
THE FIELD GUIDE
FOR PARKS AND CREATIVE PLACEMAKING
THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND & CITY PARKS ALLIANCE

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FIELD GUIDE FOR CREATIVE PLACEMAKING IN PARKS

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forward by
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produced by
The Trust for Public Land &
City Parks Alliance

DANCE PLACE - 8TH STREET ARTS PARK

Washington, DC

Park Type: ***Inside/Outside***
Reclaimed underused spaces adjacent to cultural institutions, bringing the spirit of the inside activities to a broader community.

Key lessons to look for:

1. Cultural organizations can transform communities and people by bringing their artistic **practices into the public realm**.
2. Being **cognizant of the requirements and restrictions** of stakeholders and engaging them appropriately throughout the process is essential.
3. **Stewarding cultural activities** in public space takes time and dedication; building manageable funding and staffing plans is critical.

Geographic context

Nestled in the northeast quadrant of Washington, DC, is the Brookland neighborhood. The neighborhood dates to the 1800s, and development was strongly influenced by the events of the time, including the Civil War.[28] Many religious establishments also settled in the neighborhood, and residential development boomed after World War II.

Today, 30 percent of Brookland residents live below the poverty line and 51 percent of children live in poverty. High levels of unemployment are a major concern, where rates in Brookland are double the rest of the District. The neighborhood is predominantly African American and is more homogeneous than the rest of Washington in that regard.

Dance Place is a neighborhood cultural center headquartered in Brookland. The center curates and hosts a 45-week presenting season, runs a dance school, and offers community arts and dance programming. Dance Place has been working in the neighborhood for thirty years, offering rigorous programming in Brookland, in partnership with various schools in the area, and to serve communities in Washington, DC, Virginia, and Maryland.

In 2009, the DC Department of Housing and Community Development set its focus on creating affordable housing in Brookland, with a focus on housing for artists. In partnership with Dance Place, the department created affordable live/work artist spaces known as Brookland Artspace Lofts, on the lot adjacent to Dance Place's center.

What were the goals?

Dance Place's core mission has been to build a community through high-quality performances, commissions, training and educational programs for audiences of all ages and abilities.[29] Carla Perlo, Dance Place's founding director, has been the long-term force behind the organization's artistic excellence; her vision saw a new goal: that of taking that artistry into the community around their building.

(Previous page): *Basketball on Arts Park*. 2016. Source: Dance Place.

Although there are parks and green spaces within the neighborhood, not all are obviously public. An alleyway, owned by the city and protected as a right-of-way for the Metro system, lay between Dance Place's building and the new housing complex – and presented itself as an opportunity to create and activate a vacant lot for public use.

Overall, Dance Place sought to take advantage of this opportunity to activate the neighborhood through programming that is interactive and open to all. This work also related to other community concerns. Given high levels of crime in the Brookland area, dance, programming, and park creation were fused to ensure that public life took a stronghold in the neighborhood and dissuaded activity that made the area feel unsafe. Also, like many neighborhoods in Washington, DC, Brookland is experiencing high levels of new development. With existing fears of displacement, this project provided a positive interaction and model for public space improvements that offer benefits to existing residents.

The goal of this effort was to build upon public investment – in this case, an artist affordable housing project – to advocate for investments to revitalize otherwise underused open, vacant spaces. As described in a local paper, "Perlo … and her colleagues hope that the park will be a natural extension of their organization's artistic and community programming."[30]

Arts-based strategy

Dance Place took responsibility for funding this asphalt-covered, vacant alleyway and transforming it into a public park. Dance Place has led the development, taking part in designing the park, and now overseeing the maintenance of the park, as well as the funding for the arts that take place in or because of this space. Named 8th Street Arts Park, it opened in 2016 and is considered the final phase of Dance Place's arts campus.

The Dance Place and 8th Street Park story involves three key components. The first was an expansion of Dance Place's own building, the

Balance Harmony. 2016. Source: Jack Gordon, courtesy of Dance Place.

second was the artist's lofts, and the third was the creation of an arts park on the public land between the two buildings. Together, these elements created a powerful "arts campus" in Brookland.

To create this campus, a community-based design process was employed. Dance Place, as an organization whose lifeblood was engagement with a diverse population through creative practices, helped to facilitate this work. To begin, a volunteer steering committee of artists, business owners, civic association leaders, and government representatives was convened. This group held monthly meetings to solicit ideas for programming and art ideas.

As part of these efforts, graffiti artists were employed to bring design ideas to life. This art also helped to inform designs from a landscape architecture company (which offered most its services pro bono). Throughout, community input was solicited to prioritize design elements. Cognizant of limitations and barriers to participation (such as limited access to computers), the team conducted surveys in a variety of ways, including online and in print.

A subcommittee then helped select contractors to implement the ideas, and a first round of public art commissions was selected. To support implementation, funding was obtained through crowd-sourcing (which raised about $20,000 from individuals), gifts from local companies, foundations, and local and federal government. For instance, the Kresge Foundation awarded a $500,000 grant for the development of the arts park.

The park on 8th Street was intended to be as rich as the Dance Place itself, offering a diverse set of opportunities to audiences and providing commission to local artists. The 8th Street Park events include dance classes, music concerts, dance presentations, gardens, and arts creation events. The partnerships developed throughout the campus expansion also benefited the increased variation of activity taking place in the art campus space. As an example, Dance Place worked with the DC Department of Energy and Environment to offer a garden club and related youth/community classes.

The arts campus, and the precedent it set of expanding arts beyond the walls of an organi-

zation's center, continued to grow throughout this project. The NEA provided a two-year grant to expand programs from the park to other places along 8th Street. The DC Office of Planning also awarded Dance Place a grant that allowed its team to create temporary projects around the city, which further developed a model for hosting programming events outside of their space.

What happened?

The expansion of Dance Place's campus to the adjacent alleyway has created a new, artistic, playable green space, available for use by more of the local community. The dance and arts and crafts workshops have engaged the community with public space, and served to physically revitalize and enliven these places, bringing neighbors together. Poignantly, 8th Street is also the area's "first community park built by neighbors, for neighbors."

The process to create this park space required the collaboration of key stakeholders, including several government departments. These relationships, particularly with local government, can be time intensive but are essential and fruitful. Keeping this engagement was consistent and intentional throughout ensured that support and funding were available for both physical improvements and ongoing programming.

Today, Dance Place serves over 13,000 people annually through diverse programming that takes place in the traditional indoor spaces, as well as in the community center and in the 8th Street Arts Park. More than 1,000 artists are hired and paid to present, and Dance Place hires forty artists as teachers for the educational programming. Many of the presentations and associated artists reflect local cultures, but Dance Place also brings in touring companies and international artists, which many community members would not have an opportunity to experience otherwise.

As the Arts Campus thrives in its fullest realization, the leaders of Dance Place have started to plan for the long-term success and stewardship of this grand idea. The idea to create this park was exciting and improvisational. Now the organization is building long-term plans to ensure the success of its artistic mission, the park, and the deep relationships it has built with the community.

The 8th Street Arts Park has brought culture from inside the walls of the cultural institution to the outside, figuratively and literally.

28. "Brookland/Edgewood Investment Plan," *Neighborhood Investment Fund*, Government of the District of Columbia, accessed June 12, 2017, https://planning.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/op/publication/attachments/Brookland-Edgewood.pdf.

29. Dance Place," *Greater Washington Catalogue for Philanthropy*, accessed June 12, 2017, //https://www.cfp-dc.org/nonprofits/1278/Dance-Place/.

30. Quinn Myers, "An "Arts Park' is Coming to Brookland," *Washington City Paper*, accessed June 30, 2017, //http://www.washingtoncitypaper.com/arts/blog/13082922/an-arts-park-is-coming-to-brookland/.

