### Arts as Economic Development

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Speakers

**Jamie Bennett** is the executive director of ArtPlace America, a partnership among 16 foundations, 8 federal agencies, and 6 financial institutions working to position art and culture as a core sector of community planning and development by investing in, researching, and supporting those who lead and execute creative placemaking projects. To date, ArtPlace has invested $85 million in 233 projects in communities of all sizes. Previously, Jamie was appointed by President Obama to serve as Chief of Staff and Director of Communications at the National Endowment for the Arts, served as Chief of Staff at the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs during Mayor Bloomberg's administration, was a senior adviser to Agnes Gund, and worked at Columbia University, The Museum of Modern Art, and the New York Philharmonic.

**Michael Caplan** has been Economic Development Manager of the City of Berkeley, California since November, 2006. He oversees Berkeley's business and development assistance programs, its marketing and district revitalization efforts, civic arts programs and business data development functions. He has initiated a variety of program development efforts to support commercial district revitalization, green business development and emerging industry sectors.

Mr. Caplan started with Berkeley's Office of Economic Development in 1989 when he was hired to implement the City's new Downtown Plan. Over the years his projects have included development and implementation of the first Downtown Berkeley Public Improvements Plan; planning and facilitating the Addison Street Arts District and other arts-related 'placemaking' initiatives; developing Business Improvement Districts in numerous Berkeley commercial areas; leading several successful commercial district branding efforts; and co-creating the Berkeley Start-up Cluster – a partnership with U.C. Berkeley and private sector leaders to support local entrepreneurship and retain and grow emerging spin-out companies. Mr. Caplan graduated from U.C. Berkeley in 1985 with a Master in City Planning. Before coming to Berkeley he worked as a private development consultant and for the San Jose Office of Economic Development where he coordinated the City's small business assistance efforts and managed their Enterprise Zone.

**Mark Stodola** serves as Mayor of the City of Little Rock, beginning in January 2007. As Mayor, he has helped prioritize public safety as the City's foremost obligation, resulting in substantial decreases in violent crime and property crime with a focus on various quality of life projects impacting economic development and tourism. The Mayor has partnered with the State of Arkansas and the Little Rock Regional Chamber of Commerce to bring over $1 billion in new capital investment to the city resulting in over 5,000 new jobs since taking office. In 2009, he crafted a major bond initiative that resulted in $6.9 million dollars in improvements to the City's park system and, in 2011, led a successful campaign to increase the City's sales tax which had been the lowest in the state. Stodola has been key in promoting the revitalization of Little Rock's Main Street, resulting in the city receiving 10 state, national and international design awards for its “Creative Corridor” plan which has sparked over $100 million dollars in private sector development. Prior to becoming Mayor, Stodola served as a senior partner in the Little Rock law firm Cadett & Stodola, PLC. He has also previously served as City Attorney for Little Rock and was elected to three (3) terms as Prosecuting Attorney for the Sixth Judicial District. Currently, Mayor Stodola serves as a Vice President of the National League of Cities, is Board liaison to the Institute on Youth, Education and Families and is Chair of the Legislative Action Committee. He also serves as an Advisory Council member of the U.S. Conference of Mayors and Chair of the Metropolitan Ports and Exports Task Force.
Mayor Stodola graduated from the University of Iowa with a double major in Political Science and Journalism, and received his law degree from the University of Arkansas, School of Law in Fayetteville. He has taught in the Political Science Department at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR); in the MBA program at UALR; at the UALR Bowen School of Law; at the Clinton School of Public Service and at Webster University. Mark is married to Jo Ellen and has three children: a daughter, Allison; and twin sons, Robert and John Mark. Mayor Stodola is a member of various professional and civic organizations.

Marilyn Strickland is serving her second term as Mayor of Tacoma. Her pro-growth agenda focuses on creating family-wage jobs by improving education and workforce training, promoting entrepreneurship, investing in transportation and attracting international investment. Born in Seoul, she is a graduate of the University of Washington and holds an MBA from Clark-Atlanta University. Prior to elected office, she worked in both the private and public sectors. Mayor Strickland’s regional and national board leadership includes Sound Transit, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the Democratic Mayors Association. Strickland has appeared on Meet the Press, National Public Radio and is a trustee with the Urban Land Institute. She has been recognized by the National League of Cities Women in Municipal Government for outstanding local leadership and was recognized as the 2015 Washington Trade Hero by the Washington Council on International Trade.
I am just back from a summer visit to see my grandmother and extended family in Cleveland, OH. As aunts, uncles, cousins, and extended family paraded through her house, I kept hearing versions of the same questions: “What is it you do? Creative placemaking? What is that?” (To which Grandma would inevitably respond, “I don’t know what it is he does, but we’re very proud of him.”)

While the community of colleagues who are deeply connected with our work at ArtPlace America keeps growing, that “what is creative placemaking” question is one that I continue to answer as I meet with mayors, artists, funders, and community organizers all around the country.

This is not all that surprising, since it was just five years ago that Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa (Nicodemus) wrote Creative Placemaking, the white paper that first brought the phrase to American communities via The Mayors’ Institute on City Design.

Shortly thereafter, inspired by both that publication and the National Endowment for the Arts’ subsequent Our Town grantmaking, ArtPlace America was born as a coalition of foundations, federal agencies, and banks came together, united in the belief that artists and arts organizations could literally shape the social, physical, and economic characters of their communities.

The foundation presidents selected Carol Coletta as ArtPlace’s founding director, and Carol set off to talk with anyone who would listen about how the arts could improve the quality of a place through social offerings and aesthetics that positively impacted that place’s people, activities, and values.

Over three years, Carol took this brand new phrase and made it a real enough thing that The Kresge Foundation embraced creative placemaking as a framework for its grantmaking, as did Connecticut’s Department of Economic and Community Development. Universities created classes on the subject, and ArtPlace received some 4,000 applications for creative placemaking projects proposed by communities of all sizes across the United States.

When Carol got the opportunity to lead community and national initiatives for the Knight Foundation, ArtPlace’s leadership had a chance to look back over its three years of grantmaking to see what themes and issues were emerging and how the practice was evolving.

They went through a strategic planning process that ultimately reframed ArtPlace as a ten-year fund, dedicated to repositioning art and culture as a core sector of community planning and development by investing in, researching, and connecting those who lead and execute creative placemaking projects.
We are talking about community planning and development that is human-centric, comprehensive, and locally informed.

As I have travelled the country, it has become clear to me that anyone who has studied urban planning, read *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, or is otherwise familiar with the work of Jane Jacobs, Holly White, and their contemporaries, hears the “placemaking” half of the phrase and instantly understands that we are talking about community planning and development that is human-centric, comprehensive, and locally informed. The “creative” simply invites artists and arts organizations to join their neighbors in shaping communities’ futures.

Those who do not share those reference points hear the “creative” half of the phrase and assume that we are investing in ill-conceived creative class strategies that believe that mayors across the country are in competition for a limited number of shiny, happy people who move constantly from city to city, leaving Starbucks, bicycles, and gay couples in their wake.

Or worse, they hear “placemaking” as ominously colonial, that creative placemakers are interested in “discovering” places and treating them as tabulae rasae to be “made” from scratch.

Neither could be further from what we are doing. We essentially believe that a creative placemaking project needs to have **four basic parts**:

- First, the work needs to be ultimately place-based, meaning that there is a group of people who live and work in the same place. It can be a block, a neighborhood, a town, a city, or a region, but you need to be able to draw a circle around it on a map.

- Next, you need to talk about the community conditions for all of the people who live in that place and identify some community development change that that group of people would like to see: a problem with housing that needs to be fixed; an opportunity with a new transportation infrastructure that needs to be seized; a problematic narrative around public safety that needs to be changed. (There are **ten categories of community development** changes that we currently track.)

- Third is when the “creative” comes into play: how can artists, arts organizations, or arts activity help achieve the change that has been articulated for this group of people?

- And, finally, since these are projects that explicitly set out to make a change, there needs to be a way of knowing whether the change has happened. Some people call this “project evaluation.” We simply say it is important to know when you can stop doing something, cross it off your list, and move on to the next thing.

I often use Springboard for the Arts’ **Irrigate** project to help people understand how these four steps play out in real life.

St. Paul, MN was constructing a new light rail, and during the two years of construction, it was a pain. If you lived along the construction corridor, it was messy, noisy, and inconvenient. Worse, if you owned a business there, it was all of those things, and you were losing customers on top of that as parking disappeared and traffic snarled.
So Springboard mobilized and trained 600 local artists, who then set out to partner with local businesses and organizations. None of the artists were asked to change their artistic practice, they were simply invited to share their art along the construction corridor: visual art installations, concerts, interactive workshops, dance performances – in total these artists produced 150 events over a two-year period, changing the narrative of the neighborhood from a place to be avoided to a vibrant destination.

Stained glass installation in fence by artist Steve Bougie as part of Irrigate

How did they know that that had happened? They tracked the 30 million positive media impressions that these arts events produced. No longer was this a neighborhood known for traffic jams; instead it became the cool place to go on a Friday night.

And, perhaps, the biggest benefit was for the transit project itself. Rather than teach people to avoid the neighborhood over the two years of construction, Irrigate filled the corridor with activity, creating demand for people to be able to get to and from the neighborhood. When the Green Line opened, people were already in the habit of coming and going and were thrilled to have another option for doing so.

Last week, we announced $10 million in new investments in 38 projects from Kivalina, AK all the way across to Miami, FL that are addressing agriculture and food systems, environment and open space, youth and education, and all of the other issue areas our communities confront.

In each of these projects, artists and arts organizations are working with other members of their communities to help build better futures. And that's really all creative placemaking is.

I hope Grandma is proud.
About This Study

Arts & Economic Prosperity IV is the most comprehensive study of the nonprofit arts and culture industry ever conducted. It documents the economic impact of the nonprofit arts and culture industry in 182 study regions representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The diverse communities range in population 1,600 to 4 million and type from small rural to large urban.

This study uses four economic measures to define economic impact: full-time equivalent jobs, resident household income, and revenue to local and state governments. To collect the most comprehensive data possible, we measured the spending of 8,721 nonprofit arts and culture organizations and 13,180 of their attendees to determine total industry spending.

Project economists from the Georgia Institute of Technology customized input-output analysis models for each study region. To derive the national estimates, the study regions were stratified into six population groups, and an economic impact average was calculated for each group. Then, the nation’s 13,180 largest cities were assigned the economic impact averages for their population.

Several outlier regions were removed when calculating the national estimates due to their comparably high levels of economic activity in their population categories.

For more information on Arts & Economic Prosperity IV, including information on downloading and purchasing all study reports, please visit www.AmericansForTheArts.org/EconomicImpact.

Americans for the Arts staff are available for speaking engagements. If interested, please contact the Research Department at 202.371.2830 or at research@artsusa.org.
Nonprofit Arts & Culture: a resilient industry

Organizations
In 2010, nonprofit arts and culture organizations pumped an estimated $61.1 billion into the economy. Nonprofit arts and culture organizations are employers, producers, consumers, and key promoters of their cities and regions. Most of all, they are valuable contributors to the business community.

Audiences
Dinner and a show go hand-in-hand. Attendance at arts events generates income for local businesses—restaurants, parking garages, hotels, retail stores. An average arts attendee spends $24.60 per event in addition to the cost of admission. On the national level, these audiences provided $74.1 billion of valuable revenue for local merchants and their communities. In addition, data shows nonlocal attendees spend twice as much as local attendees ($39.96 vs. $17.42), demonstrating that when a community attracts cultural tourists, it harnesses significant economic rewards.

In 2010, nonprofit arts and culture organizations alone supported 2.2 million full-time equivalent jobs. Of this total, 1.1 million jobs were a result of “direct” expenditures by nonprofit arts organizations, representing 0.87 percent of the U.S. workforce. Compared to the size of other sectors of the U.S. workforce, this figure is significant. Nonprofit arts and culture organizations support more U.S. jobs than there are accountants and auditors, public safety officers, and even lawyers.

Economic Impact of America’s Nonprofit Arts & Culture Industry

America’s nonprofit arts and culture industry generates $135.2 billion in economic activity every year—$61.1 billion in spending by organizations and $74.1 billion in event-related spending by audiences. The industry supports 4.1 million jobs and generates $22.3 billion in government revenue.

“Mayors understand the connection between the arts industry and city revenues. Arts activity creates thousands of direct and indirect jobs and generates billions in government and business revenues. The arts also make our cities destinations for tourists, help attract and retain businesses, and play an important role in the economic revitalization of cities and the vibrancy of our neighborhoods.”

Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter
President, The United States Conference of Mayors, 2012–2013

Economic Impact of the Nonprofit Arts & Culture Industry (2010)

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<th>AREA OF IMPACT</th>
<th>ORGANIZATIONS</th>
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Average per person audience expenditures: $24.60

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<td>Gift / Souvenirs</td>
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The impact of nonprofit arts and culture organizations on the economy is significant.
THE CREATIVE CORRIDOR  A Main Street Revitalization

University of Arkansas Community Design Center + Marlon Blackwell Architect

for

The City of Little Rock

In fulfillment of an NEA Our Town grant

"...a stranger suddenly dropped into the business center of Zenith could not have told whether he was in a city of Oregon or Georgia, Ohio or Maine, Oklahoma or Manitoba...The shops show the same standardized, nationally advertised wares; the newspapers of sections three thousand miles apart have the same 'syndicated features'; the boy in Arkansas displays just such a flamboyant ready-made suit as is found on just such a boy in Delaware."

-Sinclair Lewis, Babbitt-
Main Street: From Commerce to Culture

If ecologies evolve through diversification, cities mature through aggregation of talent and resources. The Creative Corridor Plan is premised upon the aggregation of complementary creative organizations currently scattered throughout Little Rock. Some of these groups exist at the financial margin and struggle to stay alive. Their ability to secure greater visibility and support will likely be amplified through new synergies from aggregation. Facilities slated to anchor The Creative Corridor include instruction and production spaces for the symphony, ballet, arts center, visual artists, theater, and dance, as well as a culinary arts economy that triangulates restaurants, demonstration, and education.
The Creative Corridor retrofits a four-block segment of an endangered historic downtown Main Street through economic development catalyzed by the cultural arts rather than Main Street’s traditional retail base.

