



# **Legislative Interim Study**

## **Attracting and Retaining Talent: Leveraging Oklahoma's Creative Industry**

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## Introduction

As the official state agency for the arts, the Oklahoma Arts Council leverages creative sector resources in the development of communities statewide. The agency supports and partners with nonprofit arts organizations, artists and makers, small businesses, local governments, and others to foster thriving Oklahoma communities—rural, urban, and suburban—in every corner of the state. Reflecting the mission of the Oklahoma Arts Council, agency programs are designed to meet the evolving needs of the state as set forth by state leaders. Current programs are designed to meet state goals related to attracting a talented and highly-educated workforce, incentivizing new and relocating businesses, stimulating commerce, and boosting tourism.

This document details strategies, goals, and successes of Oklahoma Arts Council programs designed to help the state achieve desired growth and competitiveness. Highlighted are agency programs that address:

1. **Creative placemaking** as a cornerstone of an innovation-based economy with essential benefits for rural communities
2. **Professional development and arts education programs** that develop a talented and creative workforce
3. **Public art** as a strategy for attracting and retaining business and talent

## Creative Placemaking Defined

*“Placemaking is the process of creating quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in.”*

Placemaking is used as an incremental way to improve the quality of a place over a long period of time with different projects. Placemaking heavily depends on engagement of different stakeholders within a community. This requires engaging and empowering people to participate in the process. Our interest in places is based on sense of place as quality places. Quality places are “active, interesting, visually attractive, often with public art and other creative activities.”

Some of the characteristic of quality places:

- Safe and welcoming
- Connected
- Allow authentic experiences
- Accessible – ability to easily circulate within, along and between public places
- Comfortable – perceptions about cleanliness, character and charm
- Quiet – unless they are designed to be otherwise
- Sociable – have a physical fabric where people can connect with one another
- Promote and facilitate civic engagement

Creative placemaking is the intentional integration of arts, culture, and community engagement strategies into the process of community planning and development. In creative placemaking, partners from public, private, nonprofit, for-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired. The Oklahoma Arts Council (OAC) plays a vital role in identifying cultural districts/creative placemaking initiatives, providing professional

development and training, funding, and connecting grantees to national and local resources. Through this process, OAC helps nonprofit organizations, small businesses, artists, and local governments to collaborate and create successful placemaking projects in communities across the state.

Creative placemaking must have the following characteristics:

- Partnerships with public, private/for-profit, nonprofit and community
- Strategically shaped - action oriented
- The physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, tribe, city, or region (place)
- Center around arts and cultural activities

Creative placemaking encompasses a wide array of practices, including professional development for artists, festivals, public art, creative economy initiatives, pop-up galleries, food trucks, arts districts, and the use of arts to advance other functional domains from transportation to recycling.

According to the National Endowment for the Arts creative placemaking initiatives can help strengthen communities by:

- Bringing new attention to or elevate key community assets and issues, voices of residents, local history, or cultural infrastructure
- Injecting new or additional energy, resources, activity, people, or enthusiasm into a place, community issue, or local economy
- Envisioning new possibilities for a community or place - a new future, a new way of overcoming a challenge, or approaching problem-solving
- Connecting communities, people, places, and economic opportunities via physical spaces or new relationships

At the core, creative placemaking is a practice that responds to community challenges and opportunities. It allows communities facing challenges to identify opportunities for intervention through the creative process regardless of the community size or project budget.

## **Creative Placemaking and Economic Development**

Leading researchers and authors of the most popular creative placemaking report Ann Markusen and Anne Gagwa outline the ways in which creative placemaking fosters economic development:

- **Recirculates residents' incomes locally at a higher rate**  
Creative placemaking is a catalyst for economic development because arts investments help a locality capture a higher share of expenditures from local income. Instead of traveling elsewhere for entertainment and culture or going to a big-box retailer or shopping mall, residents are patrons of local talent and venues, earnings that re-circulate at a higher rate in the local economy.
- **Re-uses vacant and underutilized land, buildings, and infrastructure**  
Re-using vacant space generates local property and sales tax revenues that can be devoted to streets, lighting, sanitation, greenery, and police and fire. Vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated (VAD) properties—sometimes called blighted properties—harm public health, lower surrounding property values, drain municipal resources, and overall hurt a community's sense of stability and pride in their neighborhood. Creative placemaking can turn vacant spaces into vibrant places and advance community-centered revitalization.