(Opposite): *Carla and little gardener*. 2016. Source: Jack Gordon, courtesy of Dance Place.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Creative placemaking, as a field, has matured over the past decade. The work presented in this book is thanks to the committed people across the country who have invested in their communities and used the arts to do so.

This monograph was made possible by a number of organizations and individuals. The staff of the two primary institutions have worked on this document and the underlying research for over two years. The Trust for Public Land's Matthew Clarke, Adrian Benepe, Nette Compton, Richard Lukas, Sally Sand, and Eliza Sarasohn and the City Parks Alliance's Catherine Nagel, Angelina Horn, and Tom McCann were instrumental in realizing this publication. Special thanks to John Ceglarek and Bianca Shulaker from The Trust for Public Land for their extraordinary efforts to support this guide.

A steering committee has supported this work for well over a year. The committee is made up of Lyz Crane from Artplace America, Ignacio Bunster-Ossa from AECOM, David Rouse from the American Planning Association, Shawn Balon from the American Society of Landscape Architects, Lily Yeh from Barefoot Artists, and Patricia Walsh from Americans for the Arts.

Interviews with leaders of each case study project provided insightful lessons and details. Interviews were conducted with Jason Roberts, Anne Olson, Carlo Perlo, Toody Maher, Lucas Cowan, Truman Tolefree, David Leinster, Caroline O'Boyle, Nicole Crutchfield, Aviva Kapust, and Michael Samuelian, among others from the staffs of each organizations.

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ART WORKS. | National Endowment for the Arts arts.gov

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Dear Park Advocate,

Whether an iconic island park in New York's harbor or a community garden space in Fargo, parks have long been a symbol of, and influence on, public culture and wellbeing. Public parks have a dynamic relationship with the communities they serve; the places we protect can resemble anywhere or they can tell the stories of our collective history and values, the process we use to make decisions can exclude or empower neighborhoods, the way we design parks can promote or hinder diversity of use, and the activity of a park can be limited or rich in encouraging our physical health and expression of our democratic ideals. The literature about the role of public space, in particular parks, in the formation and reflection of culture and community is rich, and one that makes the connections between our parks, arts and culture, and community development essential to purposefully explore.

Mirroring the goals that many parks professionals have for their projects, "creative placemaking" can help animate space, rejuvenate infrastructure, improve public safety, and bring a community together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired. In 2010, a white paper by Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa defined creative placemaking as the practice in which "partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities." This idea of partnerships, strategic intervention, and the focus on the arts and culture as a rallying point for discussion and decision-making can help create stronger, healthier parks for generations to come.

At The Trust for Public Land and City Parks Alliance, we have seen this practice explored with varying degrees of intentionality. Experimentation with different strategies, partnerships, and mediums has continued to evolve over time. In interviews and reflection on these projects, key elements to success emerged: a commitment to early inclusion of artists, a meaningful dialogue with communities, and an openness to allowing outcomes to emerge from the process. This practice has become more purposeful over time, and this *Field Guide* represents an effort to work cross-disciplinarily to advance the use of creative placemaking in parks.

We strongly believe that creating this *Field Guide*, like the implementation of the work it describes, requires soliciting input from a wide spectrum of voices. Generously funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, The Trust for Public Land and City Parks Alliance held a "Creative Placemaking in Parks" colloquium in June 2016. This two-day event in Philadelphia brought together parks department leadership, artists, landscape architects, decision-makers, and community advocates to discuss the value, best practices, challenges, and next steps for implementing parks projects that integrate creative placemaking as a key to achieving high quality outputs and impacts.

We believe the reflection on the meaning and adoption of creative placemaking that took place at this colloquium, and during subsequent investigation and meetings, was an important step in developing a comprehensive viewpoint and framework for how we create quality parks that holistically enrich the communities they serve.

This guide provides a framework for the application of creative placemaking in the parks world. Almost limitless possibilities for the implementation of this work exist. There is an important role for you to play in this practice, whether you work for a parks department, are an elected official, or are a resident. As such, this resource is meant to be accessible and inspirational for a wide cross-section of people interested in parks and community development.

It is well recognized that the understanding of "creative placemaking" varies widely – from artists who engage with communities and societal questions throughout their practice, to park planners who have been incorporating aspects of this work unknowingly, to those who are hearing the term for the first time. This Creative Placemaking in Parks Field Guide is the first step in providing information and case studies, and the goal is to expand this work to create interactive, knowledge-building communities around the topics detailed here. As this practice continues to evolve, so too will the resources to guide and inform the field.

Sincerely,

Adrian Benepe,

SVP, Director of Parks for People
The Trust for Public Land

Catherine Nagel,

Executive Director
City Parks Alliance

FORWARD

LILY YEH, ARTIST
FOUNDER OF VILLAGE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES
FOUNDER/DIRECTOR OF BAREFOOT ARTISTS

As our lives become overcrowded with digital distractions and our cities become ever more densely congested with buildings, vehicles, and people, our parks and open spaces become needed ways to breath, a relief from the stress of urban living. Yet, despite the desperate need for open urban space, many unattended or abandoned places emanate indifference or even danger, which discourages people from using them and is a waste of precious land for the community.

> **A simple way to change a passive, indifferent, or threatening space into a welcoming, nurturing, and inspiring place is through the presence of art. Art in public places can lift us from the mundane into the realm of imagination. Art can remind us what is important to our existence through playfulness or poetry. Art can surprise us by its honesty or inspire us by its daring. Art can help us envision what is possible; it can prod us to dream and act.**

The most empowering public art comes from the envisioning of the community itself. When the process of creating public art engages people in the neighborhood in a sensitive and genuine manner, it can be profoundly transformative. In our fragmented and deeply wounded society, the healing capacity of an inclusive, respectful, and community-based art-making process cannot be over emphasized.

Making art in public places is like making a great community hearth. It brings people, family, friends, and strangers together to enjoy, connect, and celebrate. I rejoice in the timely publication of the *Field Guide for Creative Placemaking in Parks*. Through its guidance, may the light of creativity spread and may the art making in parks and open spaces bring harmony and joy to our land.

HOW TO USE THIS FIELD GUIDE

This *Field Guide* is intended to promote the use of creative placemaking in parks and open spaces.

But what exactly is creative placemaking?

Creative placemaking is a term that describes the practice of using the arts as a tool for community development. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), which was instrumental in defining this practice, went so far as to write an entire book about it. It opens with the following questions:

> **So you're a mayor who wants to make your city better, or you're a resident of a neighborhood where development is out of control, or you work at a community development organization and are trying to improve the plaza where kids play and folks meet up, or you work in a small town and want to improve Main Street, or you work in a planning or economic development office and are trying to find new ways to engage the public in a project. Since you care about making your place better, you follow the current thinking in planning and community development, and you've been hearing a new term—creative placemaking. What is that, you say? Something about the arts? You love the arts, but what do the arts have to do with making your place better? You want to know how to do creative placemaking.**

This document is intended to answer those questions for people who would like to use creative placemaking in making the parks and open spaces that serve our communities.

The Trust for Public Land and the City Parks Alliance work tirelessly to ensure that parks are seen as a first-tier community service, like utilities and public safety, and that every American has access to a quality park or open space. At its core, this right to access is grounded in a belief that parks serve as cultural assets; they speak to our need for beauty, recreation, socialization, and health. Creative placemaking is a natural bedfellow with this intent, and it can help make for more prosperous parks—and communities – across the country.

10 EXAMPLES OF CREATIVE PLACEMAKING IN PARKS

1 **Commission a piece of environmental art in a waterfront to illustrate the challenges of sea level rise.**

2 ***Help build a "friends of" group that helps to produce regular concerts and art activities in public spaces.***

3 *Bring an artist onto a design team to offer creative ways to ask questions about what a community wants.*

4 Collaborate with a fabrication lab to teach local kids how to build by co-creating temporary pavilions or play structures.

