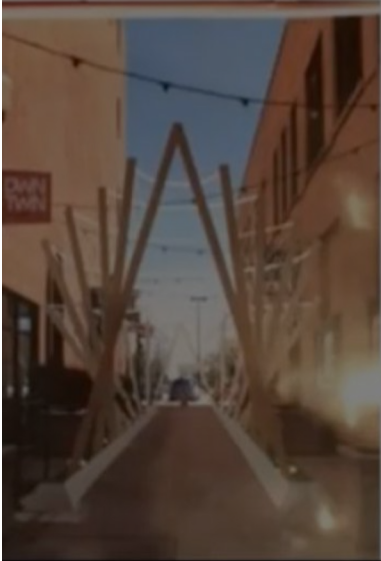# Creative Placemaking

*A Strategic Approach to Community & Economic Development*

# Creative Placemaking: Connecting Community, Culture & Growth

A strategic approach to community and economic development that integrates arts, culture, and design to strengthen local identity and drive sustainable growth.

**by WMWO Chamber of Commerce**

# What is Creative Placemaking?

## Definition

Creative placemaking integrates arts, culture, and design into community development. It strengthens local identity while driving economic progress.

## Purpose

It uses creative expression to reflect community values. This catalyzes revitalization in both urban and rural settings.
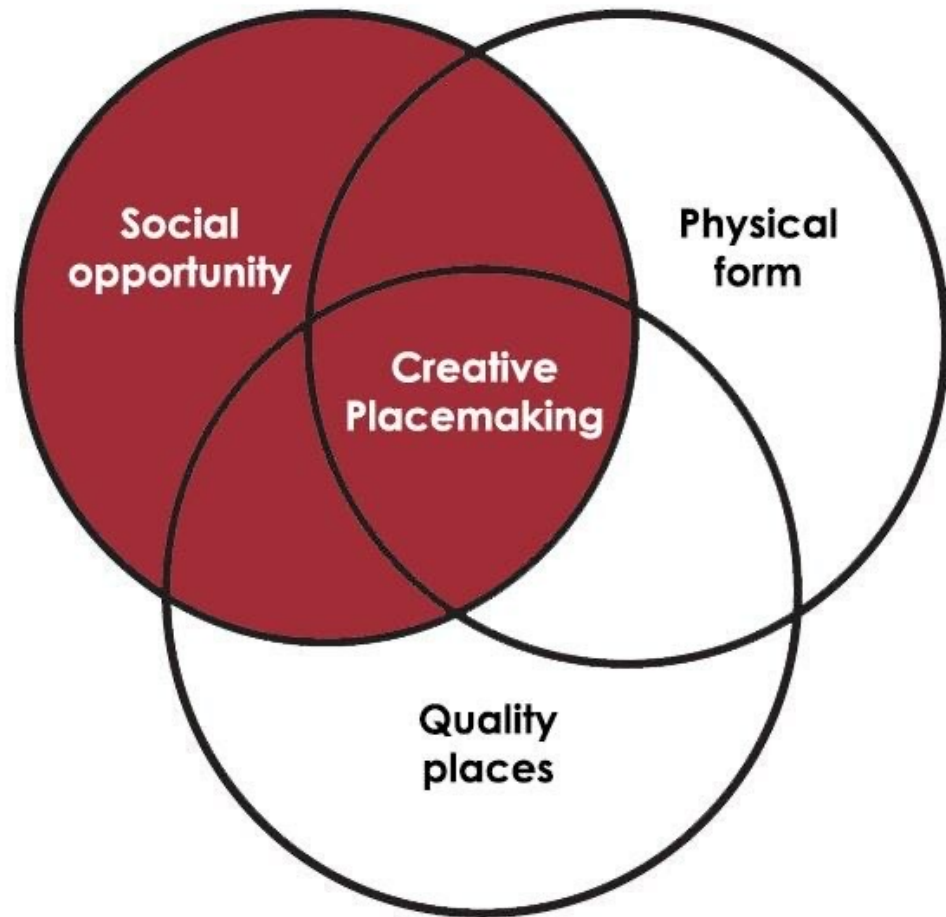


More than beautification—creative placemaking is strategic, inclusive, and sustainable. It creates meaningful connections between people and places.