- **Creates jobs in construction, local businesses, and cultural activities**  
Jobs and incomes are generated in construction, retail businesses, and arts and cultural production. New business, in the creative industries and others, are attracted to these communities.
- **Expands entrepreneurial ranks of artists and designers**  
Artists and designers are an entrepreneurial asset for development in creative places, and they find business opportunities to improve their skills and earn more revenue.
- **Trains the next generation of creative workers**
- **Attracts and retains non-arts-related businesses and skills**  
Arts-anchored revitalization encourages non-arts firms and families to commit to place and to participate actively in remaking where they live and work. Creative-class theory suggests that a high-tech, highly educated workforce prefers a location with creative amenities. A flourishing arts and culture sector can affect where workers in information economy, especially younger ones, want to live and as such is important for workforce recruitment and retention strategies.
- **Improves overall community infrastructure**  
Under the strategic placemaking framework, the increased revitalization in housing and transportation choices, and other urban amenities attract talented workers.
- **Attracts and retains talent**  
The most valuable asset of any community is its citizens. Creative placemaking focused communities can attract new people and retain younger generations.

## **Creative Placemaking and Cultural Districts**

A cultural district is a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly area of a community in which a high concentration of arts and cultural facilities and events serve as the anchor of attraction.

Cultural districts activate any of the following:

- Attracts artists, creatives entrepreneurs, and cultural enterprises
- Encourage economic development and supports entrepreneurship in the creative community
- Encourage the preservation and reuse of historic buildings and other artistic and culturally significant structures
- Foster local cultural development
- Provides a focal point for celebrating and strengthening the unique cultural identity of the community
- Promotes opportunity without generating displacement or expanding inequality

### **The Oklahoma Arts Council's Cultural District Initiative**

Established in 2013, the Oklahoma Arts Council's Cultural District Initiative offers funding, guidance, professional consultation, and formal certification of cultural districts throughout Oklahoma. As a creative placemaking program, the initiative assists communities in identifying and leveraging their local arts and cultural assets to promote economic and community development. Since its inception from a pilot program to a competitive grant focus of the agency, from 2013 to 2023, the Oklahoma Arts Council has **awarded a total of \$194,195 to**

**26 different communities.** Organizations can participate in the program for up to five consecutive or non-consecutive years and receive a maximum of \$25,000 in funding. To date, due to limited program funding, none of the districts have been awarded the full \$25,000 total over the 5-year grant period.

In addition to funding, the program provides technical assistance to organizations interested in helping to develop a cultural district. The technical assistance depends on the organization needs including access to knowledge, consulting, networking, leadership and governance, and program design. The Oklahoma Arts Council provides direct consulting or access to consultants with expertise in functions such as cultural planning, strategic planning, community engagement, finance, fundraising, and facilitation.

### **Oklahoma Cultural District Initiative Communities (2013-2023)**

- Asian District Cultural Association (OKC)
- Bartlesville Community Center
- Broken Arrow Historical Soc./Museum Broken Arrow
- Chamber of Commerce Foundation (Ardmore)
- Cherokee Nation (Tahlequah)
- City of Del City
- City of Shawnee
- East Central University Foundation, Inc. (Ada)
- East Tulsa Main Street/Tulsa Global District
- El Reno Main Street Program
- End of the Trail Cultural District Inc (Stilwell)
- Eufaula Area Arts Council
- Grove Community Playmakers
- Guthrie Art Escape
- The Arts in Guthrie Foundation
- Guymon Area Arts and Humanities
- Modella Art Gallery (Stillwater)
- Jenks Chamber of Commerce Community Fndn.
- Miami Chamber of Comm. Arts & Humanities Council
- Muskogee Area Arts Council
- Olde Capitol Hill Council Inc. (OKC)
- Paseo Arts Association (OKC)
- Ponca City Main Street
- Stockyards City Main Street, Inc. (OKC)
- The Church Studio Music Foundation (Tulsa)
- Woodward Arts Council

### **Creative Placemaking as a Strategy for Rural Communities**

Creative placemaking preserves and amplifies community character, which is often a priority for small and rural towns or neighborhoods. It also encourages community members to share place-based stories, memories, and relationships and celebrates local assets through art activities. By using the creative sector—specifically, arts and cultural assets—policymakers have a viable approach for strengthening economic opportunities and vibrancy into rural communities. Arts and culture have long been part of urban rejuvenation efforts. Now, an expanding body of research and practice showcases positive economic and quality-of-life outcomes associated with the rural creative sector.