Main Street America
Main Street became a major force of centralization and incorporation in our emerging national landscape. Absent a town square or green, it functioned as the definitive heart of American civic and commercial life by the latter part of the 19th century. While no Main Street is exactly the same, this place type developed a categorical urban form exhibiting distinct morphological and typological patterns based on commercial activity. And, as chronicled in the novels of Sinclair Lewis, Main Street forged shared patterns and social capital that shaped a distributed American experience. But that was then. So goes the city, goes Main Street.
Main Street Decline

The ascendancy and eventual decline of America’s Main Streets is the story of the American city’s decline. The story includes game-changing transformations in the transportation technologies and retail logistics that originally serviced Main Street. The peak of Main Street’s influence parallels the dominance of streetcars and trolleys as urban transit modes—forces of population concentration that facilitate walkable neighborhoods. Whereas rail transit concentrates populations, automobiles distribute populations. With the emergence of mass automobile ownership after the 1920s new suburban commercial districts derivative of Main Street arose, displacing the function of Main Street as an urban center.

Urban Renewal
580 acres of the downtown were demolished, including 471 commercial buildings (more than 1600 total in a city of 193,000) and the population density dropped from 18 people per acre to five in 1970.

Pedestrian Mall
Four blocks of Main Street were converted into a pedestrian mall that made up the Metrocentre District. Due to lack of automobile access and a decline in businesses, the mall was perceived as a failure and was demolished.

Now in the 21st century, commerce has long abandoned most Main Streets, including the one in Little Rock’s. In Little Rock we are left with a great street space framed by beautifully crafted buildings that represent an irreplaceable tradition of architecture and urbanism. Like any accomplished work of art, music, or literature, Main Street is an important link in our cultural gene pool, representing a placemaking intelligence whose loss diminishes our collective city-building capacities. Tearing down structures with historical significance is an inferior land development solution. The good news is that as new interests pioneer revitalization within the city today, Main Street is once again seen as an important venue for adaptive reuse. Like with most strong urban form types, Main Street is highly resilient and capable of adaptation to new realities without losing its distinguishing spatial characteristics. To preserve and rehabilitate Main Street is prudent and farsighted stewardship regardless of whether one is following an economic, social, or ecological bottom line.
The decline of Little Rock’s Main Street happened late; a victim of the city’s all too successful efforts in securing federal urban renewal funds during the 1950s. The Central Little Rock Urban Renewal Project began in 1961 as a consortium of the Urban Progress Association, the Little Rock Housing Authority, Downtown Little Rock Unlimited, and the City of Little Rock—eventually to become a national model for urban neighborhood clearance. Over 580 acres of the downtown were demolished, including 471 commercial buildings (more than 1,600 buildings total in a city of only 193,000), and population density dropped from 18 people per acre to five people per acre by 1970. In some downtown neighborhoods the population dropped 75 percent. Primarily sustained by state office tenants, Main Street is an urban island among a few intact downtown districts floating within an otherwise underdeveloped building fabric. Downtown’s single largest land use is parking, and the City’s retail base is not coming back anytime soon.

When Parking Becomes an Urbanism

Little Rock has a parking problem: surface parking is now the City’s single largest land use. In downtown and urban areas generally, parking should never become its own land use! Successful urbanism incorporates surface parking into the street, or discretely within the block interior, or as structured parking within building footprints. A disproportionate amount of surface parking undermines continuity in building and neighborhood fabric, fatal to urban character and functioning. Of course, parking as its own urbanism is an outgrowth of the City’s urban renewal efforts, the latter having never replaced the building fabric it demolished. Parking as a place holder has become a de facto urbanism.
...there are over 7,000 spaces within two blocks of the Main Street Creative Corridor!

While The Creative Corridor’s building fabric is fairly intact with only four vacant sites among the four blocks, a different parking challenge exists. More than 7,000 parking spaces exist within two blocks of The Creative Corridor in structured, surface, and on-street formats. Most of this parking, however, is presently reserved for dedicated parking in structured decks. As The Creative Corridor retrofit eventually leads to higher and better land uses, some on-street parking will likely be lost to installation of new pedestrian amenities within the right-of-way. The reintroduction of rail transit someday will also warrant removal of on-street parking along Main Street. Urbanization of Main Street will necessitate new urban parking strategies fitting of the placemaking principles underpinning conception of The Creative Corridor. Since a primary goal of The Creative Corridor is to develop a superior public realm commensurate with the development of world-class architectural facilities, parking cannot be allowed to drive urban design, but rather should be considered in an integral manner with other public interests.

Precedents in Main Street Revitalization

Cities everywhere have tapped into the place-based economic development potential of their Main Streets. As with any project of the commons, these revitalization efforts all required public-private partnerships and cooperative agreements among property holders. Most importantly, they could not have happened without powerful city leadership with the ability to envision a different future. Most of the illustrated projects are located in once distressed downtowns with the usual naysayers and opponents who couldn’t imagine a reality different from the status quo. These urban corridors have become mixed-use signature streets and destinations in their respective cities.

In the 1950’s downtown Little Rock had a population density of 18 people per acre. By 1970 Urban Renewal efforts demolished 1,600 buildings, dropping the population density to five people per acre.

Cities everywhere have tapped into the place-based economic development potential of their Main Streets. As with any project of the commons, these revitalization efforts all required public-private partnerships and cooperative agreements among property holders. Most importantly, they could not have happened without powerful city leadership with the ability to envision a different future. Most of the illustrated projects are located in once distressed downtowns with the usual naysayers and opponents who couldn’t imagine a reality different from the status quo. These urban corridors have become mixed-use signature streets and destinations in their respective cities.
Like many Main Streets, The Creative Corridor neighborhood has a Walk Score ranking of 94 out of 100, considered to be a “Walkers’ Paradise”—a key benchmark for securing high-grade urban reinvestment.

Funding Initiatives and Community Participation
Planning for The Creative Corridor was made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts under their inaugural *Our Town* program in 2011. The City was one of 51 communities out of 447 applicants to be awarded funding under this signature program. Considerable federal investments focused on elevating downtown livability in Little Rock preceded award of the *Our Town* grant. Indeed, leadership under Mayor Stodola has garnered successive grants over the last five years from the NEA and USEPA to develop The Creative Corridor. Working extensively with stakeholders and the design team, the City has shaped a vision for The Creative Corridor ready for further design development and implementation.
During the project grant period spanning 2011 and 2012, the City and design team met with more than 30 stakeholders, including arts organizations, the Main Street Task Force, and property holders. From these meetings and workshops, a design strategy emerged for incremental implementation of The Creative Corridor Plan. The Creative Corridor Plan also draws upon planning proposals generated from the USEPA’s 2011 report: Greening America’s Capitals: Little Rock, Arkansas. The USEPA focused on the installation of Low Impact Development (LID) streetscapes for Main Street. Based on the Creative Corridor Plan, the USEPA and the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission (ANRC) just committed $1.2 million in capital funding to implement some of the plan’s demonstration LID streetscapes under their 319 Nonpoint Source Pollution program. Meanwhile, development partners are preparing tenant build-out plans for the western edge of the 500 block of Main Street. Other historic structures within The Creative Corridor are either under contract or undergoing tens of millions of dollars in rehabilitation.
Unlike roads, which efficiently move traffic from one point to another, streets are platforms for capturing value. A well-designed street provides non-traffic social functions related to gathering, assembly, recreation, and aesthetics. Public investments in the right-of-way should align with the development patterns desired along the street.

**Design Approach: Creating Urban Rooms**

The primary goal of The Creative Corridor is to create a superior public realm commensurate with the development of world-class architectural facilities. The plan structures an identity for The Creative Corridor adaptable to increasing levels of investment over time. The approach employs four phases in the corridor’s transformation to a downtown cultural node. Consisting of a series of urban rooms, this node provides a sense of centrality and opportunity for social life that counters the dominance of mobility in corridors. Each phase can be accomplished in succession or all at once as funding and political will permit. Phasing maintains plausible alignment between public and private investments, and between proportional investments in the urban realm and individual buildings.
The Street as a Platform for Capturing Value

Unlike roads, which efficiently move traffic between points, streets are platforms for capturing value. A well-designed street provides non-traffic social functions related to gathering, assembly, recreation, and aesthetics. Public investments in the right-of-way should align with land-use development patterns desired along the street. The plan coordinates Metroplan’s proposed expansion of the rail streetcar system with the City’s development of ecological-based stormwater management facilities as recommended by the USEPA.

Design solutions, then, rely upon the urbanism of streetscapes—landscape architecture, ecological engineering, public space configurations, building frontage systems, and townscaping—to recalibrate the corridor for new uses.
A vivid and integrated physical setting, capable of producing a sharp image, plays a social role as well. It can furnish the raw material for the symbols and collective memories of group communication.... Indeed, a distinctive and legible environment not only offers security but also heightens the potential depth and intensity of human experience.

—Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City*

Alignment between Public and Private Investments

The vision is holistic, but the approach facilitates incremental implementation. Urban revitalization efforts are generally susceptible to failure when they lack either phased participation or balance between public and private investment. Particularly in today’s risk-averse financing climate, viable plans will be structured around small-grained infill strategies reliant upon staged or self-financing. Accordingly, project phasing begins with prudent right-of-way improvements proportional to current development activity without getting too far ahead of the market. Each phase establishes self-sufficiency without reliance on the subsequent phase to appear complete—not dissimilar to Main Street’s initial growth and development.
Like any accomplished work of art, music, or literature, Main Street is an important link in our cultural gene pool, representing a placemaking intelligence whose loss diminishes our collective city-building capacities.

Main Street’s New Land-Use Ecology

An additional challenge regards the compatibility between proposed larger infill buildings using curtain wall technologies and early 20th century commercial buildings fashioned from the expressive order of brick and stone. Rather than simply rely on historically-inspired frontage guidelines, the plan negotiates conflicting building traditions and scales through the use of townscaping elements like arcades, urban porches, marquees, LED screens, public art, and amphitheaters that bridge street and building interiors. This layer of pedestrian-oriented improvements support ongoing lifestyle shifts within the corridor, while allowing the City to maintain a de facto development momentum.
Since architectural guidelines are not politically feasible, townscaping elements and frontage systems mediate between new and old structures, big and small scales, and create anchoring spaces in the corridor.

A 24/7 Main Street
Main Street lacks vitality after weekday working hours. The design challenge involves restructuring a public realm conceived for workaday commercial throughput to now serve 24/7 urban lifestyles with a high level of livability. Main Street must be safe and inviting at night. The plan introduces pedestrian-oriented shared street configurations that support a new land-use ecology combining residential, tourism, and the cultural arts. Novel townscaping structures link spaces serially along the corridor while building frontage systems connect public and private spaces across the corridor. These highly amenitized streetscapes reward walking, sociability, and livability throughout the day and week.
Among the most common technique for making Main Street work as a design is the enhancement of any nodal space, or even the whole creation of such nodes that now serve as greens, vest-pocket parks, or squares. The nodes help introduce an element of centrality and enclosure, and in so doing attempt to influence our perceptions of Main Street as a safe social environment.

-Richard Francaviglia, Main Street Revisted-

Creative Corridor Phasing Strategy

Phase 1: Develop nodes for enhanced pedestrian activity which serve as gateways marking The Creative Corridor segment of Main Street. Through the introduction of shared street strategies that privilege a pedestrian environment supportive of non-traffic functions like outdoor dining and theater gathering, gateway nodes frame intimate social spaces within an otherwise continuous corridor.

Phase 2: Develop a center to The Creative Corridor marking the most important intersection symbolically in Little Rock—Capitol Avenue and Main Street. A large central plaza for vehicles and pedestrians accommodates large public events and forms an appropriate gateway to the state capital building to the west. The space configuration houses an elevated park lawn/amphitheater, arcade, and space for mobile food trucks to serve downtown office workers.
Phase 3: Connect the three nodes with a thickened edge or pedestrian promenade on the west side of the street. The west side holds the most development potential and borders the proposed plaza north of Main Street at Capitol Avenue. The pedestrian promenade is a two-block alley of trees housing outdoor dining courts, public art, and consequential low impact development pocket parks for ecological-based stormwater management to be funded by the USEPA.

Phase 4: Install rail transit infrastructure facilities per Metroplan’s proposal for future streetcar expansion, and relocate dedicated bicycle lanes with shading to parallel Scott and Louisiana Streets. The three streets combined offer full multi-modal passage between downtown and urban neighborhoods to the south.

Create Gateways

Establish gateways at the Arkansas Repertory Theater and the Mann Building to the north, demarcating The Creative Corridor core. Gateways employ shared street strategies to enhance pedestrian activity and calm vehicular traffic, while establishing a new visual structure for the corridor with minimal resources.

Like conventional streets, shared streets serve both pedestrians and vehicular traffic. Shared streets, however, privilege the pedestrian by inducing social behavior from motorists through the design of streets as rooms. Each gateway room is a raised pedestrian table made from a continuous surface of architectural pavers stretching from building edge to building edge. Table surfaces are flush with the sidewalk without markings that designate transport mode split—including that between auto and pedestrian. This slows traffic. Surface amenities include special townscape elements like lighting gardens that recycle old Little Rock street lights, street furniture, public art, and marquees.
North Gateway Plaza

Willamette Street in Eugene, Oregon is an example of a shared street. By shifting transportation mode mix in favor of the pedestrian, shared streets support non-traffic social functions while integrating the automobile. Street design compels slower speeds without sacrificing traffic capacity.

- rain gardens
- plaza seating
- street light garden
- public art pad
- continuous pedestrian table
- green wall
- urban staircase
- urban patio
- back-in parking
- planned streetcar extension

Phase 1 Example: Willamette Street, Eugene, Oregon
Looking into the North Gateway Plaza from the proposed mixed-use building
Looking toward the North Gateway Plaza from the 400 block
Gateway tables create urban rooms with street furniture, architectural pavement, and manicured landscapes akin to an urban pocket park. The City should consider a form-based code for The Creative Corridor that inspires highly public building frontages for new structures like that shown.
Historically significant buildings on the east side of the 300 block include the Rose Building and the Gus Blass Wholesale Company Building, for which a sensitive mixed-use renovation is nearing completion. Both are fine examples of classic Main Street building typologies. While the Rose Building has undergone several modern incarnations since its original construction, it remains a classic expression of the arcaded commercial building typology.