5 **Work with a local radio station to capture oral histories of residents who live around a community park so that its renovation is designed to reflect the stories of that place.**

6 In a neighborhood park stage, produce a piece of theater that visualizes some of the lived experiences of people in that community.

7 ***Work with a photographer to document an abandoned rail line to demonstrate the potential of a linear bike trail and park.***

8 *Hire a sculptor to design historical murals for a small city's parks, creating a network of visual experiences that tell the story of that community.*

9 Embed visual elements into green infrastructure that help explain how passive systems can help prevent stormwater runoff.

10 **Support an artist-led community organizing process that focuses on park safety and public governance.**

INTRODUCTION

This book is intended to serve as an introduction to creative placemaking for those interested in using the practice to create more and better parks in their community. It is geared towards the practitioner who has some awareness that the idea exists but needs a tool to learn more about it and to apply those lessons to a real-world example.

This resource will accomplish two things. First, it will answer the foundational questions of, “What is creative placemaking?” and, “How does creative placemaking make for better parks?” Secondly, it will help to connect the readers to other, more detailed resources that can help them execute their projects with precision and local specificity. These resources will be noted throughout the publication.

The Field Guide is divided into three sections. The first section defines, in the simplest way, creative placemaking as it applies to parks and open spaces. The second section outlines what could be a typical process for creative placemaking, all the while noting that these processes are rarely anything but typical. This section provides for a very loose framework to assist in the planning and implementation of these creative, forward-looking projects. The third section describes in detail 11 case studies of parks and open spaces that have deployed creative placemaking. While these projects are organized by type of park and space, the content is uniquely focused less on the end product and more on the processes and internal challenges of each example.

The 606 Block Party. 2016. Source: Adam Alexander, courtesy of The Trust for Public Land.

DEFINITION OF CREATIVE PLACEMAKING AND PARKS

Creative placemaking for parks is a cooperative, community-based process that uses arts and cultural expression to create or rejuvenate parks and open spaces, thus deepening a sense of place and inspiring community pride.

Creative placemaking's two words can help us understand the term and the practice.

"Placemaking" refers to a concept that can be complicated and academic, but refers most simply to the things that bind us to the places we live and work. People who work in community development,[1] whether as residents or professionals, often subdivide their work according to a discipline, such as transportation policy or affordable housing. "Placemaking" suggests another way of thinking: that community development should focus first and foremost on a holistic understanding of place. In this sense, a neighborhood group will ask questions like, "What city services do we need and how do those services interrelate?" A city planner would ask, "How can I provide more affordable housing around transit-rich neighborhoods, and then how can I locate social services around these new hubs?" These people are thinking about place first, and policies second.[2]

"Creative" refers to the practice of using the arts to advance community development. This idea is not new; arts

1. Community development is defined as a "process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems." "Community Development," *The United Nations Terminology Database* (UNTERM), United Nations. accessed June 12, 2017, //www.unterm.un.org/.

2. Two resources are useful for understanding place-based development and placemaking. The first is **The Federal Reserve of San Francisco's artcle, "Place-Based Initiative,"** *Community Investments* 22, no. 1, Laura Choi, ed. Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco (2010): 2-8, //http://www.frbsf.org/community-development/files/Spring_CI_2010a.pdf; and, **The Project for Public Spaces "Placemaking 101"** online resource is more focused on public space planning, but has important content. "Placemaking 101" *Project for Public Spaces*, accessed June 12, 2017, //https://www.pps.org/reference/reference-categories/placemaking-tools/.

have, for centuries, been associated with how we have built and imagined our cities. For example, a Renaissance prince installs a sculpture in the main plaza to demonstrate power. Or, after the 1929 stock market crash, artists are employed to paint spirit-raising murals of America's industriousness.

"Creative," in today's sense, has a strong relationship to this "place-based" thinking mentioned above. In today's global information-based economy, place means more. Words like "authentic" and "local" have economic and cultural value. Because of this emphasis on thinking about place, the arts and culture have an important job: they bind us to place. Imagine all the things you remember about a childhood home or a favorite destination. More than likely, there are examples of culture in those memories, such as a traditional holiday meal or a spectacular musical theater performance.

Together, these two words—creative placemaking—leverage our innate connection to culture, from traditional meals to church choirs to crocheting clubs, to address important community development goals.

This power to connect the idea of place with culture allows for those interested in community development to leverage that relationship. "Creative" thinking about place elevates all those cultural activities, places, and ideas and makes them essential to community change. Culture also provides a platform to talk about complex community issues within a forum that is less divisive. A community meal gives neighbors a chance to talk about housing issues without the fraught environment of a city council hearing or a zoning meeting. An outdoor jazz festival helps brings people together to think about the renovation of an important gathering space.

Together, these two words—creative placemaking—leverage our innate connection to culture, from traditional meals to church choirs to crocheting clubs, to address important community development goals. This approach understands that culture binds us to place and to one another, and by prioritizing culture ahead of more divisive political issues, we can entertain conversations about community change in ways that are balanced, nuanced, and respectful.[3]

WHY CREATIVE PLACEMAKING AND PARKS?

Creative placemaking, thus defined, can be deployed as part of nearly any community development goal. Just as transit planners can incorporate the arts in their activation of key corridors or public health experts can use the arts to make meaningful changes to mental health challenges, so too can creative placemaking have value to the design, construction, and stewardship of parks and open spaces.

The Trust for Public Land and the City Parks Alliance jointly see creative placemaking as integral to the delivery of effective parks and open space, which will ensure healthy, livable communities. Given the multiple benefits that parks provide, city and county governments should see them as a first-tier city service. Everyone should have the opportunity to connect with parks and open spaces, as they provide multiple benefits to the physical, environmental, social, and economic health of a community. As its most essential function, creative placemaking empowers communities, especially those most vulnerable, to have a voice in shaping their neighborhood parks.

The goal of creative placemaking in parks is to:

1. Strengthen the role of parks and open space as an integrated part of **comprehensive community development**.
2. Advance **arts- and culturally-based approaches** in park making, thereby creating social connections within and between communities.
3. Foreground the role of parks as **cultural products** unto themselves, as important sites for civic gathering and activity.
4. Foster **innovation, design excellence, and beauty** in community parks and open spaces.

As these show, the intersection of creative place making is characterized by processes, not a product. Many

3. The **National Endowment for the Arts** produced an important monograph about creative placemaking that gives more information about the practice, its history, and its application. More information here: https://www.arts.gov/news/2016/how-do-creative-placemaking

confuse public art and creative placemaking. Although it can serve as an important ingredient in a placemaking process, public art needs other ingredients (community engagement, organization building, community planning, etc.) to be meaningfully described as placemaking.

Luckily, parks, as cultural sites, are exceptional places to test creative placemaking practices. Park professionals across the country already do so as a natural part of their work. This *Field Guide* intends to make these opportunities even easier to execute and with even more impact on our communities.

COMPONENTS OF A CREATIVE PLACEMAKING PROJECT

Even so defined, creative placemaking can feel imprecise and confusing to implement. What is and is not creative placemaking? As a helpful outline, one way to think about creative placemaking is as a multistep process. The following outline, adapted here to refer to parks, was created by ArtPlace America, the nation's only creative placemaking-focused foundation.[4] This four step process, or checklist, is a helpful first step for any practitioner looking to pursue a creative placemaking project.

The case studies in the *Field Guide* are organized around this four-part structure. They will help make these steps more digestible and less abstract.

Underpass Park. Source: Nicola Betts. 2016, Digital Image.