# Visualizing the intersections



Social opportunity

Physical form

Creative Placemaking

Quality places

# Placemaking is…

Community-driven

Visionary

Function before form

Adaptable

Inclusive

Focused on creating destinations
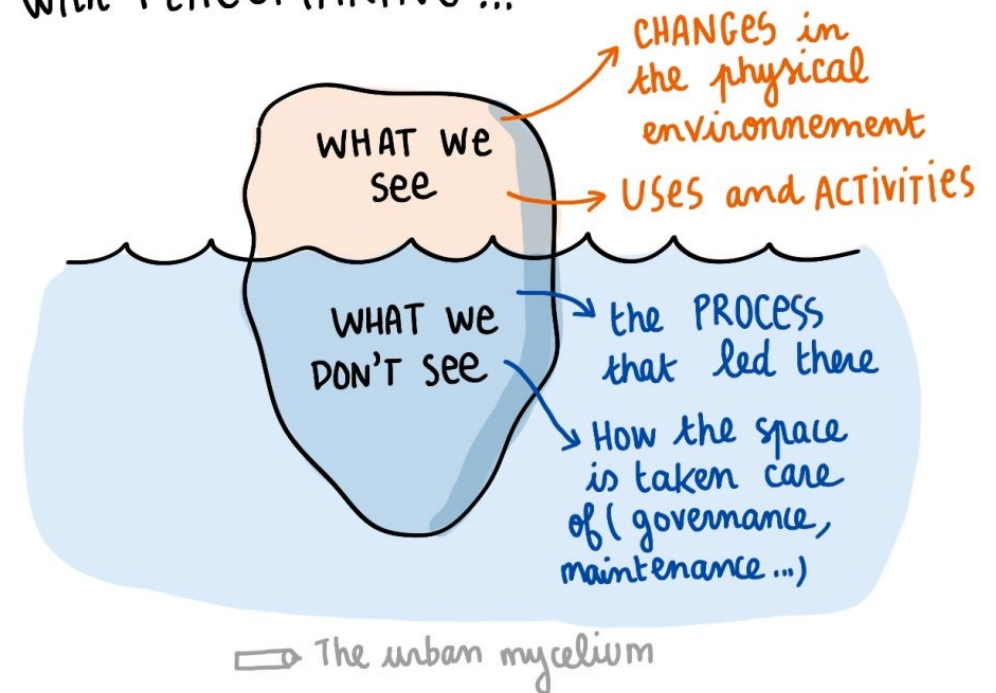
Context-specific

Dynamic

Trans-disciplinary

Transformative

Flexible

Collaborative

Sociable



with PLACEMAKING…

WHAT WE see → CHANGES in the physical environnement
→ USES and ACTIVITIES

WHAT WE DON'T SEE → the PROCESS that led there
→ How the space is taken care of (governance, maintenance …)

↦ The urban mycelium

## Placemaking is NOT…

Top-down

Reactionary

Design-driven

A blanket solution or quick fix

Exclusionary

Car-centric

One-size-fits-all

Static

Discipline-driven

One-dimensional

Dependent on regulatory controls

A cost/benefit analysis

Project-focused

# Spatial activation and stewardship can take many forms.

From temporary to semi–permanent, spatial activations frequently use a combination of programming (or, an activity component) and physical improvements. The below list is not intended to be exhaustive, but highlights some frequently seen types of spatial activation.
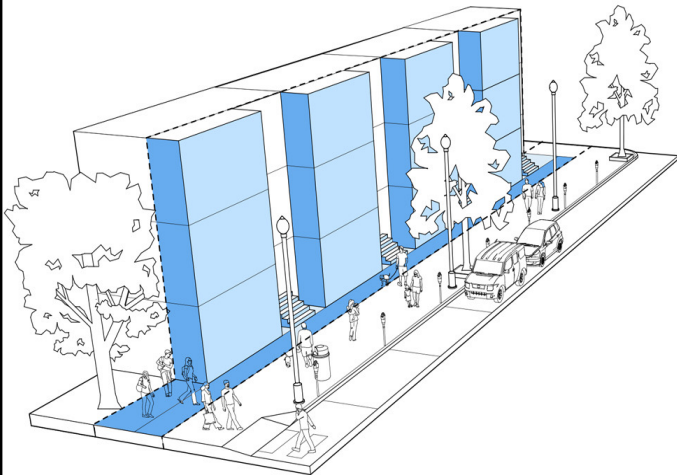
| TEMPORARY SPACE/PROGRAMMING | | PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENT/BUILT ENVIRONMENT | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Street Performances | Festivals | Parklets | Murals & public art |
| Parades | Street markets | Pop-up commerce | Cafe seating |
| Marathons | Farmers' markets | Temporary beaches | Temporary pavilions |
| Demonstrations | Street vending | Outdoor movies | Public seating |
| Outdoor Sports | Vending development zones | Temporary plazas | Celebrations |
| Block parties | | Free libraries | Commemoration |

## Activation vs. Enhancement

A distinction should be made between open space activation and open space enhancement. Open Space activation uses public spaces for people, in ways that improve quality of life and community awareness through dynamic engagement. Open space enhancement focuses on improving the aesthetic qualities of space.