Minor structures on the northeast edge of the block, the Menke Building and the Isaac Kempner Building, may possess historic facades beneath their modern veneers, warranting improvement or replacement once comprehensive rehabilitation occurs throughout The Creative Corridor. New investments in The Creative Corridor and the block’s proximity to the convention center will likely exert ongoing pressure for elevating densities on this side of the block.

Gateway tables feature a light garden consisting of recycled street lights gathered from the Little Rock area. Lights clustered from different eras and city neighborhoods function as a public art installation portraying an urban history otherwise left unnoticed.

Recycle existing and assorted Main Street lamps as a light garden, creating a gateway feature.
ECONOMIC VITALITY
How the arts and culture sector catalyzes economic vitality

Terms such as “creative economy,” “creative class,” and “cultural economy” are becoming more common among urban planners, arts administrators, economic developers, and business and municipal leaders. These terms reference a variety of types of jobs, people, and industries, including the sectors of visual, performing, and literary arts, as well as applied fields like architecture, graphic design, and marketing. Whatever label is used, this use of terminology linking culture and the economy indicates recognition of the connections among the fields of planning, economic development, and arts and culture.

The activities of the arts and culture sector and local economic vitality are connected in many ways. Arts, culture, and creativity can

- improve a community’s competitive edge
- create a foundation for defining a sense of place
- attract new and visiting populations
- integrate the visions of community and business leaders
- contribute to the development of a skilled workforce

To pursue economic development projects with a creative approach, there are four key points to consider:

KEYPOINT #1:
Economic development is enhanced by concentrating creativity through both physical density and human capital. By locating firms, artists, and cultural facilities together, a multiplier effect can result.

KEYPOINT #2:
The recognition of a community’s arts and culture assets (and the marketing of them) is an important element of economic development. Creatively acknowledging and marketing community assets can attract a strong workforce and successful firms, as well as help sustain a positive quality of life.

KEYPOINT #3:
Arts and cultural activities can draw crowds from within and around the community. Increasing the number of visitors as well as enhancing resident participation helps build economic and social capital.

KEYPOINT #4:
Planners can make deliberate connections between the arts and culture sector and other sectors, such as tourism and manufacturing, to improve economic outcomes by capitalizing on local assets.
KEYPOINTS

Competition, definition, attraction, integration, and continued development are all pivotal aims for economic development professionals. Traditional outcomes of economic development in planning include job creation, increased tax revenues, increased property values, increased retail activity, and more sustained economic vitality. These goals are often pursued through programs such as workforce development, recruitment, amenity packages for firms, local property investment, and policies that support business. When combined with creative approaches, these traditional programs can create a richer context for economic development.

Economic development approaches that integrate arts and culture are usually combinations of facility-centric, people-oriented, and program-based approaches. Development of an arena, cultural center, incubator space, or creative district is an example of a facility-centric method, while a people-oriented approach could include facilitating arts professionals’ development by approving live-work spaces, supporting arts centers, creating cooperative marketing opportunities, or commissioning artworks. Program-based approaches target a specific issue within a community, such as developing an arts program—whether gardening, mural making, or public art displaying—to address the issue of vacant property; promoting health education through a local arts festival, exhibitions, or performances or plays with health themes; or displaying artwork in vacant storefronts to attract passersby and enliven an area. Whether targeting economic improvement through facilities, people, programs, or all three, creative strategies can strengthen economic vitality (Table 1).

Each key point is explored in greater depth below, with examples and connections to the strategies in Table 1.

<p>| Table 1. Creative Strategies for Improving Economic Vitality |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of Assets</td>
<td>Promoting cultural amenities for the purpose of attracting economic investment and skilled workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Promoting community development through artistic, cultural, or creative policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revitalization</td>
<td>Promoting community and neighborhood revitalization through artistic measures and strategies that emphasize creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic/Job Clusters</td>
<td>Creating economic or job clusters based on creative businesses, including linking those businesses with noncultural businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Providing training, professional development, or other activities for arts, cultural, or creative entrepreneurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts-Oriented Incubators</td>
<td>Creating arts-specific business incubators or dedicated low-cost space and services to support artistic, cultural, or creative professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branding</td>
<td>Developing visual elements that communicate a community’s character; using logo development and graphic design for advertising, marketing, and promoting a community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Districts</td>
<td>Creating arts, cultural, entertainment, historic, or heritage districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live-Work Projects</td>
<td>Providing economic or regulatory support for combined residential and commercial space for artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts-Specific and General Public Venues</td>
<td>Providing public or private economic or regulatory support for marketplaces, bazaars, arcades, community centers, public places, parks, and educational facilities of various types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>Using celebrations or festivals to highlight a community’s cultural amenities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Design and Reuse</td>
<td>Implementing the reuse of existing sites or buildings for arts and culture purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Art</td>
<td>Supporting temporary and permanent public-art projects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Concentrations of cultural enterprises and creative workers in a geographic area provide a competitive edge, likely by elevating the quality of life, improving a community’s ability to attract economic activity, and creating a climate in which innovation can flourish.

Concentration of culture-sector firms and highly skilled workers, along with related facilities and business, enables partnerships and cooperative projects to develop. Concentration also facilitates the marketing of skills and products. The physical density of creative and cultural firms promotes the sector’s prosperity, which is in turn economically good for the local area as a whole.

Clusters of culturally oriented businesses and workers can breed innovation and new specializations. Places where innovation is prized are naturally attractive to innovators and conducive to creativity of all types, as the frequency of exchange promotes creative activity. Planners can develop projects that deliberately locate creative professionals in a facility or area. Density or concentration of creative facilities can occur on a range of scales, from a single building to a streetscape, neighborhood, or district.

The Crane Building in North Philadelphia is an example of a facility-centric redevelopment for creative businesses and artists. Originally built in 1905 as a plumbing warehouse, the building today houses Crane Arts (www.cranearts.com), with four floors of artist studios and suites and a variety of project spaces available for community programs and cultural development. Facilities include an art-restoration studio, a ceramics studio, a multimedia studio, and a printmaking, painting, and sculpting studio. One of the office suites is a cultural coworking space opened by Peregrine Arts (www.peregrinearts.org) for entrepreneurs, consultants, artists, writers, visionaries, and anyone working in design, media, history, the arts, and cultural heritage. The building has been successful enough that Crane Arts is considering opening another building. As an economic development tool, the building is beneficial not only to the creative occupants but to adjacent communities and the design profession as a whole. For example, during the recent economic recession, local architects with few or no incoming projects participated in a gallery exhibit at Crane Arts in an effort to “get back to the act of making things.” The exhibit was an effective tool for marketing and design.

In Tampa, Florida, a local developer designed and created the Sanctuary Lofts (www.sanctuarylofts.com) as an urban revitalization project to concentrate creativity and attract residents back to the downtown. The project began with an early 20th-century Greek Revival church in the Tampa Heights historic district that was transformed into loft apartments with space for creative-studio rentals. Many of the existing materials were salvaged, including doors, windows, pews, and hymnal racks. Sanctuary Lofts now serves as workspace for painters, artists, photographers, designers, and architects. This unique living space can assist in facilitating communication between creative organizations and the public and can create a stronger sense of identity for community residents.
Recognizing and strengthening existing assets are vital parts of community development and can contribute to economic development.

Assets include those related to entertainment (e.g., theaters, performing groups), personal development (e.g., community centers, bookstores), and education (e.g., schools, museums), as well as more directly to job creation and industry (e.g., translators, designers). Cultural and creative amenities are assets as well as excellent tools for identifying and promoting other community assets.

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 the information economy, especially younger ones, want to live and as such is important for workforce recruitment and retention strategies. To promote local culture and creativity, communities can deem an area or part of town as an arts, cultural, or creative district. A district is technically a designation to name and centralize creative assets by locating and drawing attention to cultural assets throughout the community. There may be economic incentives to live or work in such a district.

For example, Taos, New Mexico, has a number of designations intended to promote it as an arts and culture magnet. The State of New Mexico has designated Taos an Arts and Cultural District. The New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Resource Team reviews the state of the creative economy and emphasizes building upon current assets to develop economic well-being. At the federal level, Taos is designated as part of the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area. Additionally, Taos is pursuing the New Mexico “Quality of Life” local option tax (a tax incentive to improve energy and water conservation, sustainable building, employment benefits such as job-training programs and employer-provided child care, and other quality of life factors) to support the continued formal existence of the Arts and Cultural District. It is also considering the construction of an arts-incubator space, to complement its affordable housing project, ArtSpace. Taos’s approach to economic development is based on asset recognition and directly connected to the arts and culture sector.

Another way to recognize assets and capitalize on them economically is to find ways to publicize and display the community’s existing artistic talent and related amenities, such as ethnic foods, costumes, and visual arts and crafts. For example, in New Orleans the cultural heritage of Louisiana is celebrated through the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. This festival increases tourism through a showcase of music of every kind—“jazz, gospel, Cajun, zydeco, blues, R&B, rock, funk, African, Latin, Caribbean, and folk to name a few.”
Arts and cultural activity can increase attention and foot traffic to an area, including attracting visitors and increasing the length of time and money they spend, thereby contributing to continued development. Similarly, the presence of public art and related streetscape amenities such as artist-designed lighting, signs, and benches is a way to attract pedestrians.

Arts and cultural activity often attracts attention, whether for casual perusal or artistic investment. Such activity can include events at culturally specific facilities such as theaters, museums, music clubs, and galleries, as well as cultural activity in venues such as arenas, public parks, community centers, and schools. Communities can also develop creative ways to make artistic activity happen in vacant or underutilized spaces. Several communities have embraced the practice of promoting creative activity in vacant retail windows and storefronts as a revitalization tool.

An economic redevelopment process can often last several years. In an attempt to temporarily transform a street scheduled for redevelopment in Brooklyn, New York, by the local BID, the local arts group Ad Hoc Art (http://adhocart.org/site) transformed a row of vacant stores into a street art gallery. Known as Willoughby Windows, the block of Willoughby Street between Bridge and Duffield was turned into a temporary art exhibit, which included a photography-themed screenprint where a camera store used to be, woven paper maps, and a large cash register (representative of the perceived financial mistakes of Wall Street). This temporary, creative art exhibit transformed an otherwise vacant eyesore into an interesting space for pedestrians.

Boston Art Windows is a collaboration between the city and local artists aiming to fill vacant storefronts in the Downtown Crossing area with exhibits that draw pedestrians. The space is a streetside art gallery incorporating interactive video, lighting, and sound to encourage passersby to pause and enjoy the spectacle. One artist’s camera records the movements of pedestrians and plays them back in time-delayed video loops that eventually cover a screen. The redevelopment authority involves curators with the storefront show, seeing the exhibit as an opportunity to facilitate changes to Downtown Crossing as economic development continues.

In Grand Rapids, Michigan, local artists, business owners, and the public engage in an annual creative event called Art Prize (www.artprize.org/home). Art Prize is an open contest in which any artist, established or emerging, can show work and any visitor can vote on it. In essence, Art Prize is the creation of a context for the city to become a temporary art gallery. During this informal creative event, public participation, interaction, and economic development are strengthened as more than 100 venues open for it (including local retail and business spaces). More than 1,000 people volunteer. The resulting relationships extend beyond the boundaries of the competition to strengthen interaction among retail shops, business owners, and the art world. Economic benefits of the contest include increased traffic and improved business.
KEYPOINT #4: Planners can make deliberate connections between the arts and culture sector and other sectors.

Establishing opportunities for partnerships among various economic sectors and creative professionals is a way to promote economic development. The talents of artists (especially related to design and communication) can enhance the value of local products and services and increase their dissemination.

Partnerships often begin with economic clusters that are closely related to or dependent on the design field; examples include marketing, tourism, high-end manufacturing, and filmmaking. These economic clusters are groups of organizations with related producers, suppliers, distributors, and intermediaries. Proximate organizations can take advantage of shared interests, relationships, and economies.10

Deliberate team building by planners can help artists, designers, and people in related economic clusters to their shared advantage. Connecticut, for example, has recently instituted Cultural and Tourism Partnership Grants that encourage interdisciplinary collaborations among tourism, historical, film, and arts organizations.11 The goal is to help localities develop relationships and strategies to improve tourism, an important goal in economic development.12 The grants support projects such as film and arts festivals, development of garden and museum trails, seasonal crafts and events, and theater packages. Lead applicants must be nonprofit organizations, but they can partner to seek funding for both profit and nonprofit ventures.

Brooklyn, New York, is experiencing an economic transformation as a result of food. A growing gastronomical entrepreneurial energy is transforming once industrial, underutilized pockets of Brooklyn into culinary oases. Entrepreneurs in their 20s and 30s, who often have a strong sense of community and creativity, are opening restaurants, bars, pubs, specialty shops, butcheries, coffee shops, and other food production and processing facilities throughout the borough. These businesses are not only meeting the growing local and regional demand for locally produced and wholesome foods but also creating an incubator for culinary quality, craftsmanship, and artistry. For example, the outputs of Cut Brooklyn, a knife-making business, become the inputs for Brooklyn Kitchen, a specialty store; cacao nibs, a product of Mast Brothers Chocolate, and Ethiopian coffee beans from Gorilla Coffee are added to beer at Sixpoint Craft Ales; and root vegetables purchased from a nearby farmers market are combined with wort from Sixpoint to make relish at Wheelhouse Pickles.