4. "**ArtPlace America** (ArtPlace) is a ten-year collaboration among a number of foundations, federal agencies, and financial institutions that works to position arts and culture as a core sector of comprehensive community planning and development in order to help strengthen the social, physical, and economic fabric of communities." For more, see: /www.artplaceamerica.org/.

FOUR STEPS

A. Define a community based on geography, such as a block, neighborhood, city, or region.

Whatever the initiative, project, or idea, it should be associated with a clearly defined geographic area. While this area can vary in scale – from a region to a city block, it is important to consider all the people who live in that place and their histories, identities, and system. For parks, this geography might be defined by the most appropriate user group: a neighborhood for a community park or an entire region for a large youth sports complex.

B. Articulate a change the group of people living and working in that community would like to see.

With that geography defined, the next step is to articulate goals and outcomes that a group of people living and working in that geography would like to see. This change should be defined by those that will be impacted by the project. That change should be something that a park can help address, such as stormwater overflow or community cohesion.

C. Propose an arts-based intervention to help achieve that change.

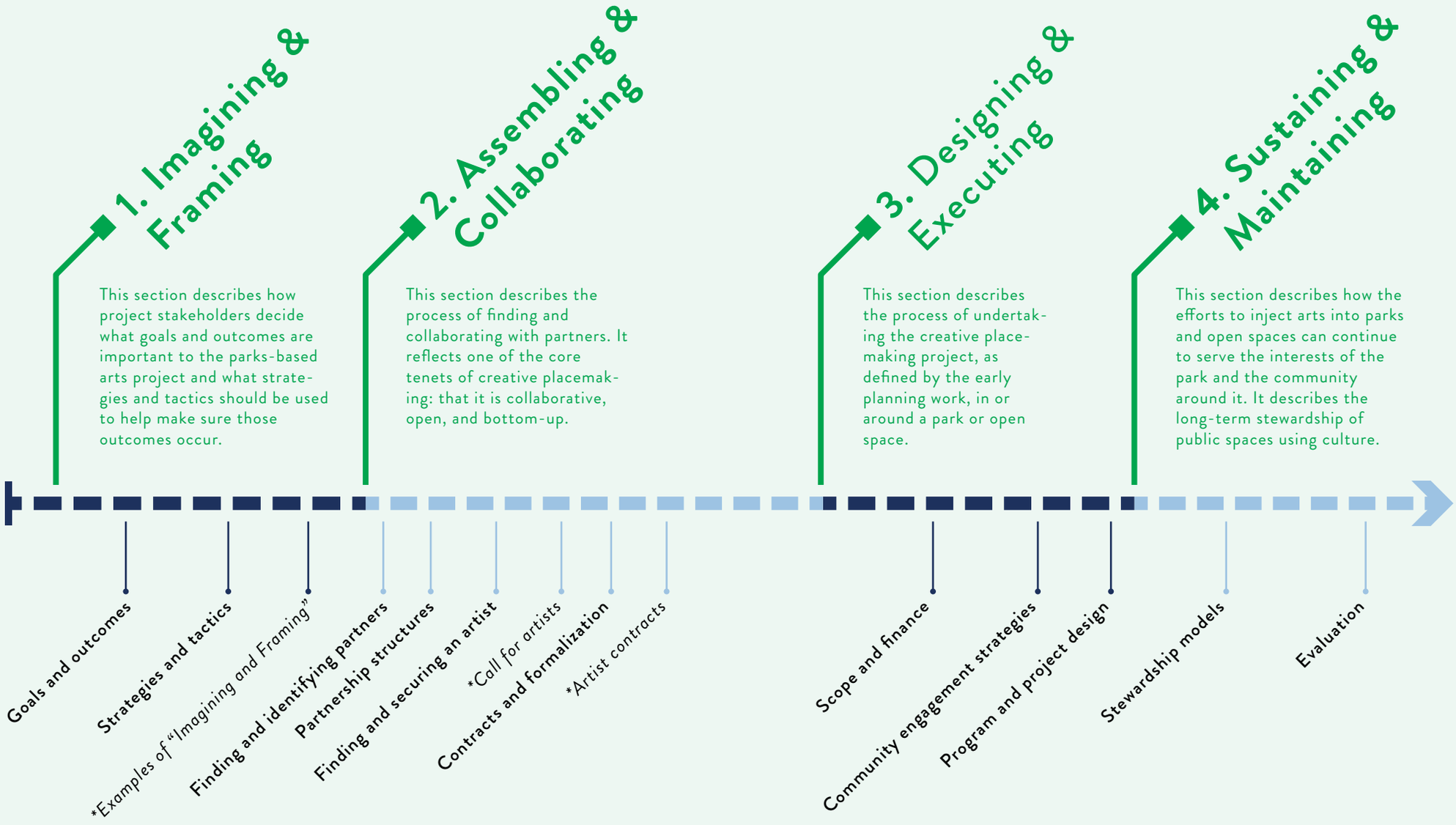
In the third step, after identifying the area of focus and the change, you need to design an arts-based intervention to help bring about that change. This kind of strategy will leverage the arts' natural ability to engage with people, to clarify complex issues, and to help reveal new opportunities.

D. Develop a way to know whether the change has occurred.

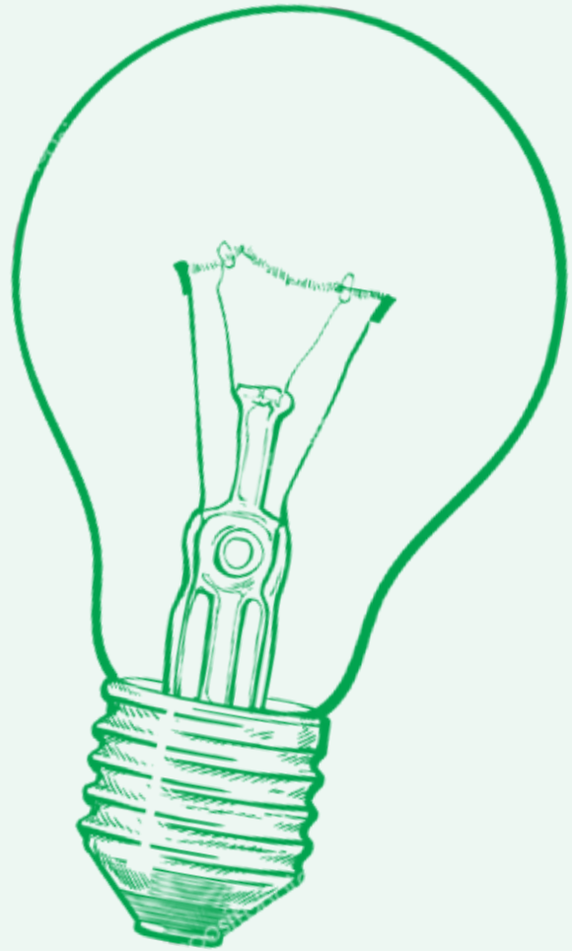
A part of designing effective interventions is having a clear idea about how you will know whether the arts-based intervention addressed the desired change for the people in the place identified. It is important to know how you will do this at the outset to help you determine at the end if you should stop doing something, do more of the same thing, or do something differently in the future.

ARTS-BASED STRATEGY

Based on the structure below, this Field Guide organizes the execution of that arts-based strategy according to a process, described below. While the narrative herein is linear, most projects will follow a unique schedule and structure. This structure aims to provide a reference that can be flexible to different needs and contexts.



IMAGINING AND FRAMING



Imagining and framing occurs when project stakeholders decide what goals and outcomes are important to the parks-based arts project and what strategies and tactics should be used to help make sure those outcomes occur. In other words: what do you want to accomplish with creative placemaking and how will you do it? (Hint: the goal should never be, "to create a park.")