Before

After

9



2012

2014

2007

2013
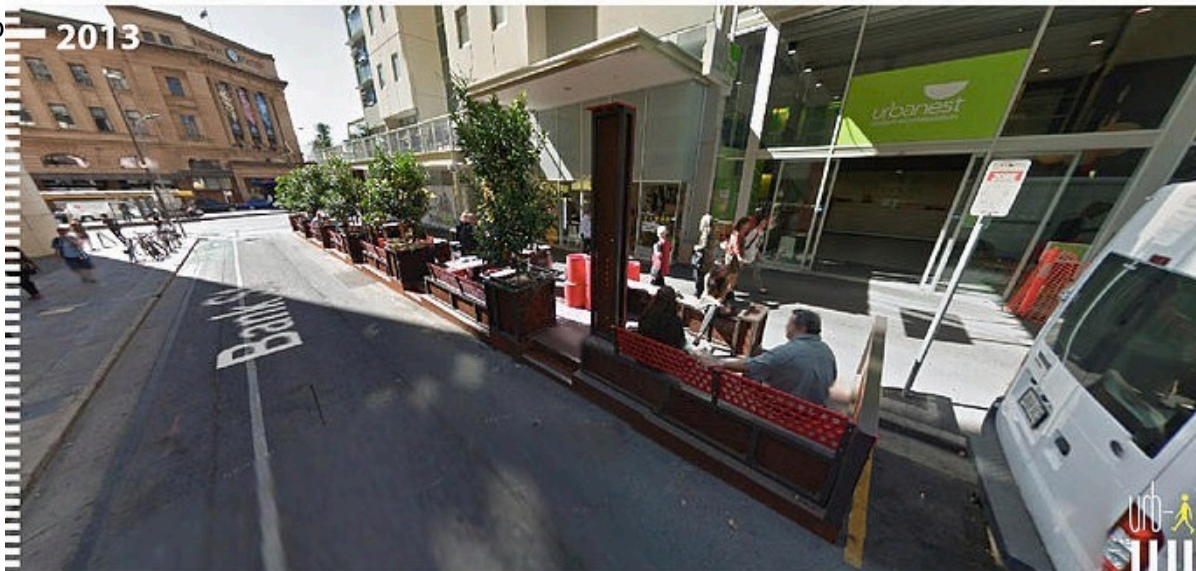
# Effective Recruitment Strategies

### Engage Local Talent

Recruit local artists, youth leaders, and cultural organizations. Their unique perspectives reflect authentic community identity.

### Build Strategic Partnerships

Partner with nonprofits, schools, and businesses. Cross-sector collaboration creates sustainable impact and shared ownership.
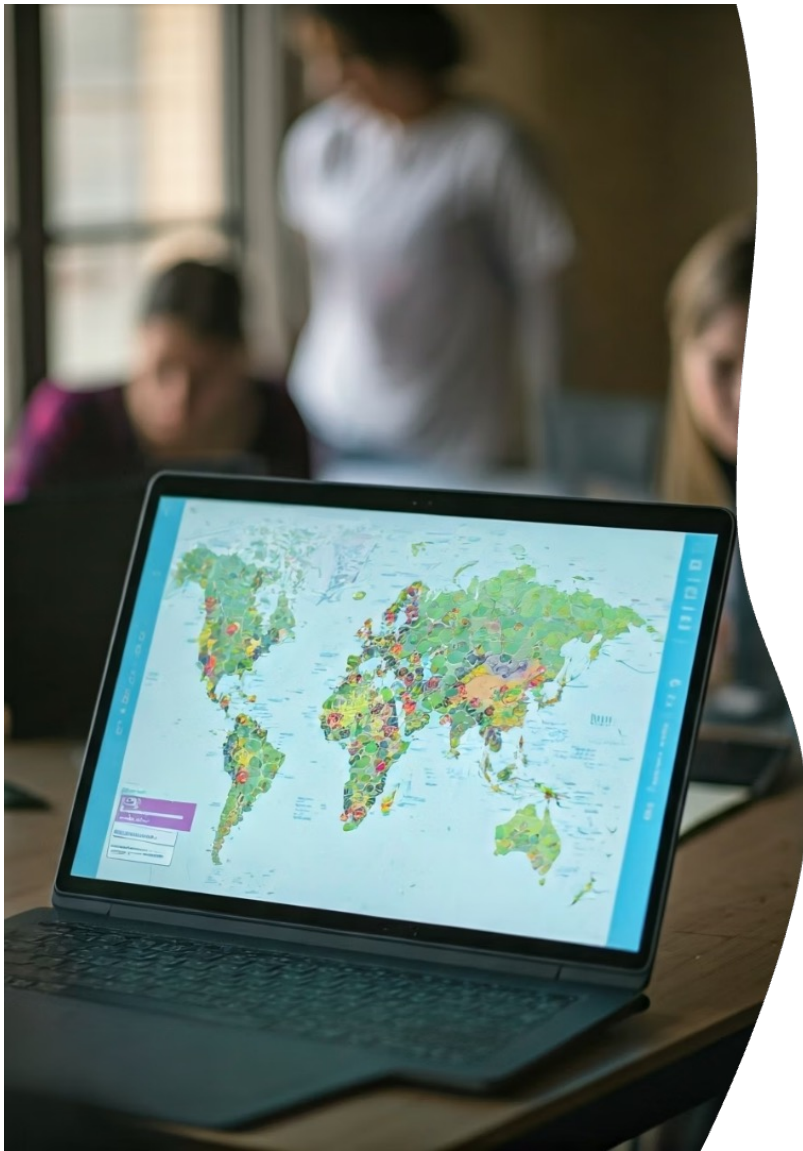
### Ensure Diverse Representation

Promote inclusivity across age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Diverse voices lead to more innovative solutions.

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# Importance of Data & Communication

## Map Cultural Assets

Create visual inventories of existing cultural resources. Asset mapping reveals hidden opportunities and community strengths.

## Maintain Transparency

Use digital platforms and in-person forums for updates. Clear communication builds trust and encourages participation.

## Gather Continuous Feedback

Implement surveys and participatory evaluation methods. Ongoing assessment allows for adaptive management and improvement.

MAP IT OUT
What are the cultural treasures in your neighborhood?