Many rural areas have unique cultures to celebrate, yet they are also contending with problems related to an evolving economy, including the loss of industry, outmigration of young and skilled workers, rising poverty rates, health and health care barriers, educational attainment gaps, and physical and digital infrastructure needs. These challenges have contributed to a lack of investment in what makes rural places so special: the people, artists and artisans, and arts organizations.

Key research findings from the Rural Establishment Innovation Survey by the National Endowment for the Arts and Art Works, state rural arts organizations draw non-local audiences at higher rates than urban arts organizations.

The survey highlights:

- Rural arts organizations report that 31% of their audiences travel from out of town to attend events.
- A greater share of rural than urban arts organizations report international audiences and visitors: 6% and 2% respectively.
- The population of rural counties hosting performing arts companies have grown faster than the populations of rural counties overall.

## **Creative Placemaking Success in Oklahoma**

Below are examples of successful outcomes generated through Oklahoma Arts Council creative placemaking efforts.

### **Urban/Suburban Success**

Plaza District, Oklahoma City

The Plaza District Association and the Plaza Business Alliance are 501(c)3 and 501(c)6 organizations that work to revitalize NW 16th in Oklahoma City. Over the past 21 years, the district has risen out of intolerable crime and disrepair into a hub of creativity and a haven for local business. A neighborhood once threatened is now thriving, and historic buildings have been renovated for new, creative uses. The work of the association that began as meetings in living rooms, weed pulling on the weekends, and urging close friends to attend a small street festival has blossomed to a district that has since seen an investment of more than 17 million dollars, features 45 thriving businesses, and showcases rising property values and decreasing crime rates.

Stockyards City Main Street, Oklahoma City

Stockyards City Main Street is a 501(c)3 entity with a mission to educate the public about western heritage while preserving history by creating a welcoming and active tourist destination area and promoting economic vitality and business success.

Asian District, Oklahoma City

The Asian District Cultural Association is a 501(c)3 organization that promotes and preserves the diverse culture of the Oklahoma City Asian District. The district bridges and builds community across generations by engaging and empowering the next generation of Asian-American Oklahomans. They accomplish its mission through events, beautification, and education and outreach.

Tulsa Arts District

The Tulsa Arts District Business Association, a coalition of local business owners, oversees the development and promotion of the area. The association's signature event is the monthly First Friday Art Crawl during which galleries, studios, and museums open their doors for the evening. The event draws thousands of attendees to enjoy visual art, performances, and family-friendly exhibitions. As the revitalization of downtown Tulsa continues, the Tulsa Arts District stands out as a cultural haven for the community. The revitalization of the district represents a portion of the overall development that downtown Tulsa has experienced in recent years. The Blue Dome District, which has steadily developed as a new area on the south edge of the Tulsa Arts District and Greenwood Districts. Williams Plaza and Tulsa City Hall are directly south of the district along with the Performing Arts Center and the

Jazz Hall of Fame, also known as the Union Depot. Farther to the south, the Deco District, named for its iconic collection of Art Deco buildings, has also been a contributing area to the downtown Tulsa development. The BOK Center, near the Tulsa Arts District, is home of one of the top venues for entertainment in the region.

#### The Church Studio Music Foundation, Tulsa

The historic church became a recording studio and office for Shelter Records in the early 1970s. At the beginning of 1915, it started as Grace Methodist Episcopal Church and was one of the earliest churches built in our new city; even later, it survived the race riots of 1921. Leon Russell purchased the church in 1972 and The Church Studio was conceived. The mysterious-looking stone structure served as a creative workshop for songwriters, musicians, engineers, and singers. Successful and award-winning talent such as Leon Russell, Tom Petty, JJ Cale, Jimmy Buffett, Georgie Fame, Eric Clapton, Willie Nelson, Stevie Wonder, Asleep at the Wheel, Michael Bolton, The GAP Band, Kansas, Mary McCreary, Freddie King, Jimmy Markham, Dwight Twilley, Phoebe Snow, Peter Tosh, Jamie Oldaker, Walt Richmond, David Teegarden, Wolfman Jack and many more recorded in the studio.