GOAL & OUTCOMES DEVELOPMENT

One of the main aspects that distinguishes creative placemaking as a process from public art or other kinds of arts-based programming is that it is oriented around clear goals for a place. With harried schedules and tight budgets, organizations and leaders often don't have the time or means to define goals that can help drive a project forward. At an even finer grain, there is a distinct difference between goals and outcomes.

> **Goals** are the general, broad changes that the project intends to achieve.
>
> **Outcomes** are the measurable changes that will happen thanks to the project.

For example, a goal might be to improve public safety in a neighborhood. An outcome might be to achieve a 20 percent reduction in crime in two years. Being as explicit as possible with these, as early as possible, will help to focus the team and the project.

Goals and outcomes exist with a relationship to both the park and the open space, and to the creative placemaking process that is an overlay to it. For the purposes of this *Field Guide*, we will focus on the goals and outcomes that can be specifically attributed to creative placemaking.

Setting Collective Goals and Outcomes

Projects, parks or otherwise, usually involve a cohort of stakeholders. Many people and organizations will care about a public space, for different reasons. These diverse voices will also bring different skills and tools to the project. Some people have strong technical abilities while others have great communication savvy. If this diversity is not thoughtfully harnessed, competing priorities and approaches can become points of contention rather than strengths.

Example of Goals and Outcomes
This example describes one scenario of a residential neighborhood in a large city. It has historic housing stock and there is a large central park.

Goal:
The community wanted to improve public safety in a neighborhood to encourage commercial investments and reduce property crimes.

Outcome:
The community decided, after working with the local police officials, to set an outcome of 20 percent reduction in crime over a two year period and that a neighborhood advisory group would exist to work with local police.

Next Steps:
On page 34, this example is continued to explain how strategies and tactics can shape effective means to reach these goals.

An effective strategy to avoid this cacophony is to create a collective goal-setting process for creative placemaking projects, perhaps even using culture to help set those goals. This might mean having an artist host a brainstorming meeting to creatively imagine collective goals. Or it might mean launching a community survey to determine the important issues in the area.[5] Either way, it's important to find shared goals that, once set, will allow everyone to contribute to, and develop commitment to, working toward this change. Once the problem and desired impact have been identified, everyone and every organization can look in their toolbox to find a way to help advance those goals.

Selecting Specific Outcomes

Once goals have been set, the same group can also identify the outcomes that would make the creative placemaking park project a success. Outcomes should relate to and flow from the goals – they are the changes that result from the activities undertaken, but outcomes differ from the goals in that they can be specifically observed or measured. Undoubtedly, if the project receives any philanthropic or public support, those funders will want to understand the effectiveness of their investment. While this is important, the most important reason to define outcomes is to know whether the arts-based intervention has been successful. Setting these outcomes at the very beginning of the process can help guide decision-making at every step.

For example, a goal might be to activate a public space with citizens from a certain neighborhood. A measurable outcome will be a 50 percent increase in special events over a season and a 25 percent increase in attendance at those events. Another outcome could be that 75 percent of event attendees had a positive experience, as measured by a survey or poll. Parks can have other outcomes that aren't focused on the park itself. Perhaps the creative placemaking project's goal involves affordable housing and the specific outcome is a new affordable housing zoning overlay

5. Setting goals is a practice with plentiful resources available. Consider these:

a. Collaboration for Impact's "**The How to Guide**," Collaboration for Impact, accessed June 12, 2017, //http://www.collaborationforimpact.com/the-how-to-guide/

b. "**IMPACT: A Practical Guide to Evaluating Community Information Projects**," The Knight Foundation, accessed June 12, 2017, //https://www.knightfoundation.org/media/uploads/publication_pdfs/Impact-a-guide-to-Evaluating_Community_Info_Projects.pdf

c. "**Toolbox for Building Needle-Moving Community Collaborations**," The White House Council for Community Solutions, accessed June 12, 2017, //https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/files/content/docs/resources/White_House_Council_For_Community_Solutions_Tool_Kit.pdf/.

around a new park development.

These outcomes can be precise, like those above, or they can be more flexible. Data about these outcomes can be either quantitative or qualitative. The former refers to data that is measurable and statistical; the latter refers to data that is measured by subjective opinions, experiences, and values. The strongest evaluations, particularly in creative placemaking project, involve a mixture of data and storytelling; both have drawbacks, but a hybrid approach can help smooth some of these challenges.

As will become clear, most projects will benefit from a mixed-methods approach that includes both quantitative and qualitative data. And, depending on the size and sophistication of the project team, this evaluation can be done on a shoestring, on an ad hoc basis, or as a sophisticated evaluation done in conjunction with professional partners. The key is to design the kind of evaluation that fits the project and that is possible within the capacity of the project team.[6]

Evaluation Planning

Although evaluation might seem like an activity to undertake after the park has opened or the artistic project is complete, it is actually something that benefits from being completed at the very beginning of any effort. Any project has a range of stakeholders, from funders to public officials to residents. All of these stakeholders most likely need to understand the impact of the project and how their contributions affects that impact. Considering an evaluation plan at the beginning will ensure that these stakeholders receive the information that matters to them and helps them learn about their impact.

Arts programming in the garden of a local health center might best be evaluated by a controlled study that measures the impact on mental health outcomes of participants versus those of nonparticipants. But a music festival in a community park might be best served by hiring local youth to conduct surveys of park-goers' quality of experience. A new playground in a dense community with green infrastructure[7] might benefit from calculating how much water per year will be diverted from stormwater sewers.

Much more detail about evaluation types is covered in the Sustaining and Maintaining section.

6. A range of helpful resources exist on evaluation best-practices:

a. "Chapter 38: **Methods for Evaluating Comprehensive Community Initiatives**," Community Toolbox, Kansas University, accessed June 12, 2017, http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/evaluate/evaluate-community-initiatives.

b. "**Survey Methods**," Research Methods Knowledge Base, accessed June 12, 2017, http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/survey.php.

c. "**Evaluation Methods**," Better Evaluation, accessed June 12, 2017, http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/start_here/decide_which_method.

d. "**On Target: A Guide for Monitoring and Evaluating Community-Based Projects**," The United Nations, accessed June 12, 2017, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001862/186231e.pdf.

7. "Green infrastructure is a cost-effective, resilient approach to managing wet weather impacts that provides many community benefits. While single-purpose gray stormwater infrastructure—conventional piped drainage and water treatment systems—is designed to move urban stormwater away from the built environment, green infrastructure reduces and treats stormwater at its source while delivering environmental, social, and economic benefits." "What is Green Infrastructure," *United States Environmental Protection Agency*, accessed June 12, 2017, https://www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure/what-green-infrastructure.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICAL DEVELOPMENT

At this point in the process, the goals and outcomes of the project have been discussed, identified, and confirmed. The stakeholders know the broad intent, as well as what success will look like. They also know how to measure that success.

Creative placemaking happens here.

This is the moment where you must decide what tools will be used to help make that outcome a reality. **In creative placemaking, this is the point it becomes clear that arts-based solutions can help bring about that change**. In other words, doing business as usual—the typical ways of building parks, providing functional transit lines, or providing basic affordable housing—will not address challenges that communities face. **Practices grounded in arts and culture offer more expansive tools to do so; they allow people to feel more connected to place, they create deep engagement opportunities, they bring people together, they allow people to talk about difficult issues, and they animate places over a long period of time.** If these needs feel like strategies that can help advance a project's goals, then creative placemaking can be an effective tool.

Developing strategies and tactics is the next important step in realizing this vision.

Strategies are plans of action designed to achieve an overall aim or intention.

Tactics are concrete and short-term initiatives that have a defined length and scope.