Identifying unique local strengths and resources is the foundational step. This involves a thorough inventory of existing assets, both tangible and intangible, that define the community's character and potential.
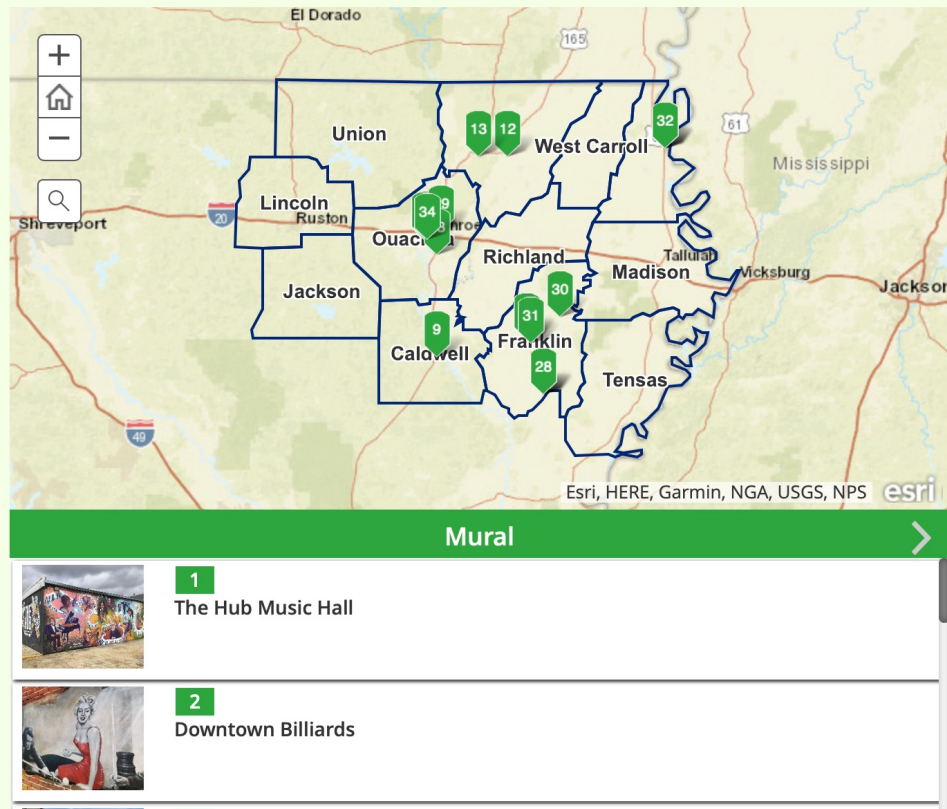
**Map Cultural Assets**

•**Historical Sites:** Discover and document landmarks, heritage buildings, and areas with significant past events.

•**Arts Organizations:** Catalog local theaters, galleries, music venues, and individual artists contributing to the cultural scene.

•**Community Traditions:** Recognize festivals, local customs, culinary specialties, and shared stories that foster identity.

•**Natural Resources:** Identify parks, waterways, green spaces, and other environmental features that can be leveraged.

•**Local Businesses:** Highlight unique shops, restaurants, and enterprises that contribute to local charm and economy.

This mapping exercise reveals hidden opportunities and community strengths, serving as the basis for future development initiatives.

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# EXPLORE OUR PUBLIC ART MAP



**Mural**

**1** The Hub Music Hall

**2** Downtown Billiards

Question
What cultural assets are unique in your community?

**Ensure Transparency**

Clear and consistent communication is paramount to building trust and encouraging broad participation throughout the placemaking journey. Transparency ensures that all stakeholders, from residents to local government, are informed and engaged.

•**Digital Platforms:** Utilize dedicated websites, social media, and email newsletters for regular updates and announcements.

•**In-Person Forums:** Organize town halls, community workshops, and open meetings to discuss plans and progress directly.

•**Accessible Information:** Present complex information in easy-to-understand formats, including visuals and simplified language.

•**Inclusive Outreach:** Actively seek out and engage diverse voices from all segments of the community, ensuring equitable representation.

•**Public Records:** Make meeting minutes, financial reports, and project documents readily available for public review.

Transparent communication fosters a sense of ownership and collective responsibility among community members.

# What tools do you use to generate transparency?

**Foster Continuous Feedback**

An adaptive and responsive placemaking process relies heavily on ongoing assessment and feedback. Regularly gathering input allows for adjustments, improvements, and ensures that projects remain aligned with community needs and aspirations.
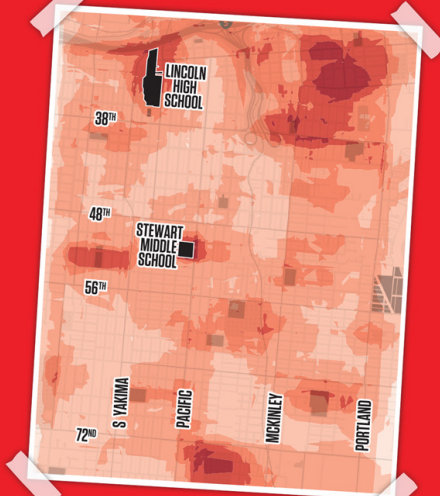
•**Implement Surveys:** Conduct regular online and in-person surveys to gauge public opinion and measure satisfaction with initiatives.

•**Participatory Evaluation:** Involve community members directly in assessing project outcomes and identifying areas for improvement.