### **Rural Success**

#### Alva: The Pilot Program

In 2013, Alva was the pilot community for what would become the Oklahoma Arts Council's Cultural District program. Local leaders who spearheaded this initiative were graduates of Leadership Arts. Both felt prepared and enthusiastic to lead the efforts, crediting Leadership Arts for their decision to establish Alva as a cultural district. Alva received grant funds and planning expertise through the program, used to create marketing materials for a new arts district, including brochures and downtown signage. Public art and youth programs were established through the grant. Private funding was solicited and a hotel tax implemented by the city. As a result of Alva's work with the Oklahoma Arts Council, they successfully obtained a \$60,000 USDA grant to restore a 7,000 square-foot building in its downtown cultural district, turning it into a creative space. Today, Alva has become an arts and culture hub in northwest Oklahoma, offering a Friday "art walk" that attracts hundreds each month.

#### Bartlesville's Town Center at Unity Square

In 2019, ground was broken between Bartlesville Community Center and Price Tower Arts Center to create Town Center at Unity Square, a park, gathering space, and performance venue. The vision for the creative placemaking project, which opened in 2020, was led by local arts and civic leaders, most of whom have participated Oklahoma Arts Council programs such as Leadership Arts, the Oklahoma Arts Conference, and the Cultural District Initiative.

#### End of the Trail Cultural District Inc (Beyond the Trail Cultural District), Stilwell

The End of the Trail Cultural District (ETCD) unites the dynamic arts and cultural heritage of Adair County by anchoring the vast artistic talents in historic downtown Stilwell. The ETCD promotes performing, visual, and literary arts in the beautiful setting of northeastern Oklahoma. ETCD enhances cultural programming, local artists, and fosters community spirit, while enhancing economic vitality and quality of life for citizens.

#### Historic All-Black Towns

The Oklahoma Arts Council has made efforts to celebrate the contributions made by the historical All-Black Towns of Oklahoma. Through grants, we have funded creative placemaking projects in Boley, Lima, and Rentiesville. Projects include a Smithsonian travel exhibition, outdoor music performance, and community pop up art markets. We have performed site visits and provided capacity building initiatives in Langston, Grayson, and

Tatums. We have played an important role in putting together the Oklahoma All-Black Towns State Conference in collaboration with the Oklahoma History Center and the Black Towns. The conference was designed to encourage a network of state agencies to join with mayors of Oklahoma's historic All-Black Towns to share resources and discuss ideas of revitalization. Our agency has connected stakeholders with federal and state resources to help communities access resources for infrastructure investment. We are currently working with the town of Boley and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to apply for grants to renovate a local museum.

#### Ponca City Main Street

Through funding from the Oklahoma Cultural District Initiative, Ponca City Main Street brought local stakeholders together to establish the Grand Arts Cultural District. Today, the district includes a self-guided tour of Ponca City's public art and its cultural spaces. The district is anchored by the historic Ponca Theatre, The Ponca Playhouse, The Doodle Academy, the Ponca City Library, and the newly renovated City Central building, which houses City Arts (Ponca City Art Association) and the John McNeese Gallery.

#### Seminole Arts Council

The Oklahoma Arts Council was cited by members of the Seminole Arts Council and leaders within the community of Seminole as an important source of information on creative placemaking funding. After learning about a national opportunity from the Oklahoma Arts Council, members of Seminole Arts Council successfully pursued funding from the Rural Housing Council for Creative Placemaking in Rural Communities, receiving one of only 10 grants awarded nationwide.

