have you attended tonight? ________

11. How many other AHA! programs/venues do you plan to attend tonight? ______

12. Would you have come to downtown New Bedford tonight if this event were not held?  
   - Yes
   - No
   - Don’t know

13. Approximately how much did/will you spend on the following items in downtown New Bedford tonight?  
   a) Food/Drinks $ __________
   b) Galleries/Art $ __________
   c) Miscellaneous retail (e.g. souvenirs, books, T-shirts) $ __________
   d) Parking $ __________
   e) Transportation $ __________
   e) Other items $ __________
14. Did you/will you spend any money at businesses OUTSIDE of downtown New Bedford that you would not have spent if you did not attend AHA!
   - Yes
   - No
   If yes, approximately how much did/will you spend?
   $_____________

15. How has AHA! changed your perception of downtown New Bedford?
   - You have a more positive perception of downtown
   - You have a more negative perception of downtown
   - AHA! has not changed your perception either positively or negatively
   - Don’t know

16. What is the PRIMARY reason that you enjoy attending AHA!?

17. Any suggestions for improving the formatting of AHA! night?

18. Would you come to a gallery night with no additional programming?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Don’t know

19. What artists or performers would you like to see at AHA!?

20. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 meaning very unlikely and 10 meaning very likely, how likely are you to recommend AHA! to a friend? (please circle)

21. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Don’t Know/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21A. AHA! exceeded my expectations</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21B. AHA! is a fun place to take my family</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21C. I feel safe when I am AHA! events</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21D. AHA! provides a positive benefit to the City of New Bedford</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22. What do you feel AHA! contributes to the community?

23. Please provide your email address below so that we can send you periodic updates about AHA! events.

   Email: ________________________________  (Please write clearly)
APPENDIX B – OPEN-END RESPONSES

Primary Reason Respondent Enjoys Attending AHA!

- Going into the shops/Shopping (N=31)
- Fun activities with friends/family (N=29)
- Something different to do (N=24)
- Being with friends/family (N=20)
- Nice night out (N=20)
- Walking around downtown (N=18)
- Food/dining/drinks (N=15)
- Art/Galleries/Artisans/Exhibits (N=14)
- Student art work (N=13)
- Seeing what AHA is all about (N=9)
- Enjoying New Bedford and community spirit (N=7)
- Entertainment & events (N=7)
- Music (N=6)
- Seeing what New Bedford has to offer (N=6)
- Meeting people (N=5)
- Children’s events/entertainment (N=4)
- Lots to see and do (N=4)
- Ruth and Abby (N=2)
- Open Mic at Cafe Arpeggio (N=2)
- Museum (N=2)
- Great people (N=2)
- Good times and family oriented (N=2)
- Free museums (N=2)
- Enjoying the culture (N=2)
- Architecture (N=2)
- Author - EA Angle
- Daughter getting to do positive things within the downtown area
- Free wine
- History
- Schooner Ernestina at the Whaling Museum
- Skateboarding
- Supporting city endeavors
- Supporting local businesses
- Themes/classic car nights
- Variety of activities/events
- Very informative
- Viewing all the magnificent sites of downtown

Suggestions for Improving the Formatting of AHA!

- More music (N=43)
- More seating (N=28)
- Don’t change anything/Perfect the way it is (N=8)
- More events (N=6)
- Better parking and signage (N=2)
- More activities for children (N=2)
- More entertainment (N=2)
Better exposure of events
Better schedule/easier to read
Free beer
Host a musical. There’s one being planned for AHA! in December for The Nightmare before Christmas.
International music
Keep up the good work
More business participation
More lights
More parties
More shops open
Offer more outside music events
Write past AHA reviews and summaries of the various events

What Do You Feel AHA! Contributes to the Community?

- Brings business to the stores (N=15)
- Brings people to New Bedford (N=12)
- Shows what New Bedford has to offer (N=12)
- Family fun (N=10)
- Shows that New Bedford is a fun place (N=10)
- Free/something to look forward to doing (N=6)
- Community spirit (N=3)
- Ruth and Abby (N=3)
- Student artwork (N=3)
- Art galleries and museums (N=2)
- Awareness of the arts (N=2)
- Gets people to socialize (N=2)
- Nice place to visit (N=2)
- Offers entertainment (N=2)
- Restaurants and bars (N=2)
- City pride
- Education
- Promotes the downtown area
- Sense of security
APPENDIX C – ECONOMIC IMPACT METHODOLOGY

I. AHA! Thursday Nights

The economic impact analysis of AHA! Thursday Nights includes three types of expenditures: organizational expenditures, in-kind expenditures and visitor expenditures.

A. Organizational Expenditures

1. AHA! Payroll: included as direct impacts using appropriate IMPLAN sector code with no Regional Purchasing Coefficient (RPC) values.

2. Programming Expenditures (e.g. artists, musicians and performers): included as direct impacts using appropriate IMPLAN sector code with no RPC values (nearly all performers are local).

3. Other AHA! Expenditures: expenditures such as marketing, advertising, consulting services, printing and general overhead are included as indirect impacts using the appropriate IMPLAN code.

B. In-Kind Expenditures

1. In-kind expenditures are included as direct impacts and 100 percent of these expenditures are assumed to be spent locally.

C. Visitor Expenditures

1. Visitor expenditures are included as direct impacts with appropriate retail margins applied. While many economic impact analyses include only spending from visitors who live outside the community (i.e. “incremental” or “new” spending), expenditures from both local and non-local AHA! Thursday Night visitors are included in the model because there is little economic activity in downtown New Bedford on non-AHA! Thursday nights with most stores, restaurants, museums and attractions either closed or sparsely visited after 5pm. Thus, much of the spending by locals at AHA! represents new spending in the downtown area.

However, it is estimated that 20 percent of AHA! expenditures by local visitors would have been made in New Bedford regardless of the events, i.e. these are “substitute expenditures.” In other words, visitors are simply changing the times they visit downtown New Bedford and the spending would have occurred regardless of the AHA! / City Celebrates! event. Thus, visitor expenditures have been reduced by a factor of 20 percent.