•**Suggestion Boxes/Online Forms:** Provide easy and accessible channels for individuals to submit ideas and concerns at any time.

•**Focus Groups:** Organize small, targeted discussions to delve deeper into specific topics or gather insights from particular demographics.

•**Observation and Data Collection:** Systematically collect data on public space usage, event attendance, and economic indicators to inform decisions.

Ongoing assessment allows for adaptive management, ensuring projects evolve to meet dynamic community needs and maximize their positive impact.

FEEDBACK
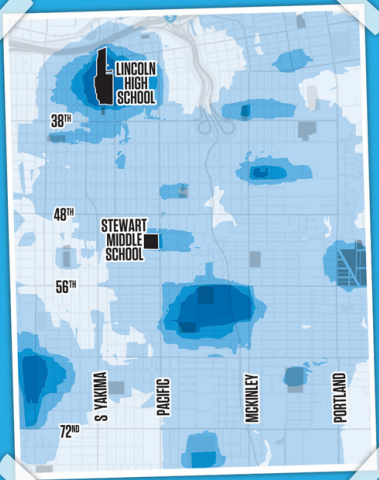
WHEN NOT AT HOME, WHERE DO YOU SPEND YOUR TIME?

WHAT AREAS DO YOU AVOID WHEN NOT AT HOME OR SCHOOL?

## WHAT ROUTES DO YOU AVOID WHEN WALKING OR BIKING?

LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL

38TH

48TH

STEWART MIDDLE SCHOOL

56TH

S YAKIMA

PACIFIC

MCKINLEY

PORTLAND

72ND

## WHAT ROUTES DO YOU USE WHEN WALKING OR BIKING?

LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL

38TH

48TH

STEWART MIDDLE SCHOOL

56TH

S YAKIMA

PACIFIC

MCKINLEY

PORTLAND

72ND

# Role of Economic Development Incentives



## Adaptive Reuse

Support repurposing of vacant buildings for cultural spaces. Revitalized structures preserve heritage while creating new value.



## Public-Private Collaboration

Facilitate partnerships between developers and cultural organizations. These alliances create sustainable funding models for creative projects.



## Financial Tools

Leverage grants, tax credits, and creative industry incentives. Strategic funding maximizes impact and attracts additional investment.

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## Adaptive Reuse

Support repurposing of vacant buildings for cultural spaces. Revitalized structures preserve heritage while creating new value. This approach transforms underutilized properties into vibrant community hubs, providing new venues for artists, performers, and cultural organizations. It's a cost-effective way to expand cultural infrastructure while respecting and enhancing the existing urban fabric, contributing to both economic and social revitalization.



BEFORE

PROPOSED DESIGN

COMPLETED

**Public-Private Collaboration**

Facilitate partnerships between developers and cultural organizations. These alliances create sustainable funding models for creative projects. By bringing together the resources of the private sector with the creative vision of cultural groups, these collaborations can unlock significant capital and expertise. This synergy ensures projects are not only financially viable but also deeply rooted in community needs and artistic integrity, fostering long-term success and impact.

# In your book...
# Case Example: Kick Start Lonoke

### Downtown Development

Revitalized main street with façade improvements and business incubation spaces.

### Community Branding

Established distinctive identity through coordinated marketing and storytelling.

### Farmers Market

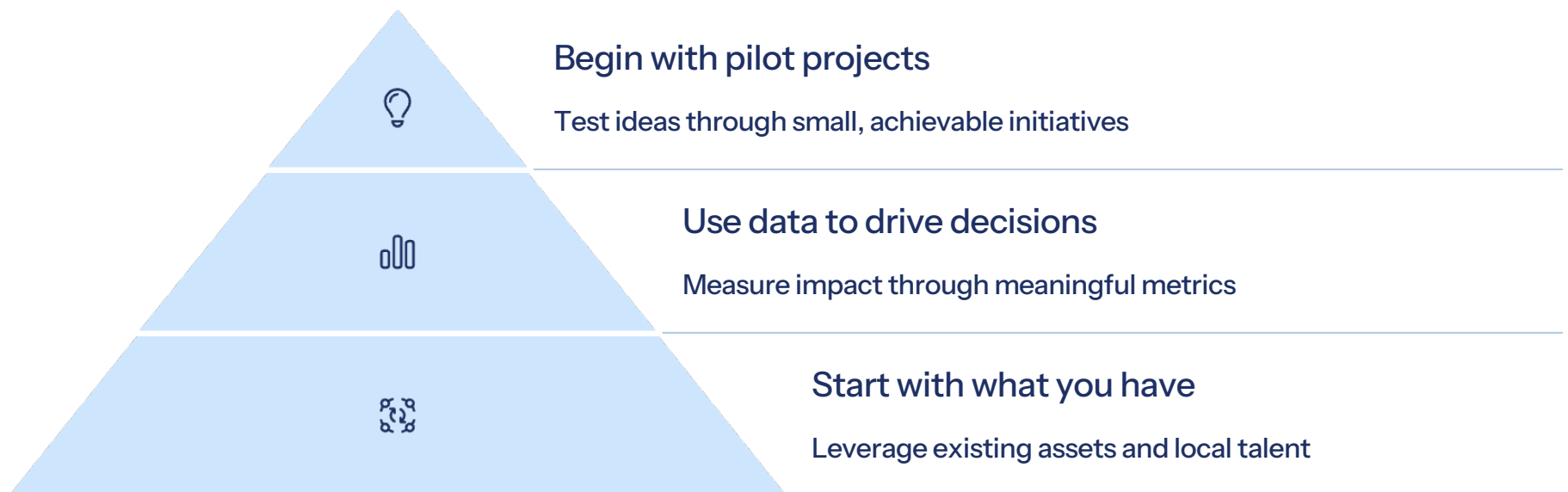Created a vibrant marketplace showcasing local products and cultural traditions.