This new collaboration between business owners is resulting in increased economic vitality and sense of community between merchants as well as residents.13 In February 2010, recognition of the economic, environmental, health, and social impacts of food production, processing, access, consumption, and waste disposal prompted residents of New York City and the Manhattan borough president to develop “FoodNYC: A Blueprint for a Sustainable Food System,” a report that establishes goals and provides recommendations for improving and balancing the health, economic, and environmental needs of the city. This report recognizes the untapped economic potential of the region’s food system, as well as the health, equity, and environmental challenges of this economic sector.
CONCLUSION

The economic development field has changed in the last decade from one that primarily emphasized location and firm-based approaches to one that more overtly acknowledges the development of human capital. Human capital refers to the sets of skills, knowledge, and value contributed by a population and has become a recognized asset as firms choose where to locate (and cities choose what to advertise and develop and whom to recruit) and entrepreneurs develop economic activity.

Members of some sectors of today’s workforce seek certain characteristics in the places they choose to live. Places with entertainment options, public interaction, lively streets, and recreational and educational amenities are preferred, along with arts and culture activities and amenities. Leaders in the field of planning and economic development are developing noteworthy, creative approaches to making places of any scale more satisfying to this workforce, while increasing economic viability and competitiveness.

This briefing paper was written by M. Christine Dwyer (senior vice president, RMC Research Corporation) and Kelly Ann Beavers (PhD candidate, Virginia Tech, and American Planning Association arts and culture intern), and edited by Kimberley Hodgson, AICP (manager, Planning and Community Health Research Center, American Planning Association).
Endnotes

7. "Testimony by NGA Center for Best Practices Director John Thomasian before the House Education and Labor Committee on the Economic and Employment Impact of the Arts and Music Industry," March 26, 2009; available at www.nga.org/portal/site/nga/menuitem.08cd660ba7cf99d18a278110501010a0/?vgnextoid=dd4bd36852440210VgnVCM1000005e00100aRCRD.
10. Testimony by NGA Center for Best Practices Director John Thomasian.
12. Testimony by NGA Center for Best Practices Director John Thomasian.

Arts and Culture Briefing Papers

This is one in a series of briefing papers on how planners can work with partners in the arts and culture sector and use creative strategies to achieve economic, social, environmental, and community goals.

Please visit our website at www.planning.org/research/arts to learn more about this series.

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Development without displacement

The wave of economic development that transportation investments often bring can increase city revenue, which generally is viewed as positive. But rapid investment and change can threaten the character of what made a place initially appealing. In these cases, close collaboration with community partners is more likely to ensure an end product that everyone will like.

In some places, a rise in artists or so-called hipsters can signal to residents that rents will also go up. Or government-led efforts to attract a more “creative class” can feel like a boot out for people who don’t fall outside of those groups. www.creativeclass.com/richard_florida' Each may or may not precede development that displaces residents and businesses.

That’s why the creative placemaking approach focuses on creating a wide net of partners. It is no silver bullet, and as scholars Mark Stern and Susan Seifert stated, “Culture-based revitalization aims for a narrow target; it must stimulate economic vitality and promote opportunity without generating displacement or expanding inequality.” \(^2\) The more buy-in you have, the more likely you are to wind up with an approach that everyone can champion. Mapping a community’s existing assets, effectively engaging the community, and developing strong partnerships are all ways to secure that buy-in, alongside developing corresponding policy responses based on what you learn.

Avoiding displacement by building in affordable spaces for arts and culture

“You want to have appealing places for people to live, work and play,” says Amanda Thompson, Knight Foundation program officer and former planning director for Decatur, GA. “But what we saw in Decatur was that as development occurs it becomes harder to have that ‘play’ part. You’ll have a huge influx of bars and restaurants and it quickly becomes ‘live, work and eat.’ The arts, culture and entertainment venues can’t survive, and so those personalized experiences start to move out.”

While you may not be able to replace units or venues one for one, you can plan and program welcoming spaces. “Beyond a plaza, I encourage thinking about how to allow the most arts to flourish here as possible, the most affordable housing, the most opportunities for artists to work here, and for artists to engage. It will look different than before, but hopefully you will achieve more than before.”
A welcoming space in a parklet in Vancouver, British Columbia. Flickr photo by Paul Krueger. [Link](https://www.flickr.com/photos/pwkrueger/7563944478)

Thompson suggests that planners and engineers program spaces with an eye for inclusion to avoid displacing arts and culture as a neighborhood changes, grows or develops. “Think about what exists to allow people to just do their thing: a graffiti wall, a little podium, outlets for people who may want to plug in,” she says. Such infrastructure additions can come at little cost and create a much more flexible space.

**Local needs require local solutions, but the roadmap is the same**

Local leaders nationwide have come to understand that cultural attractions are an essential ingredient for every vibrant community in the same vein as natural space, libraries and recreational facilities. And each new community that seeks to integrate arts and culture into their local and regional planning has the opportunity to iterate on existing examples and apply their unique cultural assets.

**More resources: anti-displacement resources and strategies**

PolicyLink’s newly released [Equitable Development Toolkit](https://www.policylink.org/equitable-development-toolkit) includes 27 tools to reverse patterns of segregation and disinvestment, prevent displacement, and promote equitable revitalization.

A policy brief by the Citizen’s Housing and Planning Association, [Making Inclusionary Housing More Flexible: Four Ideas for Urban Settings](http://www.giarts.org/sites/default/files/Cultivating-Natural-Cultural-Districts.pdf), outlines how four communities have incentivized inclusionary housing while at the same time promoting mixed-income neighborhoods.

[Enterprise](https://enterprise.org/) is a social enterprise that “brings together the people and funds to create affordable housing in strong neighborhoods” through lending funds, financing development, managing and building affordable housing. Visit Brookings’ [Confronting Suburban Poverty Case Studies](http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/reports/2015/06/15_confronting_suburban_poverty/enterprise_confronting_suburban_poverty.pdf) to read about Enterprise’s partnership with the City and County of Denver’s Offices of Strategic Partnerships and Economic Development to launch the groundbreaking Denver Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Fund. The $15 million fund has leveraged nearly $200 million from public, private and nonprofit partners to preserve or create 626 affordable homes near FasTracks transit, alongside 120,000 square feet of mixed-use commercial space around the sites, making room for a new public library, child care program, and dance company, as well as affordable office space for local nonprofit organizations.

[Community-Wealth.org](https://community-wealth.org/), a project of The Democracy Collaborative, is a resource for tools, models, and support organizations for a broad range of community wealth building activities, from community land trusts to municipal enterprises to new state and local policies.

1. Read about the “creative class” from researcher Richard Florida, who coined the phrase. [www.creativeclass.com/richard_florida](http://www.creativeclass.com/richard_florida)
On downtown Berkeley street, the poetry is underfoot

July 13, 2015 2:52 pm by
Lou Fancher

On a downtown Berkeley city block, poetry is a constant companion.

Stretched along both sides of Addison Street between Milvia Street and Shattuck Avenue, cast-iron “stepping stone” plaques engraved with fired, glass porcelain enamel lettering speak the language of poets from Ohlone Indians to contemporary wordsmiths.

Known as the “Berkeley Poetry Walk” and anthologized in The Addison Street Anthology, published by Berkeley-based Heyday Books, the public-art project was a massive undertaking completed in 2003 by a team of pivotal volunteers, private donors, the City of Berkeley, City staff and the Civic Arts Commission.

The Berkeley Poetry Walk, completed in 2003, was motivated by community sentiment in the 1980s to create a vital downtown arts and cultural district to reverse economic decline. Photo: edrdo

Fueled by community sentiment in the 1980s to create a vital downtown arts and cultural district to reverse economic decline, the project’s origins gained momentum from a 1992 market analysis by the Office of Economic Development. The study compared downtown Berkeley to other commercial districts in the region and determined that arts establishments and restaurants were key factors in attracting people to Berkeley.

The 1994 Downtown Public Improvements Plan and funds from Measure S bonds laid the groundwork for the literal
manifestation of an artistic push that is embedded today in Addison Street’s Berkeley Repertory Theater, The Aurora Theatre, Freight & Salvage and the Poetry Walk sidewalk.

Money played a small, crucial role; people did the rest.

Emerging like a swarm of larger-than-life characters in a play by Shakespeare or superheroes in a modern day action film, the credits list is long: landscape architect and initial streetscape designer John Roberts; public art consultant Steven Huss; technical consultant/artist Scott Donahue; experts at Cherokee Porcelain and Steel in Tennessee who invented and fabricated the unique, durable, slip-free panels; graphic artist David Lance Goines who selected the type font and design; Project Manager Mary Ann Merker who shepherded nearly three tons of poetry into the sidewalk; and Robert Hass, U.S. Poet Laureate and Professor at the University of California, Berkeley.

And like a “thank you” award speech, there are countless unsung “others,” including members of neighboring arts communities, city assistants, business owners and private donors, and more.

“It was a most remarkable project,” Hass said. “When I was asked to choose the poems, I just said ‘Sure, let’s do it.’ I had no idea how much work it would be.”

Mexican rancho era song/poets, poems from Japanese and Chinese internment camps, translations, poems reflecting local theater traditions, song lyrics, reflections on nature, cities, politics, love, sorrow, humor and more.

“Mostly it was to tell the story from this side of the Bay. We could have done anything, but it occurred to me that there was enough interesting writing in the East Bay,” Hass said.

Relying on research, instinct and decades of having studied and been steeped in traditions rising from the early 1950s Beat poets, Hass says he “interviewed old people” and consulted people of all ethnicities. From their stories, he stumbled upon intriguing pockets of poetry. “I learned about faculty wives like the “Mother’s Milk Club” who got together with their children once a week and read their poems,” he said.

“Tussman was the last Yiddish poet to receive the Jerusalem Prize. She lived up on Euclid in her last
days. Her tile is still sitting in the corporation yard and isn’t in the ground yet, along with a few others we
didn’t get to,” he said. “I’ve got to call Mary Ann right away and get on that.”

Merker — if anyone can — will soon have “Keep Me” in place. The Civic Arts Commission secretary says
the project was daunting, positive and required endless problem solving.

“When the poetry panels first went in I had so many inquiries that as project manager I asked each
member of the team to write an essay on what they did to make this happen and posted it on our web
page.”

In Merker’s essay, she says finding a
company to make panels that would meet
city requirements and be aesthetically
pleasing required extensive teamwork.
Over time, the initial look — black squares
with bright white type — mellowed into a
warm, rust-colored patina and golden,
creamy white text.

Hass said: “I had mixed feelings about
putting things near the streets. From an
Asian point of view, this would seem very disrespectful; people would spit on them, drop gum. John
Roberts said, ‘Well, we’ll just steam clean them every year.’”

Cleanliness in the actual poems’ content was another challenge. “The most Berkeley poem of all was by
Allen Ginsberg and was about moving into his Berkeley cottage and where he was going to hide his dope.
Another poem was a song’s lyrics and had an obscenity so there was a question whether or not I could
use that,” Hass says.

Often, Hass would check with Adam David Miller (a member of the commission) to learn if a given poem
would incite objections but says he was left largely on his own to build the collection.

The project won the Downtown Berkeley Association’s 2003 President’s Award and continues to draw
attention — although less frequently than when it was first installed. Hass has noticed that a bittersweet
interaction happens when one of the poets dies. “People have brought flowers to their tiles,” he says.

And a larger, entirely sweet but still complex echo of the fervor that led to Poetry Walk continues in
Berkeley schools and bookstores and resides on the internet, he says.

“The energy has changed over the years. It has to do with the Occupy movement, with how much more
directly political social activism has become. But during the post-war period an active life of poetry
happened here and it’s still going on.”
Securing adequate funding is the cornerstone of any public art program. Aside from donations from private individuals and corporations, there are a number of approaches through which to garner financial support for art. These ways can be broken into four broad tracts: public/private sector endeavors; percent- and non-percent-for-art programs; developer participation; and local funding sources.

To go directly to any section, click on the links below.
- Public/Private Sector Collaborations
- Percent- and Non-Percent-for-Art Programs
- Soliciting Participation from Developers
- Alternate Funding Sources

**PUBLIC/PRIVATE SECTOR COLLABORATIONS**

On the non-development side, opportunities for public art could be nurtured as part of the ongoing, existing local programs. A city or business could partner with these organizations to involve artists in:

- Designing gardens and plantings;
- Creating destinations in green spaces, along paths and at nodes, anchoring spaces for rest, recreation, play, and gathering;
- Installing art exhibits in vacant storefronts to improve a building’s — and neighborhood’s — overall image;
- Encouraging local museums to loan out works of public art for temporary placement throughout the downtown; and
- Hosting exhibits in publicly accessible places, including municipal, state, and federal buildings.
PERCENT- AND NON-PERCENT-FOR-ART PROGRAMS

PERCENT-FOR-ART ORDINANCES

Passing percent-for-art legislation encumbers a percentage (usually .5 to 2) of CIP (publicly funded capital improvement projects) per year for the commissioning of public artworks, which will usually be sited in, on, or adjacent to the building or project being constructed. Percent-for-art ordinances guarantee a funding stream for public art projects regardless of what happens to city budgets or arts funding. The policy also guarantees that public art projects will be planned each year, as long as CIPs are underway and municipal construction continues.

Benefits of a percent-for-art ordinance:

- It can provide a mechanism for obtaining funds from a broad range of city agencies and departments;
- It can offer legal recourse (if funding for percent projects becomes a legally binding requirement) to obtain funds for public art from non-compliant city agencies;
- It can provide an opportunity to work with and introduce public art to many city agencies, in many different types of projects, and in many locations city-wide; and
- In some cases, such as Atlanta, it allows for the siting of art in adjacent or nearby communities to offset the negative impacts of a project, or to place public art in more diverse areas of a city.

Even when a percent-for-art ordinance is in place, however, additional funds for art projects may be required: Despite 2% for art public funding, “money is always a problem,” says Linda Bloom, administrator of Sacramento, CA’s Art in Public Places program. Currently, the organization is looking to forge private partnerships and use private money for artwork on the city’s light rail system.

NON-PERCENT-FOR-ART SOURCES

Several examples of well-known, successful, non-percent-for-art-funded programs exist in the following cities:

**Houston, TX:** The Cultural Arts Council of Houston also receives a percentage on the hotel/motel tax for art. In addition, the Council contracts with a variety of city agencies, as well as with Harris County.