For people who work in fields that are not artistic, identifying strategies and tactics for a creative placemaking pro-

cess can be intimidating. Artists and cultural professionals spend their careers thinking about inventive ways to creatively express their ideas and talents. A parks professional, landscape architect, or community leader can lean on other voices and expertise to support their work. Creative placemaking benefits from strong and quality partnerships, perhaps with an artist, a cultural organization, or another creative-minded ally.

What's important is to understand why the arts can help advance a project and how it will do so.

What's important is to understand why the arts can help advance a project and how it will do so. In other words, parks-focused people need to develop (1) a broad strategic vision and (2) tactic(s) that can help deliver on that strategy.

Strategic Vision

As described above, strategies are ways to achieve long-term goals. Creative placemaking is a strategy that can be used to deliver on the outcomes and goals that a group identifies, per the above. After identifying that interest, the team can start to carve a broader strategy that connects that artistic expression with the goals defined above.

An important factor for partners to consider is the relevance and relationship between the artistic practice and intervention to the local community and to the challenge being addressed. These practices, the strategy, must share an affinity for the overarching goal of the project. More importantly, the strategy should emerge from the local knowledge and character of place. The unique cultures and expressions of a community have all the intelligence necessary to build a sophisticated and effective strategy.

For example, a community dance festival in a local arboretum could be a great strategy to encourage civic participation in the surrounding neighborhood and to encourage active recreation in that community. A public art sculpture in that arboretum would be a lovely addition, but it might not address the placemaking goals of the project.

Example of Strategies and Tactics

This example continues the narrative from page 28, regarding a desire to improve public safety in a neighborhood.

Strategy:

To improve public safety in the neighborhood, the project team decides to create arts groups that can support programming in the central community park.

Tactics:

Specifically, the team worked with a local performing arts organization that focuses on music and dance, based on traditions from the area. A new community group was established to have—in the park—regular dance classes, annual music festivals, and a youth photography group.

{Opposite spread): Ai Wei-Wei, *Circle of Animals/Zodiac Heads*, 2016. Source: Rose Kennedy Greenway.

Secondly, the stakeholder should identify community-based partners to brainstorm and deliver on those possible strategies. To extend the example: an arboretum's managing director will likely not have specific expertise on contemporary dance. However, a dance-oriented nonprofit or even a dancing club could have the interest and expertise to deliver an outdoor dance festival. (Partnerships are discussed in more detail further in this section).

However, what if the stakeholders are at a loss for what kinds of arts-based practices would suit the project? If more general help is needed, seek out community arts organizations, particularly those that have a demonstrated commitment to community development. This might be a local arts council, another arts-based community development corporation (CDC), or an arts institution such as a university museum or a performance center. Even if not formally part of project, these networks can help parks professionals develop a creative placemaking strategy.

Tactics

Once the arts-based strategy has been identified, the stakeholders can start to brainstorm specific tactics to execute on that strategy. To continue the example above, this would involve listing the dance-based activities that could occur at the arboretum. Perhaps the stakeholders will organize five dance recitals in a scenic location at the venue, host weekly dance classes for local elementary school students, or host a Friday night party with contemporary pop music and bring in a well-known guest artist to give a master class.

Other strategies will have widely different tactics: participatory design exercises with local sculptors, a "Photovoice" project that allows kids to capture inspirational images, or cooking classes with chefs from around the world. The range of tactics varies as widely as does human imagination. Having the right stakeholders in place will ensure that these tactics fit in the overall strategy and that the overall strategy will help achieve the outcomes and goals of the project.

Examples

While the *Field Guide* has collected 11 world-class examples of creative placemaking in parks from around the country, the following microexamples will help to sketch out how an "imagining and framing process might look.

Kiwanis-Methow Park. 2016. Source: The Trust for Public Land.

Equipo Verde. 2016. Source: The Trust for Public Land.

KIWANIS-METHOW PARK (WENATCHEE, WASHINGTON)

Geographic Context
The South Wenatchee, Washington community is diverse (with a high percentage of Latino residents), proud of its agricultural significance as an apple producer, and culturally-rich. At the same time, the community is also significantly under-served and under-resourced, which is particularly true with regard to access to health-related services.

What were the goals?
The goals of this project was to increase the visibility of public health resources to the South Wenatchee community, particularly those focused on mental health. These mental issues ranged from clinical conditions of depression and anxiety, to those that involved social participation and inclusiveness. While the area has social service providers, many migrant families felt a lack of comfort in accessing them.

Art-based Strategy
This goal emerged during the participatory design process for the renovation of an important park in South Wenatchee. To fully explore those goals, interactive design outreach was conducted, in English and Spanish, at local community and cultural events, such as the Northwest Mariachi Festival. Wenatchee happens to be an international hub for mariachi music. Partner organizations – such as the Wenatchee Museum and Cultural Center and The Numerica Performing Arts Center, leveraged there own deep connections to the community. Because this arts-based engagement was so successful, a range of medical and social-service providers joined the park-based engagement. They were able to connect with residents about issues of mental health, dental care, and other important issues. This collaborative approach, while first created to support the park, is continuing as a broad way to celebrate this community.

What Happened?
A "Health Wenatchee" festival, in combination with culturally-based communication materials, has helped to break down the barriers that have isolated this community from much needed resources. Culture is integrated into each step as a meaningful way to communicate important health concepts and create connections between community members and resource providers. Overall, the arts and cultural activities make this park a place to come together to improve all forms of health outcomes.

AVALON GREEN ALLEYS (LOS ANGELES)

Geographic Context
There are 900 linear miles of alleys in Los Angeles, which combined would make up about 3 square miles—about twice the size of New York's Central Park. Partnering with the City of Los Angeles' Community Redevelopment Agency, Bureau of Sanitation, the University of Southern California's Center for Sustainable Cities, Jefferson High School and others, The Trust for Public Land is working to re-purpose several neighborhood alleys and transform them into community park spaces.

What were the goals?
There are two important goals for this project. The first is use these alleys to capture and infiltrate storm water from nearby alleys and streets to manage runoff. The second goal has been to create community organizing groups in these areas, to support political and social activism for issues that go beyond storm water and public spaces.

Art-based Strategy
To help achieve these goals, the project team conceived of the alleyways as cultural spaces by including community-created murals and pavement art. The inclusion of these elements intends to combine resilience and environmental considerations with community engagement, educational opportunities, and beautiful spaces that communities use, take ownership of, and are proud of. The engagement used to create these cultural elements was then transferred into a long-term community organization to steward these spaces and to organize the neighborhood.

What Happened?
Community members continue to use and care for these spaces, hosting festivals, recreational and educational opportunities, and clean-up days in the alleys. The organization created, Equipo Verde, has helped to build community resiliency and trust around a host of issues. The success of this project has helped to build momentum around future green alleyways around the City of Los Angeles.

ASSEMBLING AND COLLABORATING

Jolino Bessera. 2014. Source: Julia Stolz, courtesy of The Trust for Public Land.

FINDING AND IDENTIFYING PARTNERS

The previous section, *Imagining and Framing*, was grounded in a framework that construed community development as problem solving, a model that can be applied to any creative placemaking project, irrespective of its focus. This and the following two sections provide knowledge specific to the practice of creative placemaking in parks and open spaces.

The rationale behind *Assembling and Collaborating*—the process of finding and collaborating with partners—reflects to one of the core tenets of creative placemaking: that it is collaborative, open, and bottom-up. Since the process is just as, if not more, important that the product, those individuals and groups going along need to be the right partners and deriving the right kind of benefit.

Two Principles of Partnerships

1. Radical Inclusion
Projects should be as inclusive as possible and involve a wide variety of collaborators.

2. Resident Input
Residents and locals have an intuitive sense of their community in terms of what matters and what's possible. This input should be a critical part of any project team.