### Public Spaces

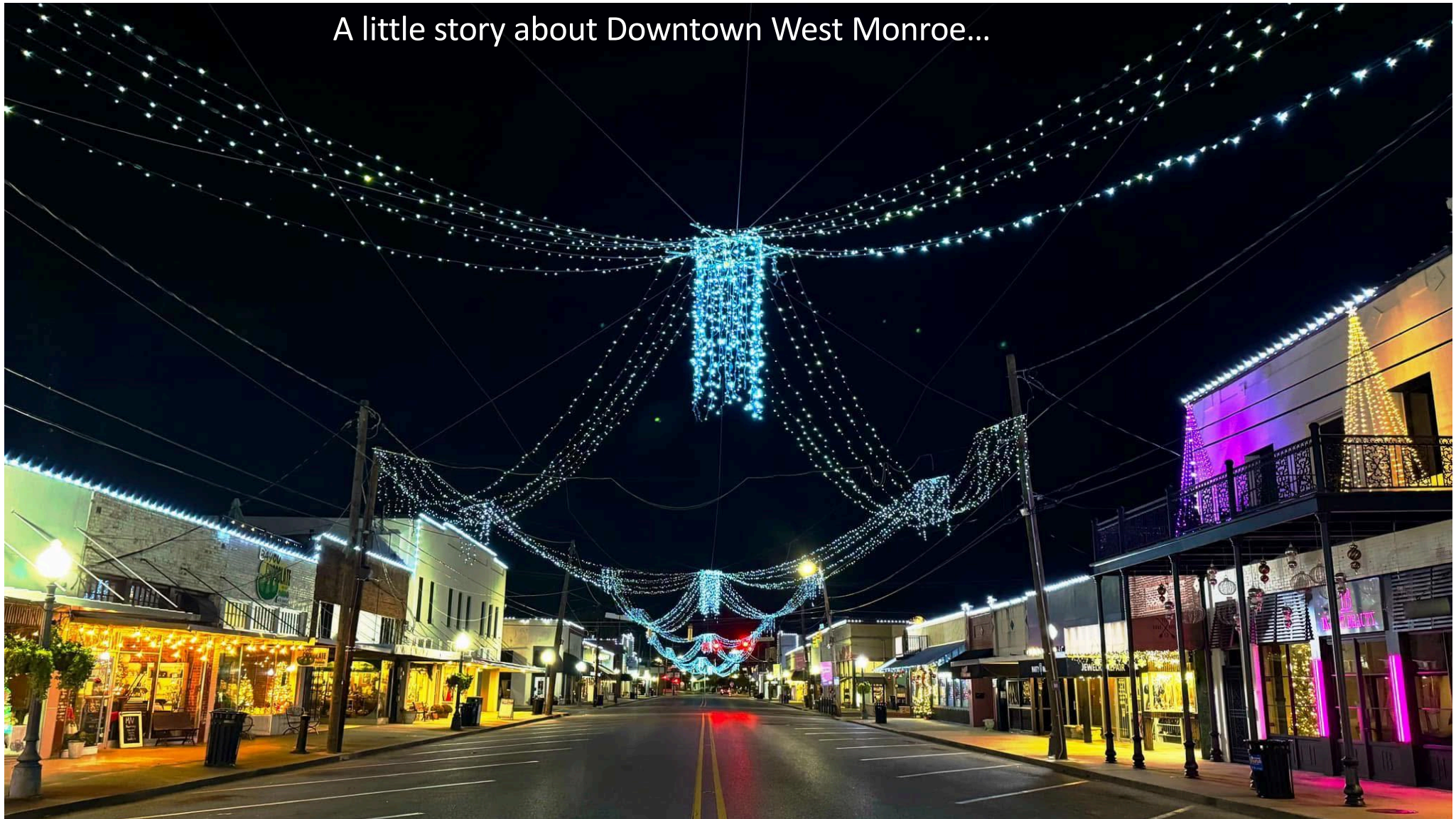Developed downtown trails connecting neighborhoods to cultural destinations.

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# Takeaways & Action Steps

**Begin with pilot projects**

Test ideas through small, achievable initiatives

**Use data to drive decisions**

Measure impact through meaningful metrics

**Start with what you have**

Leverage existing assets and local talent

A little story about Downtown West Monroe…

Once upon a time there was a downtown that needed

A PLACE...