**New Orleans, LA:** The Arts Council of New Orleans funds public-art projects through a joint partnership between public/private sectors in order to create more stable funding basis. City of New Orleans, local and state governmental agencies, as well as other non-profit arts organizations, are funding sources for the public-art program.

**Phoenix, AZ:** Phoenix’s public-art program is funded through the city’s general-purpose funds, public-art funds, state lottery revenue, and regional and federal grants.

**San Antonio, TX:** The San Antonio Design Enhancement Program (DEP) is operated through the city’s Public Works Department’s City Architects’ Office. The DEP program is maintained by art allowances and budgets that are identified and developed by each project-design team.
San Diego, CA: The public art program in San Diego is a department of the San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture. Administrative costs are covered by a portion of the city’s Transient Occupancy or Hotel/Motel Room Tax, which helps to fund the operating and personnel expenses of nearly 90 arts and cultural organizations.

SOLICITING PARTICIPATION BY DEVELOPERS

Even if a city does not have a percent-for-art ordinance in place, nor a significant number of city-funded CIP projects (both of which would guarantee a certain number of public art projects per year), it may still be possible to get funding from capital projects for public art, by working with the private sector.

In cities around the country, private developers are realizing that commissioning works of art for their projects benefits more than their bottom line. They can:

• Improve employee and tenant working environments;
• Create a unique look or landmark feature for the project;
• Demonstrate a larger civic commitment; and
• Translate into higher rents and a more desirable office location.

For city agencies, expenditures on public art projects can:

• Highlight and publicize agency initiatives, missions and objectives;
• Communicate important information or instructions to the public (public service messages such as the importance of recycling are natural subjects for public art works);
• Contribute to the community’s acceptance of a plant or facility in which they are to be sited; and
• Increase the public’s recognition of the important work provided by that agency or city department.

The first step to soliciting developer participation is to take stock of the public and private investment occurring in your city. For example, in 2002 in Mobile, AL, nearly $400 million in public and private investment was underway. Private projects included the $165 million RSA Tower; a newly constructed $75 million Mobile Register Building; and a $1.2 million Larkin Music Center. Public sector funded projects included the $90 million GSA Federal Courthouse (with its own 1% for art budget); a $9 million Social Security building; a $16 million federal government rehabilitation of a train station as a multi-modal transportation/retail center; and the Mobile Landing/Alabama State Docks expansion and waterfront park project, which had a budget of $40 million.

In cases such as this, public-art program staff or committee members should solicit private developers regarding introducing works of public art into their projects. This should be done in as timely a manner as possible – the earlier art is introduced into project plans, the better. There are a number of ways of encouraging the development community in funding public art projects:
1. **Include art in the incentive package given to developers.** For example, developers are often requested or required by cities to provide parking, a certain number or amount of coverage by street trees, curbs and sidewalks, etc. Public Art could be added to this list, or developers given the opportunity to include public art in a project as a way of meeting the requirement for providing these kinds of on-site amenities. Fees paid by developers, or requirements that developers provide more affordable housing or a park as part of a project, also could be set aside to fund works of public art. In Portland, OR, public art is acceptable as an alternative to meeting the city’s requirements for ground floor windows (no blank walls at street level).

2. In instances where a Nexus or Environmental Impact Study has been ordered to determine the potential negative impacts of a project, **a percentage of the fees paid by a developer as part of this mitigation could be set aside for a public art project**, where the art would be considered a mitigation tool.

1. **Have the “plaza bonuses,” or floor-area ratio bonuses, given to developers who set aside a certain amount of ground floor as public space, also be awarded for including public art.** In Portland, OR, development projects where one percent of total construction costs are committed to public art receive a floor-area ratio bonus of **1:1.** All or at least 25% of these funds are deposited in the Public Art Trust Fund for use on projects in other sites around the city. The City of Tampa, FL, encourages “any private developer/owner who applies to the city for building permits to construct or reconstruct a commercial or municipal structure to commit one percent of construction costs up to $200,000 to the provision of fine art in conjunction with such commercial structure” or to elect instead to donate to the city an amount equivalent to the one percent. In addition, every building or construction permit pulled for the construction or reconstruction of a commercial or municipal structure is reported to the public art committee.

No matter how the developers are encouraged to fund art, they are responsible for maintaining and conserving works once they have been commissioned. Developers need their own advisors or consultants and/or a public art review panel should be convened on private projects to ensure quality and that the artwork(s) commissioned complies with the overall goals of the public art policy and public art vision of the city.

**ALTERNATE SOURCES OF FUNDING**

Funding for public art has come from:

- TIF (Tax increment financing) of vacant buildings for use by artists for housing and studios (Memphis, TN);
- Foundation grants, including those from National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH);
- Neighborhood appeals;
- Parking meter revenue;
- Hotel/motel taxes (Transient Occupancy Tax);
• Sales tax revenue,
• Proceeds from the sale of city land;
• Funds pooled with the county;
• State and city governments;
• Historical societies and commissions;
• Local companies (including locally based branches of national corporations);
• Utilities;
• Arts councils and advisory boards;
• Museums; and
• Art centers

Potential strategies to raise funds for a public-art policy could be to:

• **Tie funding of public art to a possible (foundation) endowment** for the care and management of downtown parks and public spaces. The endowment could pay for art selection, commissioning, and maintenance.

• **Tax large-scale events and festivals** to pay for art. For example, a Motel/Hotel tax can be dedicated to public art during the event. This funding can be put toward art projects that would occur before and after the event.

• See if your project would make you eligible for a **state tax credit for historic renovation**

• Have City Council members **fund public art projects in communities** within their districts.

• Use the **public art policy as a marketing tool** to funders.

• **Have a 501(c)(3) administer the public art program**, so that donated monies could be used tax-free and would represent taxable deductions for donors.

**ADMINISTERING THE MONEY**

A Public Art Trust Fund can be set up as a discreet fund of a Public Art Program. Public art program staff would deposit all funds earmarked for public art projects — be they from public or private sources, or donated or bequeathed to the city for works of art — into this Fund. Each project can be assigned to a separate account within the trust, or at least a specific project number used for tracking payments and disbursements. Additional funds can be deposited into the Public Art Trust Fund for a project’s contingency or for use on other types of public art projects, both new and existing. The Public Art Program would contract with artists and pay them from this Public Art Trust Fund, which would follow standard accounting procedures and practices.

(Images, from top to bottom: A seafaring take on a wrought iron fence, P.S. 123 in New York; patchwork banners in Santa Monica, CA; Seyed Alavi suggests a different viewpoint in an underpass in Los Angeles; a public art exhibition at the Paine Webber gallery in Manhattan; a sculpture of Mayor James Curley in his namesake park in Boston.)

Author: [Project for Public Spaces](#)
New Engines of Growth: 5 Roles for Arts, Culture & Design
National Governors Association

Conclusion

This report focuses on the ways that arts, culture, and design can assist states as they seek to create jobs and boost their economies in the short run and transition to an innovation-based economy in the long run. In particular, arts, culture, and design can produce economic growth because they can:

- Provide a fast-growth, dynamic industry cluster;
- Help mature industries become more competitive;
- Provide the critical ingredients for innovative places;
- Catalyze community revitalization; and
- Deliver a better-prepared workforce.

Using the five roles as a framework, state leaders—governors, economic development officials, and state arts agencies—can make arts, culture, and design an important part of an overall economic growth agenda. States have already undertaken initiatives that are highly relevant to that agenda. Grouped by the five roles some of the most promising efforts include the following:

Providing a fast-growth, dynamic industry cluster.

The creative economy does not consist only of artists. It includes a broad cluster of creative activities—arts, culture, design, entertainment, publishing, fashion, and other components. Existing economic development strategies can be used to focus on creative clusters within a state for competitive advantage. State leaders can:

- Identify creative enterprises—both commercial and nonprofit—in analyses of state industry clusters;
- Include creative enterprises and arts, design, and cultural development experts in economic task forces, meetings, and other leadership activities;
- Examine eligibility criteria for state assistance (incentives, training, technical assistance) to make sure that creative enterprises, artists, arts, and cultural organizations are eligible to participate;
- Integrate entrepreneurial curriculum modules into art and design programs and into other education programs in community colleges and four-year institutions; and
- Pilot small business development center training courses for artists and entrepreneurs in creative fields.
Helping mature industries become more competitive.

Not only is the creative cluster a productive economic sector itself, but it also contributes significantly to the productivity of other industries and sectors. State leaders can foster links between the arts, culture, and design assets in their states and industries, such as manufacturing and tourism, that are struggling to rethink their products and markets. They can:

- Position arts, culture, and design alongside R&D as a source of innovation economywide;
- Create units and expertise within community colleges, manufacturing extension centers, and agricultural extension services dedicated to design—for example, providing access to technical assistance in the design of products, packaging, and branding; and
- Create pilot programs (perhaps with foundations) that place artists and designers in a position to work with and for companies as contracted talent, interns, or artists in residence.

Providing critical ingredients for innovative places.

Innovation hubs are much more than land linked to a university. They combine all sorts of enablers of innovation: from their mixed land use to support cross-sector interactions and the arts and cultural amenities of the creative economy to the social organizations and networks to connect researchers and entrepreneurs. States can foster key enablers of innovation with strategies to:

- Encourage (via tax credits and other kinds of incentives) cities and developers to create cultural districts, creative corridors, innovation hubs, and other places that will attract a critical mass of creative talent and facilitate co-location or geographic clustering of complementary businesses; and
- Consider universities and medical research institutions (“eds and med”) and the spaces around them as places that can be designed physically and strategically to offer critical ingredients for innovation—smart people, research institutions, professional networks, favorable intellectual property agreements, and so on, that can help companies spur innovation.

Catalyzing community revitalization.

Creative industries—and arts and culture in particular—play two important roles in communities. First, artists and cultural activities can create important anchors in neighborhoods and districts, often helping to revive them. Second, the presence of such activities will draw other participants in the innovation economy, such as researchers or software developers, who want to be in a creative ecosystem. Ways to support these roles include:

- Use the arts and cultural districts and historic preservation programs to encourage developers and communities to reclaim abandoned spaces and encourage co-location of creative and innovative businesses close to one another; and
- Use creative public spaces to improve livability and quality of life.

Delivering a better-prepared workforce.

An orientation toward arts, design, and creativity fosters the kinds of skills required in America’s 21st-century economy, whatever the business or economic sector. Governors can encourage workforce development efforts to begin focusing on arts and creativity—not because workers will become artists, although some will, but because creative skills are increasingly required for good jobs, business success, and economic prosperity. Governors and other state leaders can:

- Ensure that arts continue to be included in state education requirements, and encourage localities to adhere to those requirements;
- Support arts integration policies and practices that link the arts with non-arts subjects, including STEM initiatives;
- Include the arts and design in adult technical education and workforce training programs; and
- Create centers of excellence in higher education, to recruit recognized faculty who can attract talented students and link the arts to technology to inspire innovation.
More than 90 cities in the United States have planned or implemented a cultural district—positioning the arts at the center of urban revitalization efforts. This handbook reveals how cultural districts are established, the processes and players in each city that have determined the shape and content of such areas, and how cultural districts reflect the unique strengths of their respective cities and support local artistic and redevelopment goals.

A cultural district is a well-recognized, labeled, mixed-use area of a city in which a high concentration of cultural facilities serves as the anchor of attraction. Cultural districts can be found in communities as small as Riverhead, New York (population 8,814) to New York City (7.3 million). Cultural districts boost urban revitalization in many ways:

- beautify and animate cities
- provide employment
- attract residents and tourists to the city
- complement adjacent businesses
- enhance property values
- expand the tax base
- attract well-educated employees
- contribute to a creative, innovative environment

While no two cultural districts are exactly alike—each reflects its city’s unique environment, history of land use, urban growth and cultural development—they can be divided into one of five categories:

1. Cultural Compounds
2. Major Arts Institution Focus
3. Arts and Entertainment Focus
4. Downtown Focus
5. Cultural Production Focus

The impact of cultural districts is measurable: The arts attract residents and tourists who also support adjacent businesses such as restaurants, lodging, retail and parking. The presence of the arts enhances property values, the profitability of surrounding businesses and the tax base of the region. The arts attract a well-educated workforce—a key incentive for new and relocating businesses. Finally, the arts contribute to the creativity and innovation of a community.

### THE IMPACT OF CULTURAL DISTRICTS IS MEASURABLE:

- The number of events in the Pittsburgh Cultural District increased from 250 in 1986 to nearly 600 in 1994, with audiences doubling to more than one million annually. In its first decade of operation, the district generated $33 million in public investment and $63 million in private and philanthropic funds, which in turn triggered $115 million in commercial activity. Tax revenues in the district from real estate and performances increased from $7.9 million in 1986 to $19.1 million in 1994.

- Three years after establishing the Tucson Arts District, 26 of the 112 businesses in the arts district were new, 54% had increased their sales volume, and 53% made renovations, with an average cost of $105,272 each. Within four years, the retail vacancy rate declined by 50% and city sales tax revenues in the arts district increased 11.7%, compared with a citywide increase of 7.4%.
URBAN REVITALIZATION AND THE ARTS

During the past three decades, urban planners and developers in the United States have enlisted the arts as a central element in revitalizing declining urban centers. Cultural development, usually in partnership with other strategies, has proven to be one effective mechanism for the restoration of many downtown "brownfield" sites—areas with unused, abandoned and decaying buildings and spaces that diminish the vitality and economic development of our cities.

Since the 1960s, many American cities have rehabilitated older cultural facilities and constructed new ones. During the same period, arts activities taking place in central cities—plays, concerts, exhibitions, dance performances, festivals, public art, plaza concerts, street fairs and gallery-hops—have burgeoned.

The increase in arts facilities and related activities corresponds to the rapid growth of cultural organizations in the United States since the 1960s. Art galleries, museums, theater companies, dance companies and orchestras in the United States grew in number, size and support from the 1960s through the 1980s.

Cultural facilities—concert halls, theaters, libraries, museums and galleries—historically have been urban phenomena. Although some cultural facilities are being developed in suburban areas, most arts facilities and activities in the United States are still located in the urban core, while other traditionally urban functions, such as housing and retail, have moved to the edges of cities.