Two overarching principles are worth stating up front. First, these partnerships often do and should include a broad range of actors. A healthy creative placemaking initiative typically involves all types of people with all types of perspectives: city officials, designers, nonprofits, neighborhood groups, schools, etc. This heterogeneity can be dizzying and complex to manage, but every effort should be made to encourage inclusiveness when curating a partnership.

The second principle of this section states that creative placemaking in parks should lead with the opinions and values of the residents who will eventually use and care for that park. This grassroots, bottom-up perspective speaks to the important connection between placemaking and equity. Equity is deeply tied to the value of parks. The stakeholders in any project should not shy away from this concept, on the contrary, they should collaboratively define what equity means for their particular community .[8]

Finding and identifying partners can be both deliberate and organic – that is, proactively seeking new relationships and using natural networks of community partners. The right approach to building partnerships knows what relationships – organizational and individual – exist, and strengthens those; it also knows what connections do not exist, and finds ways to secure those.

What kind of partners are necessary
Many assume that parks are created, all over the country, by very typical means: a public park agency engages with a community, identifies priority areas for investment, and then expends capital to develop that park. Although many park projects do follow this pathway, the nature of open space development is subject to the vagaries and nuances of community development and city life.

Our parks, open spaces, civic spaces, and outdoor areas have generative stories that start from mayoral priorities or emerge from grassroots activism; they begin with a parks department's spending plan or they are created by a private conservancy's largesse. They might pop up on va-

8. Policylink's **Equity Toolkit** is a valuable resource to understand equitable development and gather resources to make your community more equitable. See more at: // http://www.policylink.org/equity-tools/.

cant lots or they add recreation along the sinews of a waterway. And many "park" projects don't involve the creation of a new park; instead, they involve the renovation or programming of existing spaces. Creative placemaking relishes this imprecision and can enhance any effort to create parks or open spaces. Similarly, creative placemaking can naturally enhance any type of partnership, helping to elevate the human qualities of organizations and individuals.

Many "park" projects don't involve the creation of a new park; instead, they involve the renovation or programming of existing spaces. Creative placemaking relishes this imprecision and can enhance any effort to create parks or open spaces.

So, how can certain partners leverage creative placemaking in the creation of parks?

City and public authorities: Public officials can be drivers of creative placemaking in a park project. Every municipality is organized by different types of government and management. Depending on the scale of the project and the size of the city, securing mayoral or executive-level support can provide critical backing and potential pathways to funding. Even if not a full-time partnership, a relationship with this leadership level can help eliminate barriers to success.

City agencies, such as parks or cultural affairs departments, have focused, mission driven goals, often organized around a set of services and spending mandates. Agencies can provide project support and regulatory assistance. Agency staff people often have strong connections to other partners and to members of the community. Parks agencies, often involved in the creation of community parks, are natural and frequent partners for creative placemaking.

Non-parks agencies can be very helpful to a creative placemaking project in a park. School departments care deeply about the inclusive nature of their schoolyards. Water quality agencies have interest in educating the community about environmental risks. However, don't assume that one city representative can speak to city mandates that guide a different department.

Public authorities, such as metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) or neighborhood development authorities are not city agencies, even if their work might be entirely within a certain city. These agencies are often authorized by states and have a unique governance structure. Take care in understanding the details of their governance and abilities so as to recognize their potential contribution to a creative placemaking project. Many of these authorities have developed a growing interest in how the arts can better their work.

Neighborhood groups and local actors: The groups and individuals who live in and represent the neighborhoods around the park or open space are key stakeholders. These groups, too, can vary widely by type and intent. Many cities have formal neighborhood organizations; these groups are foundations for engagement and support. Many other informal groups might exist—around activities, ethnicity, religion or interests—that have a place-based focus. These organizations are often nimbler and, if active, undertake frequent programming.

A CDC is a registered nonprofit with the intent of bettering a certain neighborhood, possibly through affordable housing or workforce training. These organizations can make great partners for creative placemaking efforts in parks because they share an interest in place-based development activities.[9]

At the same time, creative placemaking should be a practice that engages the broadest possible audience, and many residents don't have the time or means to participate in formal organizations, don't have experience with these processes, or feel unwelcome. A strong partnership, even if it poses challenges and hurdles, involves members of the community who feel displaced or unwelcome, even if that poses challenges and hurdles. Culture is a great way to en-

9. **Community Wealth** has a great resource on understanding Community Development Corporations (CDCs) and their impact on places. //http://community-wealth.org/strategies/panel/cdcs/index.html/.

courage this inclusive attitude toward participation; shared food experiences, music events, or sports activities, can bring people together in profound ways. **Reaching out to people, and not waiting for them to reach out first, is a principle that can't be stated strongly enough**. Doing so requires creativity, patience, and generosity.

Artists and artistic organizations: Artistic partners are key stakeholders in a creative placemaking project. However, many of us don't have a ready list of artists and creative people to call in service of this effort, and even if we did, those connections might not have a community development focus or might not understand how to work in parks. The following arts-based organizations, derived from the Americans for the Arts resources, can contribute in specific ways to a creative placemaking project.

Local arts agencies and councils

These governmental or quasi-governmental organizations support artists and arts organizations in a certain local geography. They often serve as "pass through" organizations, directing funding from the federal or state level to local groups and individuals. If their funding mandates align, they could be a good source of funding, and if their mission is aligned with community development goals, they might be useful as strategic thinking and policy partners.

Example: LexArts, Lexington, Kentucky's local arts council, provides funding to local arts organizations and other programming to support the arts in the area. It is funded through a mixture of public and private sources.

Arts service organizations

A nonprofit organization that furthers the interests of artists, creators, arts organizations, and elements of the arts community. The arts service organization's activities can include policy development, advocacy, marketing, provision of professional services, and production of collective projects. These organizations are great partners to help identify artists and cultural producers in the area, particularly because they are targeting people who are from that region.

Example: Alliance of Resident Theatres (A.R.T.)—New York assists over 360 member theatres in managing their theatre companies effectively so they may realize their rich artistic visions and serve their diverse audiences well.

Civic engagement arts organizations

An arts organization that bring artists, community leaders, and residents together to address issues of community engagement and democracy. These organizations, should your region be so lucky to have one, can be your closest ally in a creative placemaking project. They would have many resources to brainstorm potential creative projects and artists to deliver on those projects.

Example: Springboard for the Arts cultivates vibrant communities by connecting artists with the skills, information, and services they need to make a living and a life.

Cultural and arts centers

Organizations that promote, produce, or provide access to a variety of arts experiences encompassing the visual, media, or performing arts. These organizations range from museums and galleries to theaters and concert halls. Depending on their mission and capacity, many of these organizations have community engagement or public-facing interests. Performances or events in parks and open spaces might be something attractive to these institutions, many of whom are looking to bring artistic work closer to the public.

Example: The New World Symphony recently constructed a park where performances are live-streamed via video and are accessible to the general public.

Folk and traditional arts organizations

Organizations that are engaged in the promotion, production, or performance of art forms that were developed as a part of the history, culture, religion,

language, or work of a region or people, and passed from generation to generation as a part of their traditions. In many rural communities, the folk arts connect people to a common sense of heritage and place. If willing, many of these organizations would be able to contribute a great deal to a creative placemaking project.

Example: Appalshop, in Whitesburg, Kentucky, promotes rural development in Appalachia through a diverse array of arts-based programming and events.

Culturally specific arts organizations

Organizations that further the artistic and cultural offerings of the community with a mission that clearly represents a specific culture. Many of these organizations have a specific geography that they represent; in this way, they could be a great partner in a creative placemaking project. For example, if a neighborhood has an ethnic identity, a park might be an opportunity to celebrate that culture.