## **Professional Development for a Creative Workforce**

### **Leadership Arts—Developing Human Capital Infrastructure**

Since 2008, the Oklahoma Arts Council's Leadership Arts program has equipped more than 360 individuals from over 90 unique Oklahoma communities with the skills and training necessary to implement local creative placemaking programs, including cultural district development. Each class includes approximately 30 class members who commit to four separate in-person class sessions in diverse Oklahoma communities. Their fifth requirement is to attend the Oklahoma Arts Conference where they graduate. Curriculum is rooted in the Asset-Based Community Development model. Leadership Arts curriculum is designed for adult learners across cultural and educational backgrounds. Participants learn why and how the arts make a significant contribution to Oklahoma's economy, how communities have developed arts programs and vibrant arts spaces to enhance quality of life, how the arts improve the image of cities and neighborhoods while serving as a centerpiece for community engagement, and how the arts cultivate creativity, attracting and retaining a creative workforce. The communities that host each class session play a crucial role in designing the learning experience. Throughout each class, members form a strong peer network, enhanced by the rural and urban exchange of information. Class sessions are devoted to hands-on learning, group work, panel discussions, and tours of community art spaces. Leadership Arts has been recognized as a model community development program by the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA). Leadership Arts classes have taken place in every corner of the state.

The cross-community learning that takes place through Leadership Arts is dynamic. In 2014, Enid hosted one of the class sessions. Representatives from Park Avenue Thrift spoke to the class, sharing how their unique thrift store model had evolved into an organization that generously supported Enid's arts and social service organizations.



That powerful example inspired a class member to create a similar model in her home community of Locust Grove. Today, the Romp Rummage Store funds the upkeep and programming offered by the Rural Oklahoma Museum of Poetry in Locust Grove.

### **Oklahoma Arts Conference—Developing Human Capital Infrastructure**

Organized by the Oklahoma Arts Council, the statewide Oklahoma Arts Conference offers training and learning experiences centered on creative placemaking. The biennial conference brings together 400-500 individuals from across the state of Oklahoma for three days of sessions, tours of cultural spaces, artist showcases, networking activities and more. The conference has taken place in the following communities: Ardmore (2007 and 2013), Enid (2008 and 2017), Stillwater (2009 and 2016), Norman (2010 and 2014), Tulsa (2011 and 2015), Oklahoma City (2012 and 2018), Muskogee (2021), and Lawton (2023). In each community, local cultural districts and creative spaces show how the arts can flourish in communities of all sizes.

#### **Conference Success**

At the 2016 conference in Stillwater, members of the Oklahoma Mural Syndicate (OMS) from OKC's Plaza District presented on their model for community mural programs. Community leaders from Miami attended this breakout session and then followed up with the OMS leaders to learn how they could implement a similar program in the town of Miami. This led to a collaboration between OMS and the town of Miami, and today, the Miami Mural Fest 66 has evolved into a highly attended local festival. Visitors to Miami can visit the vibrant murals throughout the year.

At the 2017 conference in Enid, representatives from Oklahoma's Barn Quilt Trail program presented on the Barn Quilt concept. During the early 2000s, the Barn Quilt phenomenon began in Appalachia, and today Barn Quilt Trails are considered a rural public art project and can be found across the United States. Barn quilts are wooden blocks painted to look like a quilt block. The finished artwork is installed on a barn, building, or public structure, usually in a rural community. The Barn Quilt trails build community pride and they become a method for attracting visitors who are searching for the quilts. At the Enid conference, community leaders from the town of Blackwell attended the session on Barn Trails, which led to them creating a local community art-making program in Blackwell where community members came to design, paint and install over 50 original barn quilts. Today, the Top of Oklahoma Barn Quilt Trail continues to grow, and it attracts visitors to Blackwell in search of the original art works.

### **Arts Education as a Strategy for Developing Creative Talent**

*GE hires a lot of engineers. We want young people who can do more than add up a string of numbers and write a coherent sentence. They must be able to solve problems, communicate ideas and be sensitive to the world around them. Participation in the arts is one of the best ways to develop these abilities.*

—President Clifford V. Smith, General Electric Foundation

Studies show that students who receive high-quality arts education:

1. Perform better on assessments of creativity, which employers cite as a top five skill
2. Develop reasoning and problem-solving abilities
3. Build collaboration and communication skills
4. Demonstrate increased capacity for leadership

Arts education can play an important role in improving academic performance in Oklahoma. Studies show that students who have four years of high school arts education score higher on college entrance exams than students with little or no arts education. Arts education often improves performance in math and science, increases school attendance, promotes civic engagement, and decreases anti-social behavior. The Oklahoma Arts Council seeks to improve education in Oklahoma by offering services and grants for programs that help students in Oklahoma schools reach their creative potential.