# Capital Improvement Grant Application
## Alley Park

### Form B

| | |
|---|---|
| Requesting from CVB | $55,000.00 |

**EXPENSES**

| | |
|---|---|
| Leveling Asphalt | Donated by the City of West Monroe |
| 7300 Brick Pavers | $21,900.00 |
| 6 Commercial Tables | 2,000.00 |
| 24 Commercial Chairs | 4,000.00 |
| Iron Gates | 4,000.00 |
| Hanging Lights | 500.00 |
| 6 Canopy Sails and Hardware | 40,000.00 |
| Design Plans | 2,896.00 |
| Total | $75,296.00 |

**REVENUE**

| | |
|---|---|
| Installation | City of West Monroe |
| DWMRG | $10,000.00 |
| CVB Grant | 55,000.00 |
| TBA Studio Donation | 2,896.00 |
| Other Funding Sources | 7,400.00 |
| Total Revenue | $75,296.00 |

Marketing for this park will come from different sources as other groups utilize the space for their events. Examples of such groups include the following:
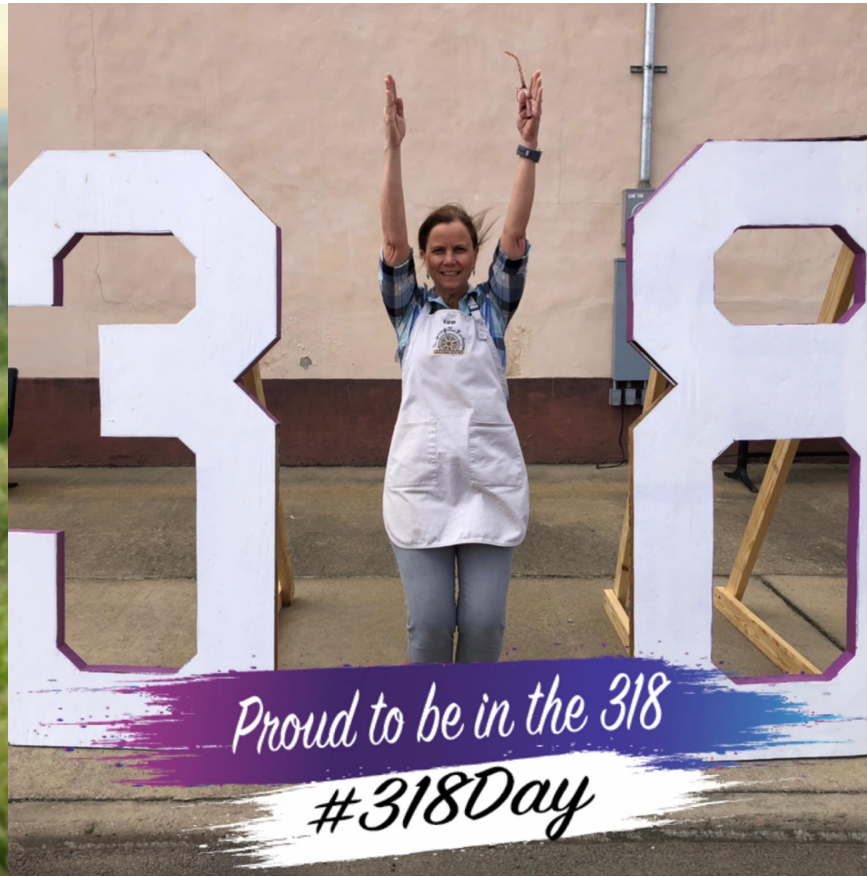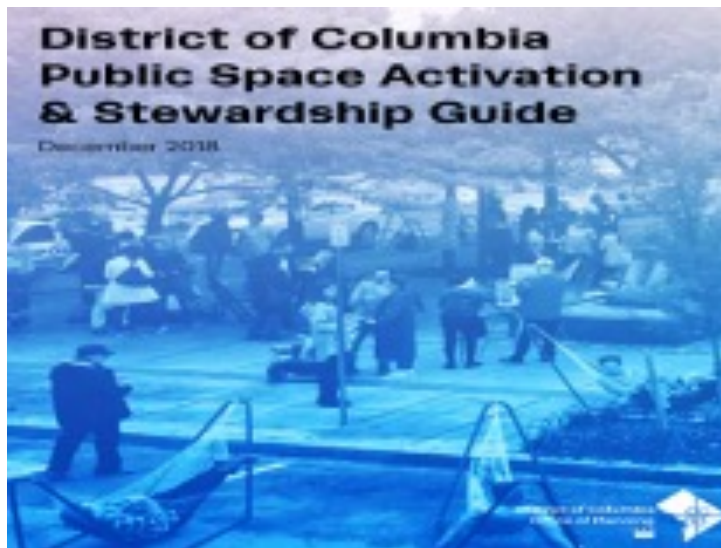
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# Why did this project work…



Proud to be in the 318
#318Day

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## Some great resources…



https://planning.dc.gov/page/district-columbia-public-space-activation-stewardship-guide



https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/5810e16fbe876cec6bcbd86e/6335ddc88fbf7f29ec537d49_2022%20placemaking%20booklet.pdf