Cultural facilities, public art, and arts activities can boost urban revitalization in many ways. The arts beautify, enliven and animate an area. The arts and their attendant support services, such as administration and marketing, provide employment. Cultural activities attract residents and tourists, who also support adjacent businesses such as restaurants, lodging, retail and parking in the city’s center. The presence of the arts enhances property values, the profitability of surrounding businesses and the tax base of the region. The arts attract a well-educated work force—a key incentive for new and relocating businesses. Finally, the arts contribute to the creativity and innovation of a community.

THE ROLE OF THE ARTS IN URBAN REDEVELOPMENT

- BEAUTIFY AND ANIMATE CITIES
- PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT
- ATTRACT RESIDENTS AND TOURISTS TO THE CITY
- COMPLEMENT ADJACENT BUSINESSES
- ENHANCE PROPERTY VALUES
- EXPAND THE TAX BASE
- ATTRACT WELL-EDUCATED EMPLOYEES
- CONTRIBUTE TO A CREATIVE, INNOVATIVE ENVIRONMENT

In cities as diverse as Seattle, Washington and Fort Wayne, Indiana, the arts have played a central role in urban revitalization efforts that also incorporate high technology centers, sports complexes, education facilities, government offices, housing, historic districts, tourist sites and specialized retail. The overall strategy emphasizes the unique resources of each city.

Innovative public-private partnerships in Seattle have positioned the arts as a central player in the city’s economic redevelopment strategy, investing more than $240 million public and private dollars over the past decade in cultural facilities that are now among the city’s greatest assets.
CULTURAL DISTRICTS

Nearly all U.S. cities have areas with cultural facilities and activities. This handbook considers only areas that have been identified as a cultural district, arts district, arts and entertainment district, museum district, theater district or similar designation by a government agency, private development group, promotional bureau or planning authority. The formality of the classification may range from consistently applied nomenclature in planning and promotional documents to a legal designation in a zoning ordinance. This handbook should be useful to communities considering the establishment of a cultural district, whether legally designated or planned and promoted as such.

A cultural district is a well-recognized, labeled, mixed-use area of a city in which a high concentration of cultural facilities serves as the anchor of attraction. Typically, the area is geographically defined (usually less than 100 blocks) and incorporates other land uses, but the defining characteristic is the concentration of cultural facilities and related activities.

A wide range of land uses, landscapes and geographic locations within downtowns or at their fringes can reasonably be labeled "cultural districts." The 24 cultural districts examined for this handbook (Table 1, p. 12) are located in cities both large and small. Fourteen of the more developed and better-known districts are located in the 50 largest cities in the United States; others are more recently developed and located in smaller cities such as Portland, Maine, with a population of 65,000, which proposed its arts district in 1991; Rock Island, Illinois, with a population of 40,300, which developed its Arts and Entertainment District in 1991; and Riverhead, New York, with a population of 8,814, which is in the process of developing an arts district. Communities within larger cities

Audubon Arts District, New Haven, Connecticut
that are also creating cultural districts include the North Hollywood area of Los Angeles, which recently developed the NOHO Arts District.

Cultural districts are specialized landscapes that typically feature "high" culture or "fine arts," although the precise meaning of "culture" varies among districts. Generally, cultural districts support the fine arts (concert halls, theaters, galleries and art museums), as well as libraries, historical museums and educational institutions. Some districts include restaurants, nightclubs and other forms of popular entertainment.

Cultural districts are mixed-use developments that incorporate such other facilities as office complexes, retail spaces and, occasionally, residential areas. Many cultural districts have been created in or near central business districts and are often contiguous with newly developed corporate office complexes. They are sometimes developed near, or contain elements of, "consumption compounds"—large, urban precincts built for festive activities and consumption of leisure-time goods and services by city residents and tourists. Consumption compounds may include tourism and convention centers, gentrified housing for upscale residents, restored historic buildings and heritage districts, reclaimed industrial sites, and waterfronts transformed into festival retail markets.

While they are important to culture-related development, this handbook does not address cultural/amenity-taxing districts—generally, county or multicity regions from which a percentage of sales tax is earmarked to support cultural institutions and activities. Montgomery County, Ohio; Allegheny County, Pennsylvania; and the Denver, Colorado region are examples of such districts.
GOALS OF CULTURAL DISTRICTS

The primary motivation behind the establishment of a cultural district is urban revitalization. Cultural districts are expected to attract new users and visitors and to spur investment in the area's properties. The goals of cultural districts include increased business activity; enhanced tax revenues; and the creation of safe and clean public areas, comfortable housing and areas for leisure-time activities. In addition, cultural districts offer evening-time activities that extend the hours during which the public may use the area.

Another goal of cultural districts is to provide facilities for nonprofit and commercial cultural activities and to accommodate larger audiences for performances and exhibits. New and enhanced facilities increase participation in arts production and arts education activities, generate opportunities for employment of artists and provide appropriate venues in which they may conduct their activities.

Cultural districts are achieving these goals. The number of events in the Pittsburgh Cultural District increased from 250 in 1986 to nearly 600 in 1994, with audiences doubling to more than one million annually. According to the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, the cultural district's first decade generated $33 million in public investment and $63 million in private and philanthropic funds, which in turn triggered almost $115 million in commercial activity. Tax revenues in the district from real estate and performances increased from $7.9 million in 1986 to $19.1 million in 1994.

Three years after establishing the Tucson Arts District, 26 of the 112 businesses in the Arts District were new, and 54 percent had increased their sales volume. Within four years, the area's retail vacancy rate had declined by 50 percent and city sales tax revenues from the district had increased 11.7 percent, compared with a citywide increase of 7.4 percent.

Some cultural districts have been developed to address problems associated with arts complexes that were constructed in major American cities during the 1950s and 1960s. Physically and programmatically isolated from their surrounding neighborhoods, these facilities often feature architectural elements—walls, parking lots and entrancesways—regarded by many residents of adjacent, often economically depressed, neighborhoods as barriers that exclude their participation. Such cultural facilities "might as well be boxed and ribboned for all their connection to the urban life around them" (Kay, p. 29).

Cultural districts can address the needs of the surrounding community by emphasizing activities that incorporate the interests of local residents, schools, and neighborhood organizations.
CULTURAL DISTRICT TYPOLOGY

Cultural districts reflect their cities' unique environment, including history of land use, urban growth and cultural development. All cultural districts, then, are unique, with no standard model. U.S. cities incorporate a variety of cultural districts that may be categorized by their most prominent attractions.

Of the five types of cultural districts, only the Cultural Compound existed prior to the 1960s as a designated urban space. The remaining four types of districts, established in the post-1960 era of central city redevelopment in the United States, are characterized by considerably more new development and are more mixed-use than the older Cultural Compounds. Where the newer districts have incorporated elements of the earlier Cultural Compounds—such as old concert halls, movie theaters or Carnegie libraries—they have usually considerably remodeled or converted the old facilities for new uses. Other land uses commonly found in the more modern districts include office complexes, retail space, restaurants, lodging and various kinds of housing.

The modern-era cultural districts tend to emphasize either major fine arts or entertainment, and primary cultural activities in the district may emphasize either arts presentation or arts production and education.

## TYPES OF CULTURAL DISTRICTS

- Cultural Compounds
- Major Arts Institution Focus
- Arts and Entertainment Focus
- Downtown Focus
- Cultural Production Focus

## CULTURAL COMPENDIA

The oldest cultural districts in the United States are Cultural Compounds, established in many American cities in the late 19th century through the 1930s. Cultural Compounds may comprise major museums, large performing halls, theaters and auditoriums, as well as schools, colleges, libraries, planetariums and zoos.

Cultural Compounds are distinctive from more contemporary cultural districts in that their noncultural land uses tend to be limited to parks, arboretums, medical centers and housing; very few include commercial uses such as office complexes and retail space.

Cultural Compounds were built in areas somewhat removed from the city's central business district and typically have the appearance of a university campus, with large, open green spaces between buildings. Many of the cities have grown considerably beyond the boundaries that existed when the Cultural Compound was established, giving the impression,

## CULTURAL DISTRICTS REFLECT THEIR CITIES' UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT, INCLUDING HISTORY OF LAND USE, URBAN GROWTH AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT.

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<th>CULTURAL COMPounds in the U.S.</th>
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<tr>
<td>University Circle, Cleveland</td>
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<td>Fair Park, Dallas</td>
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<td>Cultural District, Fort Worth</td>
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<td>Forest Park, St. Louis</td>
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from a contemporary perspective, that they are located in the core of the city.

Cultural Compounds remain important to the economic and cultural growth of many cities, which continue to remodel, expand and enhance their facilities.

MAJOR ARTS INSTITUTION FOCUS

This type of cultural district is anchored by major arts institutions such as large concert halls, playhouses, libraries and museums and may also include smaller arts organizations and entertainment facilities, such as nightclubs and cinemas. The Major Arts Institution cultural district is typically located close to the central business district and often near convention and other tourism sites. Some cultural districts with a Major Arts Institution focus specialize in a particular cultural genre, such as museums or theaters.

Major Arts Institution Districts in the U.S. include:

- Cleveland: Playhouse Square
- Dallas Arts District
- Fort Lauderdale Arts and Science District
- Houston Museum District
- Houston Theater District
- New Orleans Arts and Cultural Sector
- New York City: Times Square
- Philadelphia Avenue of the Arts
- Pittsburgh Cultural District
- San Francisco: Yerba Buena Center
- St. Louis Grand Center

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT FOCUS

Arts and Entertainment districts focus on popular attractions for younger audiences and tend to have a more bohemian feel than the Major Arts Institu-
CULTURAL DISTRICTS

DOWNTOWN FOCUS
A cultural district that encompasses most of the downtown area, including the central business district, uses most or all of a city's cultural attractions to draw visitors. "Culture" in this type of district is broadly defined to include major arts institutions, popular attractions, restaurants, nightclubs, movie theaters, parks and tourist sites. This model tends to be established in smaller cities, where the downtown can be more easily packaged as a destination. (At least one larger city—Tucson, population 451,500—is using this model successfully as well.)

Downtown focus districts in the U.S. include:
- Hartford (Connecticut) Downtown Arts & Entertainment District
- Riverhead, New York: East End Arts District
- Tucson Arts District

CULTURAL PRODUCTION FOCUS
The focus is less on the presentation of the arts and more on arts production or arts education in the Cultural Production Focus district. Production spaces such as artist, dance and music studios, as well as media production centers, are the primary cultural facilities in these districts, which may also include arts centers with classroom space for the visual or performing arts, specialized spaces such as darkrooms and ceramics studios, arts-oriented high schools or colleges and presentation spaces such as private galleries and small theaters.

Cultural Production districts generally focus more on inner-city neighborhood development than on attracting visitors. They typically include a significantly higher percentage of residential space—particularly housing for artists—than other cultural districts and are less likely to be established near a city's central business district or major tourist attractions.

Cultural production focus districts in the U.S. include:
- Detroit: Heidelberg Project
- New Haven: Audubon Arts District
- St. Paul: Lowerton Urban Village
The community development field has delivered unprecedented social change work since the 1960s: billions of dollars in private capital invested; hundreds of thousands of affordable housing units built; the development of many high-performing local, regional, and national nonprofit organizations; and the creation of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, the most successful private-public partnership the nation has ever seen.1

The emerging creative placemaking field has a different but complementary set of assets. Creative placemaking leads with the ability to address the intangibles that make a successful and vibrant community (see Gary Hattem’s article in this issue), to mobilize social capital (Darren Walker and Xavier de Souza-Briggs in this issue), to bring performance and participatory activities to public spaces (Jamie Bennett, this issue), and—maybe most important—the capacity to “challenge preconceptions about what a city is supposed to look like and how it works” (Rip Rapson, this issue).

The intersection of community development and creative placemaking holds great promise. If we combine the energy and spirit of creative placemaking with the demonstrated capacity and practices of community development, we can create an exciting, inspiring, and inclusive vision for our communities in the future. To reach this goal, we should better understand the potential and common challenges of each field. The essays in this collection enable us to do just that.

What Creative Placemaking Brings to Community Development

Focusing on Human Capital

There is growing consensus in the community development field that we need to expand from our initial focus on the built environment to include strategies that simultaneously address people and opportunity. As Xavier de Souza Briggs, vice president for economic opportunity and assets at the Ford Foundation, explains in this issue, we are going from a “near obsession with the hardware of place—the physical systems—to a much deeper appreciation for the role of human capital, knowledge, and creativity.”

Jamie Bennett, executive director of ArtPlace America, underscores this point. “In creative placemaking, ‘creative’ is an adverb describing the making, not an adjective describing the

place. Successful creative placemaking is not quantified by how many new arts centers, galleries, or cultural districts are built. Rather, its success is measured in the ways artists, formal and informal arts spaces, and creative interventions contribute toward community outcomes.” Expanding this idea, Darren Walker, president of the Ford Foundation, notes that creative placemaking, particularly in under-resourced communities, can unearth and support inherent creativity within a community: “I reject the idea that a community that is poor can’t be a place of creative placemaking....The creative process might need to be organized, leveraged, and oxygenated, but you often find that creativity is there.” Examining communities through a lens of assets instead of deficits transforms perspectives. In addition, De Souza Briggs notes that artists, better than developers, can “connect, engage, and listen” toward enabling the community to “narrate itself” how it sees itself, what the critical issues it faces are, and where it is headed. As many in the community development field and the broader social sector learn how to meaningfully engage communities and incorporate their voices and visions in development strategies, enlisting artists as partners has proven particularly effective in many geographies and contexts.

Further, creative placemaking opens the door to marry physical environment improvements to arts programming, events, and education. It fosters public spaces that encourage social cohesion and engagement, and nurtures local talent and distributed, diverse leadership.

**Unearthing Engines of Economic Development**

The essays in this collection are rich with examples of how art and culture serve as engines of economic development (Mary Jo Waits, Stephen Sheppard, among others). Samuel Hoi, president of Maryland Institute College of Arts, writes about a recent Otis report documenting the potent economic drivers and jobs generators that the creative professionals and industries are in Los Angeles and California. In the same vein, Bennett writes, “Creative placemaking supports economic diversity and place-based prosperity in the community, creating more opportunity for all...By clustering together different types of arts spaces along underused streets, communities are able to create consistent patterns of foot traffic, which provides a positive presence on the street to improve public safety and to drive a neighborhood’s economy, as these members of the public dine and shop.”