### **Arts Education Grants**

Grants from the Oklahoma Arts Council help students harness and develop their creativity and improve their academic outcomes. Arts education gives students the tools they need to compete in a global and creative workforce. Following are grant opportunities from the Oklahoma Arts Council for arts education:

**Essential Arts Education Grants for Schools** reinforce the essential value of arts education during the school day. Individual schools can apply for two grants of up to \$5,000 per school year with a 10 percent cash match.

**Expanded Arts Education Grants for Schools** are designed to support the invaluable arts education programs provided by schools benefiting students during out-of-school hours. Individual schools can apply for one grant up to \$2,500 per school year with a 10 percent cash match.

**Capitol Art Field Trip Grants** give schools across the state the chance to bring students to the historic Oklahoma State Capitol for an unforgettable journey that makes lessons from the classroom come to life.

**Classroom Supply Grants for Visual and Performing Arts Grants** offer up to \$500 per year for schools to purchase eligible supplies and materials for visual and performing arts programs that take place during the school day.

**Arts in Alternative Education Grants** provide two grants of up to \$5,000 per school year in grant funding for arts education programming at alternative education sites. A 5 percent cash match is required.

**Arts in Alternative Education Community Partnerships** provide up to \$25,000 for arts programming, training, and more at alternative education school sites.

**Performing Arts Experience Grant for Alternative Education** provide alternative education sites up to \$750 to use toward hosting a performing artist for an in-person concert or taking students to attend live dance, drama, media arts, or music performances.

**Oklahoma Poetry Out Loud Partnership Grants** provide funding to an organization to coordinate and implement the annual state Poetry Out Loud competition in high schools statewide.

## **Public Art as a Tool for Attracting Business and Talent**

Public art is a tool increasingly used by state and local leaders to maximize their service to citizens. More than half of all U.S. state governments administer programs that incorporate public art in capital projects. Including local municipalities, there are hundreds of similar programs nationwide. According to Americans for the Arts, by engaging in public art as a tool for growth and sustainability, communities can thrive economically. Public art enhances the identity and character of communities, supporting cultural tourism and economic development strategies. A healthy public art ecosystem drives the growth of new businesses. Improved quality of life, property values, community aesthetics, and more are noted outcomes of public art programs.

### **Oklahoma Art in Public Places (AIPP)**

In 2004, the Oklahoma Art in Public Places Act was approved by the Oklahoma State Legislature and signed into law as a means of advancing state economic development goals and enhancing public spaces for Oklahoma residents. The act requires 1.5 percent of eligible state capital improvement project budgets be invested in the commissioning or acquisition of public art that represents the history and values of our state. To leverage the arts as a tool for state agencies, the resources of the Oklahoma Arts Council are employed in managing the program.

### **AIPP Public Art Projects**

Since the establishment of the Oklahoma Art in Public Places Act, numerous Oklahoma Art in Public Places (AIPP) projects have been completed in communities across the state. Some of the most recognizable OAIPP public artworks adorn state highways, turnpikes, bridges, and airports. Other projects are benefiting state parks, libraries, colleges, state buildings, and more.

Following are examples of completed OAIPP public artworks that are helping to build a stronger Oklahoma:

- *Circle of Life* by Kelly Haney, Oklahoma State Banking Department
- *DNA IV* by Bill Barrett, McKnight Center for the Performing Arts, Oklahoma State University
- *Homeland* by Judy Collins, Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs
- *Homestead to Harvest* by Andy Dufford, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture
- *Indigenous Brilliance* by Joseph Lewis Erb, First Americans Museum
- *Grand Lake O' the Cherokees* by Lynn Basa, Grand River Dam Authority
- *Daytime/Dreamtime* by Jacqueline Iskander, Northeastern Oklahoma A&M
- *Prairie Winds* by Kathy Bradford, Cherokee Strip Heritage Center
- *Thermal Bliss* by Stan Carroll, Lake Murray Nature Center
- *Bifarium* by Dan Garrett, Oklahoma Turnpike Authority, McAlester



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