# CREATIVE PLACEMAKING RESOURCES

**ARTICLES**
- Creative Placemaking by Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa
  http://arts.gov/sites/default/files/CreativePlacemaking-Paper.pdf
- Principles of Creative Placemaking by ArtPlace America–
  http://www.artplaceamerica.org/articles/principles-of-creative-placemaking/
- Defining Creative Placemaking by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)–  A Talk with Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa by Jason Schupbach
  http://arts.gov/NEARTS/2012v3-arts-and-culture-core/defining-creative-placemaking
- Small is Beautiful by Anne Gadwa
  http://www.crt.state.la.us/Assets/OCD/arts/culturedistricts/homepage/Small%20is%20Beautiful-Gadwa%20july%202014.pdf
- What is Placemaking? http://www.pps.org/reference/what_is_placemaking/
- Preservation and Placemaking by Linda Glisson, from Main Street Now–
  http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/main-street-news/story-of-the-week/2010/preservation-and-placemaking.html#.VSPd1_nF98E
- Need Community Development- Put Your Money on the Arts by Gadwa
  http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2011/09/27/gadwa/
- South Broad Street-Fresh Food Hub by Rebecca Mowbray, the Times Picayune–
  http://www.nola.com/business/index.ssf/2012/08/old_schwegmann_store_on_broad.html
- Main Street Community Partnership, Michigan Municipal League
- The Economic Impact of Placemaking, Sarah Craft, June 2014
- Placemaking in Legacy Cities, Michigan New Solutions Group, December 2013

**BOOKS**
- Imagination in Place, by Wendell Berry (2010)
- The Art of Placemaking: Interpreting Community Through Public Art and Urban Design, by Ronald Lee Fleming at The Townscape Institute (2007)
- Placemaking: The Art and Practice of Building Communities, by Lynda H. Schneekloth & Robert G. Shibley (1995)
- Place and Space: The Perspective of Experience, by Yi-Fu Tuan (1977)
- How to Turn a Place Around, by Project for Public Spaces (2000)
- The Ecology of Place, by Timothy Beatley and Kristy Manning (1997)
- Environmental Graphics: Project and Process[1] by Wayne Hunt, Hunt Design (2004)
- Graphic Design and Architecture: A Twentieth Century History [2] by Richard Poulin (2012)

**WEBSITES** with Lists of Resources, Reports, Programs
- Americans for the Arts – http://www.americansforthearts.org/
- National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)–  http://arts.gov/NEARTS/2012v3-arts-and-culture-core/defining-creative-placemaking
- ArtPlace America– http://www.artplaceamerica.org/articles/principles-of-creative-placemaking/
- Project for Public Space, Placemaking Blog– www.pps.org/blog
- Michigan– Placemaking Resources  http://miplace.org/placemaking
- Placemaking Chicago– http://www.placemakingchicago.com/about/principles.asp
- D.I.Y. Creative Placemaking (Canada)– http://www.artscapediy.org/Creative-Placemaking/Approaches-to-Creative-Placemaking.aspx

**GRANTS**
- Our Town NEA– art works to support creative, economically-competitive, healthy, resilient, and opportunity rich communities
- Kresge Foundation, Arts& Culture–promoting healthy cities by integrating arts and culture in community revitalization
- Grants.gov – FIND and APPLY for federal grants offered by 26 federal grant-making agencies
- Foundation for Louisiana 225-383-1672
- Community Foundation of Acadiana 337-769-4840
- ArtPlace America– a collaboration of national foundations and the National Endowment for the Arts to accelerate creative placemaking across the U.S
- Louisiana Division of the Arts – Art Grants
- Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation – National Parks Service Historic Preservation Fund Grants Program, Main Street Program, Historic Tax Credits
- Louisiana Recreational Trails– funds for all kinds of recreational trail uses
- USDA Rural Development– Louisiana Dept. of Agriculture, helping improve the economy and quality of life in rural America through loans, grants, and business assistance.

**ORGANIZATIONS**
- Project for Public Spaces – central hub if the global Placemaking movement, connecting people to ideas, expertise and partners who share a passion for creating vital places.
- Louisiana's regional arts councils providing services, information, and grants for art organizations and artists–Arts Council of Greater New Orleans, Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Arts & Humanities Council of Southwest Louisiana, Arts Council of Central Louisiana, Shreveport Regional Arts Council, Northeast Louisiana Arts Council, St. Tammany Arts Commission
- Foundation for Historical Louisiana– promote the preservation of the cultural and architectural heritage of Louisiana through education, advocacy, and stewardship
- National Trust for Historic Preservation– privately funded nonprofit organization working to save America's historic places
- Preservation Resource Center– To promote the preservation, restoration, and revitalization of New Orleans' historic architecture and neighborhoods.
- National Art Strategies Organization–Provides leadership programs and resources for art leaders
- Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX)– helping Louisiana communities realize their vision for a better quality of life
- Center for Creative Placemaking–created to build capacity for sustainable and cost-effective creative placemaking
- Broad Community Connections– a Main Street organization devoted to revitalizing the Broad Street Corridor
- Nunu's Art and Culture Collective–providing a stage/platform/gallery for creative living by facilitating community, economic, and artistic/cultural development.
- Louisiana Cultural Economy Foundation–a catalyst for the development and enhancement of the distinct cultural industries of Louisiana by promoting the economic health and quality of life of our cultural economy workforce
- Corporation for National and Community Service– AmeriCorps, SeniorCorps, Social Innovation Fund, Volunteer Generation Fund
- US Economic Development Administration Resources Directory– links to critical local resources including: EDA regional office contacts, state government contacts, and EDD, TAAC, RLF, University Centers, and Tribal planning organization sites
- Market Umbrella- cultivates community markets the utilize local resources to bolster authentic local traditions

**West**

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