Rip Rapson, president of the Kresge Foundation and chair of the ArtPlace presidents’ council, tells a compelling story of how creative placemaking in Detroit has leveraged both the economic potential and the creativity of artists to reimagine the city: “Artists in Detroit...are instrumental in helping us see connections among the past, the present, and the future. They embody, embrace, and express the soul of the place. And they are fully engaged in creative placemaking—contributing tangibly and powerfully to energizing and animating neighborhoods.” Artists, both long-term residents and those recently attracted to the city by the prospect of a community of like-minded individuals and affordability, do not, according to Rapson, see the city as “on the skids” and are instead converting public ruin and decline
into a new cultural identity that has significant potential for attracting attention, visitors, new residents, and further investment.

In addition, Jane Chu, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and Jason Schupbach, director of design programs at NEA, outline how the endowment’s Our Town grants have, among other important goals, supported communities in defining arts as economic assets. They emphasize that “Artists and designers provide amenities for consumers and rejuvenate downtowns and neighborhoods....[They] help form the core of community development practice.”

Releasing Imagination, Boldness, and Animation

As de Souza Briggs points out, community development has a “problem-solving frame: delineating problems and fixing them.” This frame is important and necessary. However, creative placemaking allows for more comprehensive solutions that supplement those fixes with bold, inventive reinforcements that contribute to resilience. Artists can breathe life into buildings, make places more attractive, and provide elements of unique character and the unexpected.

As Bennett describes, “Creative placemaking provides a sense of community identity and agency, which connects community members with one another as stewards of shared space.” This type of shared stewardship holds great promise for extending the impact of community development initiatives.

What Community Development Brings to Creative Placemaking

The community development field is mature, and with that maturity, it has developed, refined, and applied tools and mechanisms that have helped transform underinvested places in the course of decades. These mechanisms can add great value to and strengthen the creative placemaking movement and bring the two fields into even closer, more productive collaboration in a few key ways.

Harnessing Private Capital

One of community development’s greatest accomplishments has been its success in leveraging public and philanthropic dollars with private capital. The Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) movement has invested and catalyzed more than $30 billion in financing to urban, rural, and Native communities, with losses of less than 1.7 percent. As many of the essays in this issue note (Ann Markusen/Anne Gadwa Nicodemus, Gary Hattem), financing is one of creative placemaking’s greatest challenges. As Hattem notes, “Intentionally directing a flow of commercial capital for creative placemaking will require a sustained commitment to fostering a network of resources that allow for a capital-ready environment.” Community development has done that consistently throughout the United States.

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Managing Permanent, Dedicated Funds

Community development has built the capacity to create, manage, and deploy a pool of funds dedicated to community development activities—from the $230 million New York City Acquisition Fund to the $50 million Bay Area Transit-Oriented Affordable Housing (TOAH) Fund. Community development also has effectively supported public measures such as Seattle’s special fund for construction and rehabilitating housing for low- and moderate-income families, the Seattle Housing Levy. Initially enacted in 1981, 66 percent of Seattle voters supported the most recent renewal of the fund in 2009. These public and private funds provide not only a ready source of capital, but the capacity to move from the periodic to the predictable—a long-term asset that enables a robust level of transactions that have the potential to be transformational. If the Public Art Trust Fund, Nonprofit Displacement Working Group and Mitigation Fund, and Community Arts Stabilization Trust—described by San Francisco mayor Ed Lee and director of cultural affairs Tom DeCaigny in their essay in this issue—are indicators of what the future holds, community development could dramatically accelerate the creation of similar mechanisms throughout the United States dedicated to creative placemaking.

Building Public-Private Partnerships

The power and effect that the community development field has had are directly related to building public-private partnerships. Whether it is the blending of public, private, and nonprofit funding streams in individual transactions or large-scale funds, such as in New York and the Bay Area, or in the implementation of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, this concept has long been at the core of community development efforts.

Several essays in this issue clarify that this type of collaboration, beyond financing, is essential to advancing effective creative placemaking at scale. Mayor Lee and DeCaigny refer to the Rainin project that builds on the momentum of several public-private partnerships including the “Let There Be Light” video installation on the side of 1019 Market Street by the producer of the internationally heralded “Bay Lights,” a monumental public artwork that adorns the Bay Bridge; the UN Plaza Fall Event Series that fills the San Francisco Central Market district with daytime and evening cultural and culinary programs; and the mayor’s Living Innovation Zones. Community development’s experience with building win-win relationships could be invaluable in expanding these types of activities.

In addition, the community development field could help creative placemakers ride the current wave of “zones” or districts and make arts-led zones more ubiquitous. Zones are a city’s effort to bring an array of partners and institutions together in a defined geographic area to achieve specific outcomes, whether it be creating jobs, clustering arts institutions, or stimulating innovation. For example, community development’s experiences navigating land use laws and regulations and understanding how to create incentives for desired types of development—gained by working in an array of zone initiatives such as the empowerment zones of the 1980s and President Obama’s current Promise Zones—could be invaluable.
Working Together Toward More Rigor in Measuring Results

Uniting community development and creative placemaking has the potential to both better address the needs of communities and take better advantage of local assets, particularly the people, in more comprehensive, responsive, authentic, and inclusive ways. Although each field brings unique strengths to the table, they both lack effective measures of success. Many essays in this issue refer to efforts to bring rigorous measurement to creative placemaking and the lack of success in doing so (Elaine Morley/Mary Winker, Sheppard, and Walker/de Souza-Biggs, for example). De Souza Briggs summarizes these efforts well: “I don’t think that creative placemaking has necessarily made a big impact on how success is measured in communities, though it has much to offer and the potential is there.” As the two fields work in closer collaboration, defining the results that investors and citizens should expect in these place-based efforts should be easier to articulate, supported by data, and more measurable. We must organize evaluation efforts based on understanding outcomes for individuals and communities, rather than outputs.

The Road Ahead

The synergies from and benefits of more collaboration between the community development and creative placemaking fields are compelling—an almost certain case of one plus one equals three. Less certain, however, is how collaboration will be accomplished. Should philanthropy or government, which fund both fields, drive the marriage and, if so, how? Would something such as a large-scale, national “prize” competition create a tipping point? Should we simply maintain the current transaction-by-transaction strategy, which has been receiving traction, but do more to share “what works” more broadly? This anthology makes it clear that something special is happening in US communities and raises the ante on determining what more we should do to nurture the movement.

Ben Hecht became president and CEO of Living Cities in July, 2007. Since that time, the organization has adopted a broad, integrative agenda that harnesses the collective knowledge of its 22 member foundations and financial institutions to benefit low-income people and the cities where they live. Prior to joining Living Cities, Mr. Hecht co-founded One Economy Corporation, a nonprofit organization that leverages the power of technology and information to connect low-income people to the economic mainstream through broadband in the home and public-purpose media. Immediately before One Economy, Mr. Hecht was senior vice president at the Enterprise Foundation. There, he led the organization’s efforts beyond housing—into childcare, workforce development and economic development and oversaw the expansion of the organization’s revolving loan fund from $30 million to $200 million. Mr. Hecht received his JD from Georgetown University Law Center and his CPA from the State of Maryland.
A CREATIVE PLACEMAKING FIELD SCAN

Exploring the Ways Arts and Culture Intersects with Housing
Emerging Practices and Implications for Further Action

Danya Sherman
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What Arts and Cultural Strategies Can Do

Below are a series of creative strategies enacted in communities facing particular struggles (many of which are articulated above). The six categories of arts and cultural strategies below were developed through analyzing and finding commonalities amongst dozens of place-based arts interventions around the country, in a variety of settings. While on the ground dynamics are complex and go beyond housing, this categorization attempts to unearth key successes that arts and cultural strategies can help achieve in a housing context, including some of the goals and impacts that are common among several cases. Further research and analysis is needed to translate the ways that arts and cultural strategies in the housing context, which often impact individuals or small subsets of communities, impact larger neighborhoods in aggregate – how might benefits scale up from individual or small groups to entire communities, neighborhoods, and regions?

Articulate

Arts strategies that engage topics of housing, neighborhood, and community can help to interpret, identify, and communicate important dynamics in powerful and unique ways. Artists, by working to express situations through non-verbal, non-analytical strategies, can help to unearth important conditions, encouraging identification, empathy, and understanding of common barriers and problems and the impacts of them.

Project Row Houses worked first as an art project because we had a symbolic role to play. People could point to what we were doing and use it as a guidepost in terms of thinking about development. RICK LOWE, PROJECT ROW HOUSES

While these strategies may not have measurable benefits in terms of commonly used financial indicators, they serve crucial roles intrinsically. These examples are often place-based and connected to urban development in a particular place, as in the case of Project Row Houses, but may also be less directly connected, as in the case of Mel Chin’s “Safehouse.” While benefits of this strategy may most directly impact the artists themselves, communities can utilize the increased awareness of a housing issue that results from arts strategies to their benefit through partnerships, advocacy efforts, and more.

CASE: Breathing Lights, Albany, Schenectady, and Troy, NY. Artist Adam Frelin and architect Barbara Nelson, in collaboration with local governments of three cities in upstate New York, Rensselaer
Polytechnic Institute, and dozens of other partners, will illuminate hundreds of vacant homes over a period of several months. The project will bring attention to the overwhelming problem of vacancy in these cities, which are often referred to as legacy or post-industrial. The project seeks to beautifully and creatively spark a higher volume of dialogue and eventually action by bringing more creative attention to the spatial environment in need of revitalization. 

Breathing Lights also includes a summit on the problem of vacancy in an effort to translate this project into additional economic benefits.

Nourish

Arts and culture can be the heart of housing work. Whether it is to beautify projects, design culturally generative elements that help build community (like porches), or help a formerly homeless individual to make a new apartment feel like home, culturally focused housing work adds a much-needed human element to projects that do not always emphasize humanistic elements.

The arts are uniquely humanizing – to be a humanist is to live beyond subsistence. STEPHEN HITCHCOCK, THE HAVEN

This aspect of arts work overlaps with design, both in terms of process and product—community developers may choose to build a thoughtful public space into the design of a project for residents’ health and wellbeing; CDCs may engage urban designers to conduct a collaborative design process as an engagement and education strategy. These kinds of creative strategies are crucial to ensure that housing developments accrue benefits to our emotional as well as physical wellbeing, especially for vulnerable residents who may have experienced trauma in a variety of forms.

CASE: The Haven, Charlottesville, VA. The Haven is a homeless services organization in downtown Charlottesville. The Haven has always worked to acknowledge the importance of a beautiful, creative, and restorative environment in homeless service provision. The shelter is located in a reused building downtown, which Executive Director Stephen Hitchcock noted feels special as soon as you walk-in – especially in comparison to the average shelter, which can often feel barebones and clinical. The Haven has partnered with New City Arts for years on various programs, most recently the Housing 2 Home program, funded by ArtPlace America. The program came about at the suggestion of a volunteer who was trying to help a newly placed, formerly homeless individual to make their new house a home, and suggested that they bring in artwork to do so. The Housing 2 Home program will pair a creative organizer to bring such resources to more formerly homeless individuals. This program is expected to nourish the soul of program participants as well as help with the Haven’s bottom line, given that whether a newly placed individual stays in their home for 6 – 12 – 24 months is a key indicator for success.
Organize

Many community-based groups engage arts-based strategies to bolster and enliven community organizing, movement-building, and collective action. While organizing can be difficult and hard work, creative strategies help to ensure that community building through housing development is enjoyable, joyous, and enriching. Arts and design-oriented strategies and interventions help to educate, empower, and create space for shared decision-making in a housing and community development context. These strategies directly benefit those engaged with the organizing campaigns at hand; secondary benefits may also accrue to other residents, policymakers, and others as a result of the organizing.

Venturing into cultural arts work has made everything that we do better. It has its own natural spirit and benefits. Staff is enthusiastic; tenants are engaged, they know the artists who come and go. ELLEN BAXTER, BROADWAY HOUSING COMMUNITIES

Many groups, including the Design Studio for Social Innovation in Boston, MA, Lincoln Park Coast Cultural Development in Newark, NJ, and others, utilize creative strategies in efforts to bring attention to the need for affordable and supportive housing and to organize tenants in creative ways, thus enhancing the impact of housing development itself.

CASE: PUSH Buffalo, Buffalo, NY. PUSH Buffalo is a multi-issue organization, combining community organizing, political advocacy, housing development, and more. By staying focused on a specific neighborhood over a long period of time and maintaining deep roots in its residents and organizers, PUSH has found itself naturally including arts-based organizing strategies into its activism and community development work to boost effectiveness. In order to focus on comprehensive community development, PUSH created its housing arm, the Buffalo Neighborhood Stabilization Company, to develop and maintain affordable housing for its residents. Aaron Bartley, Executive Director, identified key cultural factors for successful community organizing and housing development: relevance, dynamism, energy, and fun, even if the issues themselves are technical or dry. PUSH has its own drumming and dancing troupe, has supported mural development by people living in the neighborhood, held two summer concerts per year showcasing local and regional talent, and more. They work to make these practices internal to the organization as a way of building community, strengthening, and celebrating their work. And now, a yearly community congress identified the need for an old school building to become an arts and community center, which is now under development, and will add important value to its housing development and other initiatives.
Bridge

Artistic activity can serve a crucial function to bringing people together in new ways. Cultural programming in a housing context can play many important roles, including some that overlap with others discussed here. One important outcome that many interviewees identified as particularly beneficial in important and under recognized ways is accessible cultural activities’ capacity to increase empathy and provide a common ground for people that may not otherwise interact. This important function addresses the negative consequences of highly segregated regions, which over time have created mistrust, bias, and prejudice to develop, as well as in mixed income neighborhoods. Overcoming biases, lack of exposure, mistrust, and prejudices benefit all parties who may then live more comfortably in their neighborhood and within the larger urban region with stronger ties to and understanding for a diversity of others.

Arts projects can rebuild humanizing social connections – they can prevent seeing a homeless person, a working artist, or even a developer as a foreign entity, as dehumanized and anonymous. Meaningful interactions through the arts can slowly build strong bonds that are fundamental to community development work. THERESA HWANG, DEPARTMENT OF PLACES

CASE: Broadway Housing Communities, New York, NY. Broadway Housing Communities (BHC), a supportive and affordable housing developer, is breaking through constraints and barriers to innovate new forms of affordable housing for low-income individuals and families. The recent Sugar Hill Housing Development created 124 units of affordable housing as well as a new Children’s Museum of Arts & Storytelling in a building designed by high profile architect David Adjaye. The project built upon BHC’s previous incorporation of the arts into supportive housing developments, which began when a community organizer who was also an artist curated a show in the building. BHC found that this brought new non-residents into the building and helped break down longstanding barriers and biases between members of the neighborhood. Executive Director Ellen Baxter is excited to begin programming the new Museum space and is hopeful that it will continue to be a cultural resource not just for residents but also for broader Harlem and New York City communities, placing the building on a cultural map of the city.

Stabilize

Many community-based groups have found that arts-based strategies are crucial in their efforts to stabilize communities that are particularly vulnerable to displacement. Groups like the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative pioneered neighborhood stabilization and wealth-creation through community-
owned land and housing by utilizing creative strategies to take land off of the private market through land trusts and other mechanisms. In the cases identified here, community-based groups identify creative strategies or engage in partnerships with artists or arts-organizations. Such partnerships that bring together technical expertise in the fields of real estate development, urban planning, and political organizing with either professionally trained arts workers or creative members of the community are often effective because they allow the creative workers to maintain a level of artistic freedom while also moving forward tangible urban development work. Stabilization strategies are most often aimed to support vulnerable populations, weakened by historic or ongoing neglect or uneven funding for individuals and communities of limited means; people of color; Native American communities; and others that are commonly at a disadvantage.

These practices are largely experimental and in need of more research, study, experimentation, and funding in order to help community groups develop best practices and achieve long-term stabilization for vulnerable communities and residents.

We are using cultural strategies to help gain control of the neighborhood through property ownership, community-led revitalization, and more. We need to make sure our existing residents, whether they are grandmothers or younger folks who will raise families here, can stay when new investment comes. We are working to create space at a pace that won’t displace. NIA UMOJA, COOPERATIVE COMMUNITY OF NEW WEST JACKSON

Other forms of stabilization through housing development include building culturally relevant housing types that are not currently provided on the private market. For example, Little Earth of United Tribes is endeavoring to building housing specifically for Native American populations, whose migration patterns and familial arrangements demand a spatial arrangement that is not served by the mainstream market that assumes a nuclear family or single adults.

CASE: Project Row Houses, Houston, TX. Project Row Houses (PRH), an early practitioner of arts-based cultural and community-based housing development, is focused on the preservation of a mixed income African American community in a rapidly gentrifying neighborhood of Houston. PRH began in the 1980’s as a project by and for local African American artists, and began by salvaging and preserving several vernacular row houses for artists’ studios and galleries. Building on the attention they received as innovative, socially engaged artists, PRH has successfully preserved and developed over 50 units of housing as well as continued to build several spaces for galleries and artists in the culturally historic row house style. Since then, the Third Ward of Texas, located proximately to downtown, has seen increasing real estate development pressure that is making it difficult to retain the historic African American
community and neighborhood environment, especially for those of low and moderate incomes who are particularly vulnerable to long-term unemployment. PRH is now partnering with churches, landowners, renters, politicians, and more in the neighborhood to convene the Emancipation Economic Development Council. The Council is pursuing several strategies, including land trusts, anchor institution development strategy, and others to address community stabilization and wealth creation comprehensively and in ways that address structural dynamics, but beginning necessarily with the ability to remain in housing. This partnership allows the arts to “stay nimble,” and not rely on arts-based leaders for everything that they may not be expert in.

Generate

Arts and cultural strategies are imageable; besides the benefits afforded to those participating in them (as described above), they can signal to outsiders that a particular neighborhood may be valuable and can thus attract investment. Because funds for affordable housing preservation, development, and rehabilitation are so low, utilizing arts strategies can aid in a communities’ competitiveness. Utilizing creative placemaking strategies have benefitted many community-housing developers by attracting national attention, which can then distinguish a CDC from others and attract additional investment. Theaster Gates’ work in Chicago, which has attracted significant attention due to its innovative nature, has opened the door to funding for housing development. Northeast Shores, a CDC in Cleveland, has been able to attract financing and achieve economic development for a neighborhood with high vacancy by intentionally marketing the neighborhood to artists, who can afford to buy homes there.

Narratives about a particular neighborhood, even if they come from a social justice standpoint, can be perceived as an invitation to invest. We have to be really careful about what story comes out in the public about our neighborhood. AARON BARTLEY, PUSH BUFFALO

Many developers are beginning to understand this and utilize it to benefit their financial bottom lines. However interviewees identified important caveats to utilizing arts-based strategies purely for economic development. Without being intentional, systematic, and strategic about whom the benefits of economic development will accrue to; there are often unintended negative outcomes for already vulnerable and marginalized communities. This can also translate into developers mistaking the forest for the trees: one interviewee noted that developers, seeing the value of the arts, may choose to bring in art from outside of the community that is not site specific or culturally relevant, simply to increase profit rather than accrue benefits to residents.
CASE: Capitol Hill Housing, Seattle, WA. Capitol Hill Housing is an innovative community development corporation that develops affordable housing and mixed-use developments in the rapidly gentrifying Capitol Hill neighborhood and others throughout Seattle. This award-winning CDC creatively leverages partnerships with arts organizations to build affordable housing (as well as providing other spaces mixed uses). The 12th Avenue Arts building contains restaurants on the first floor, which are buoyed by two flexible theatre spaces, nonprofit office space, and 88 apartment units. Their forward-thinking, place-based strategy gives them deep local knowledge, making it easier to develop projects across a portfolio that incorporates affordable housing, the arts, and commercial activity.
Implications

The six cases above showcase innovative practitioners acting at the intersection of housing and arts and culture work. A scan of others working at this intersection reinforce that arts-based strategies can be useful in moving housing work forward in that they can articulate key issues, nourish traumatized individuals, bridge disparate neighbors, stabilize vulnerable communities, generate important financial returns, and much more. That these kinds of actions are needed across various communities underline the persistent challenges discussed in Section Three. However, the creativity and innovation of arts-based community work can be further leveraged to continue improving housing outcomes for struggling communities, if done intentionally and intelligently. Below are several implications drawn from research and analysis, organized by potential audiences and actors.

Developers

Housing developers - whether they are non-profit, for-profit, public, private, CDC’s, regional affordable housing developers, or others - are increasingly experimenting with partnerships with arts organizations and using arts-based strategies to benefit their work in myriad ways. However, given financial pressure and the inertia of the housing industry’s isolated practices, developers will have to be intentional, strategic, and committed in order to achieve key outcomes.

Developers can solve financial problems if they have partners with a strong interest in doing so. If there is a positive mindset to get something done, it will generally happen. RICHARD BARON, MCCORMACK BARON SALAZAR

Research above indicates that developers, especially CDC’s, who use creative, culturally relevant housing strategies that commit to specific communities in place over long periods of time can attract attention, capital, and achieve important outcomes. In order to do so, developers may themselves wish to fund community organizers and artists and/or partner with community-based arts organizations and incorporate their creative, relational work into the functioning of their developments, creating line items for this kind of work and allowing it to proceed organically—several of the successes of projects noted above happened due to the natural evolution of the kind of creative work organizers and artists to best, and was then leveraged and expanded through partnerships and additional funding. In order to fund this work, developers may need to develop the capacity to articulate the value of arts strategies in housing to policymakers and funders, and be creative in attracting funding from unlikely or non-traditional sources. Developers who engage in cross-disciplinary dialogues, attend arts events in the communities
they are working in, and develop relationships with local policymakers can often find new language, understanding of, opportunities to support creative work.

Policymakers, Intermediaries & Funders

State, local, and federal policymakers, community development financial institutions, banks, philanthropies, and others have a huge amount of leverage and control in the housing sector, and thus in the ability to help communities achieve important outcomes in part through arts and culture-based strategies. Though larger political dynamics may prevent huge changes to the amount of funding available for affordable housing in the future, the funding that does exist can be targeted strategically at the most vulnerable communities who may use arts and culture strategies like those above to bolster their work. Additionally, funders could work more closely together to align their reporting requirements and incentivize and provide technical assistance for qualitative, longitudinal, and impact reporting that incorporates overall wellbeing, the arts, and cultural relevancy in key measures. Funders and policymakers must help build grantees’ goal-setting and impact-reporting capacity to understand who is being positively and negatively impacted as a result of investments through creative grant-making, capacity building, and quantitative and qualitative data collection methods.

Artists and creative practitioners have a language that deals with the human dimensions of this work rather than a ratio and quantitative measures. ELLEN BAXTER, BROADWAY HOUSING COMMUNITIES

Several public agencies have partnered with arts organizations to improve basic planning processes [for example, the Go Boston campaign’s partnership with the Design Studio for Social Innovation in Boston, or DS4SI43] to much success – policymakers and planners could hire or engage community-based arts organizations or artists as partners in bolstering effective housing planning. At the federal or state level, agencies could partner with philanthropies [similar to the way HUD is partnering with The Rockefeller Foundation on the 100 Resilient Cities initiative44] to make arts and culture strategies key aspects of policies and grant making. Key upcoming federal policies that arts and culture work may benefit are the next round of Choice Neighborhoods grant, and the Assessment of Fair Housing tool that will be released as part of the Affirmatively Fair Housing Rule.45

Funders must also beware of common “traps”, and not mistake what artists can do for the basic functioning of policy work or housing development – artists and creative strategies must be brought on as complements and allowed to proceed creatively, not as substitutes for important nuts-and-bolts analysis and action. Funders must also beware of the cooptation of arts for extra profit; developers and other grantees, seeing arts’ ability to generate financial returns, may utilize creative placemaking
language and perhaps even intend to positively impact vulnerable populations but enact arts strategies that end up creating negative housing outcomes through residential, commercial, and cultural displacement, or other negative consequences of investments.

Many developers use art, but it is not art that is relevant to the community being served. I’ve seen a lot of developers not build on the culture that is there, which pushes out long term residents and makes them feel unwelcome. How do we incorporate art and culture that is already there? MARCHELLI HILL, AMERICAN COMMUNITIES TRUST

CDFIs, banks, and other funders could leverage their investments to help organizations build capacity to do arts-based housing work. One interviewee suggested that the larger regional CDCs could be engaged to partner with small arts organizations to build arts work into existing funding for affordable housing and technical assistance. Banks seeking to utilize Community Reinvestment Act and other funds could help broker these partnerships as well. Lastly, funders and policymakers should consider what it would mean to build organizer capacity and fund education and experiments, acknowledging that many culturally centered housing practices are emerging now and require operational support to develop best practices and learn from one another.

Artists, Organizers & Community-Based Organizations

Individuals and community organizations can provide a huge amount of benefit in achieving successful housing outcomes, but this is an emerging field. Individuals can learn from the above cases and others. For example, nearly all of the cases above involve a long-term commitment (ten years or more) to specific communities in a specific delineated geographic area. In these cases, innovative practices largely come as a result of a committed dialogic, relationship-building process wherein creative strategies emerge as part housing and community development towards larger goals to enhance well-being. In order to bring the housing sector on board in work like this, artists, community members, and organizers need to develop the capacity to work with developers, policymakers, and other key decision-makers if they do not already do so. Attending cross-sector conferences, attending policy hearings, requesting meetings, and more can be ways of beginning to build these kinds of networks and language. Additionally, groups could expand opportunities for peer-to-peer sharing of best practices and knowledge.

We need to push arts organizations to see developers as partners, to ask themselves, ‘who do I need to work with to make what I want to see happen?” MICHAEL SEIWERATH, CAPITOL HILL HOUSING
Overall, long-term opportunities to break down siloes between housing, community organizing, and arts work will be hugely mutually beneficial. Actors of all kinds can begin to do this kind of work in a variety of ways, and the working groups that ArtPlace plans to convene in order to begin working at this intersection are promising.

Conclusion

While persistent challenges to housing exist, innovative strategies are emerging at the intersection with arts and culture that are helping communities move the needle locally and systemically. Among the breadth of creative placemaking projects, however, the number of housing-focused projects is relatively low. A number of potential reasons for this may be embedded in the context and barriers discussed in Section Three. The relative dearth of arts-based projects and policy that focus specifically on housing creates an exciting opportunity for all potential actors.

The need for this creative action in the housing sector is immense: with rising rents, land prices, and declining incomes, more Americans are in need of housing stability than ever before; disparate outcomes for low income communities and communities of color remain entrenched in our policies and practices, and the sector as a whole is facing continued declining federal funding, with uncertainty on the horizon given a new presidential administration. In the context of a notoriously opaque field, practitioners show us that arts and culture work can provide important outcomes: articulating the need, nourishing the body and soul, bridging disparate residents, organizing for power, stabilizing vulnerable communities, and generating financial returns.

Key findings of this report conclude that:

- Creative community-building strategies may uniquely help place-based groups positively impact their communities while also addressing key structural and systematic barriers that prevent too many from building healthy, integrated, and self-sufficient living situations
- Arts and culture strategies address the heart of community development work because they address deep emotional and interpersonal issues, and thus play a unique role in unearthing the complex and dynamic relationship between people, place, and community development
- Key barriers exist in the housing, arts & culture, and community development sectors that prevent further incorporation of arts strategies by community-based practitioners
- Arts and culture-based work may help developers (both nonprofit and for profit), funders, policymakers, intermediaries, community-based organizations, advocates, and artists to work
effectively in towards their own goals and through new partnerships together to overcome key structural and local barriers to more equitable communities of opportunity and stability.

ArtPlace and its partners’ attention to breaking down barriers at this intersection will include convening dialogues, innovative metric development through its community development investment program, and more.