Example: Longhouse Media is a Washington State organization dedicated to indigenous people to use media as a tool for self-expression, cultural preservation, and social change.

Many projects may not need an organizational partner and can rely on an individual to provide the artistic contribution. If that is a desired path, any of the arts organizations above can help to identify individual artists or partners.

Additionally, even though many of these organizations have a community-based mission and are nonprofits, their time is still valuable. All partners should have a realistic sense of their commitments and what that commitment will cost. Just because the arts can be exuberant and fun doesn't mean it is not without costs. Artists, like any professionals, need to be fairly compensated for their time and expertise.

Parks and other nonprofits: A range of other community development organizations and nonprofits could provide value to a project partnership. Parks nonprofits—including friends groups, advocacy groups, and land trusts can provide important resources about creative activities in parks and open spaces.

Other interest-based nonprofits, can be aligned to serve a park-based creative placemaking project. For example, public health organizations make for natural partners, particularly where increased physical activity is a key goal. Or, affordable housing developers have a vested stake in contiguous public space and might want to ensure the community and the open space are well connected.

Partnerships thrive in the same way gardens do, with ample planning and care. Identifying and even securing partnerships doesn't guarantee that those groups will work together smoothly and efficiently.

PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURES

Project roles and organization

Projects, be they parks or large buildings, have a range of team types. Large planning or development projects have an inherently large and complex group of stakeholders; they are typically bound together by legal documents that describe the precise nature of those relationships. Community development projects can often have loosely organized and informal partnerships. Creative placemaking in parks can benefit from a hybrid approach, creating structure where necessary but also allowing for flexibility and change. The following principles are key:

1. Define a project leader or project leadership team. Creative placemaking projects usually involve a wide range of stakeholders, some of whom work in rigid environments, like cities, and some of whom work with much less structure, like an independent artist. Identifying an effective project leader can help give all stakeholders an understanding of their role, drive the project forward on a schedule, and give the team the chance to think strategically.

2. Ensure that the team has ways to hear, elevate and value every voice, even those that don't have a regular

William Dick School. 2014. Source: Jenna Stamm, courtesy of The Trust for Public Land.

presence. Regularly scheduled project meetings are key, but so are more informal ways to reach people, such as community meetings and celebratory events.

3. Artists and cultural entities shouldn't be relegated to a topic on an agenda; they should be integrated members of any team and they should be a part of that team, when possible, from the beginning of any project. Don't wait until a "public art" component for a park needs to be designed; include those creative voices from the outset as part of the community engagement and design process. This might require a leap of faith and a bit of uncertainty, but examples abound for how artists have spearheaded projects in ways that make the projects more meaningful to people and therefore more effective.

MOUs and formal relationships

The partnerships that allow for creative placemaking in parks range from free form and unstructured to formal and highly structured. Finding the right partnership is an important step, both to protect all the participants and to ensure that ideas and conversation can remain flexible.

There are several key indicators that can help determine whether more formal partnerships are necessary: when financial management falls on more than one organization, when risk management falls on more than one organization, and when the project is of such complexity as to require detailed implementation plans. If the art or park project checks any of these boxes, then leaning toward a more formal partnership might be advisable.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) is a flexible tool for creative placemaking practices. It describes a "convergence of will" between two parties that is formal but not legally binding. Depending on its construction, an MOU can be interpreted as a binding contract. This document can help define the roles of parties, identify risk management responsibilities, assign financial terms, and set forth important dates and goals.

A range of other tools can establish formal relationships. Cities and local authorities have formal *contracts, covenants and agreements* that might be required and/or useful. Similarly, *contracts for hire* can establish requirements for work products between parties. *Nonprofit bylaws* can help bring clarity to organizational roles and requirements.

Communications and informal relationships

In a much more informal way, meeting minutes, email summaries, and written work plans can offer mutual understanding and expectations. Creative processes can feel like they should be open ended and free-wheeling. However, a gentle and thoughtful level of project management can bring consistency to the process. Creative placemaking projects in parks and open spaces can often involve widely different discipline types – water engineers and water sculptors, traffic planners and movement artists. Taking the time to underpin the process with structure and constraint will allow all involved to do their job better.

Creative placemaking projects in parks and open spaces can often involve widely different discipline types – water engineers and water sculptors, traffic planners and movement artists.

And because of that diversity, open and frequent communication is critical to any project's success. Communication should be empathetic, always seeking to understand the opinions of residents, city officials, and artists; frequent, not letting gaps of time derail momentum; and clear, using jargon-free and simple language to communicate intent and needs.

While the range of partnership types in community development projects vary widely, in creative placemaking projects, the partnership with an artist or cultural producer deserves special attention. Parks professionals and artists, while they may have similar motivations, can have different expectations and ways of workings. Thankfully, there are tried and true methods to find and secure the services of artist and creatives.

FINDING AND SECURING AN ARTIST

This section describes how to select an artist. However, in many instances, this process will not be necessary, because the artist is already part of the team or there is a clear relationship in place. Quality partnerships will ensure the right pathway forward is used.

Artistic advisory board

A great strategy to answer these questions, and to manage the steps described below, is to create an *artistic advisory board or committee*. This group can be distinct from the project team and have representation from all the key stakeholders, including community residents, designers, local officials, and other artists. This group will ensure that the selection process is accountable both to the project and to the community.

Finding an artist

For park projects, most calls for artists will be for new artworks or art experiences, not previously created pieces (although in some exceptional cases, such as a well-known outdoor sculptor, this may not be the case). Three methods to call for artists will work in most park and open space scenarios: the contest, which can be used for smaller elements such as wayfinding or signage; a *request for proposals* (RFPs), where artists submit fully realized proposals for the artwork; or a *request for qualifications* (RFQ), where artists submit qualifications about their experience and abilities. (Often, RFQs are used as a screening process for RFPs – the two can operate as parts of the same selection process.)

While RFPs and RFQs can vary in their scope and detail, certain components—these, derived from Springboard for the Arts' resource,[10] —often form the core of a good call for artist (see the opposite page).

Creative placemaking is not synonymous with public art. It is important to clearly describe the community development outcomes and strategies in the summary, background, and project description sections of the RFP/Q.

10. "Find an Artist Toolkit," *Springboard for the Arts*, accessed June 12, 2017, //http://springboardexchange.org/find-an-artist-toolkit/.

CALL FOR ARTISTS

Summary
Briefly say what you are looking for, what type of call this is, the deadline, and artist compensation.

Background/Context
Relevant info about who is commissioning the work and the site where the final artwork will be located.

Project description
What kind of art are you seeking? What are big-picture reasons for working with an artist?

Details
Specific parameters of the site, budget, and type of artwork you are seeking.

Compensation
What will you be paying for this work and what it should cover?

Eligibility
Who can apply to this call?

Selection criteria
Criteria by which proposals will be judged/selected.

Selection process
Who will jury proposals, and what will that process look like?

Application Process
Materials that need to be submitted to fulfill the call and where to send them.

Timeline
List of relevant dates—from submission deadline to artist notification and project completion.

For example, instead of describing just the site of a potential public sculpture, talk in detail about issues surrounding the creation of the park—water management, social cohesion, etc—and foreground those goals in the brief. This focus will help the artists create better and more engaging artistic expressions.

The RFP/Q needs to balance the need for sensible constraints with an openness to creativity and exploration. Park projects have complicated environmental factors (soil types, water, climactic exposure); these constraints should be clearly stated and defined. Project schedules and budgets put additional constraints onto any potential intervention by an artist. Liability and maintenance planning, while cumbersome, should not be ignored: what happens if someone gets hurt, and who maintains the work? Many cities have established criteria for dealing with art in the public realm, such as Chattanooga's "Policies and Procedures for Artwork Donations, Loans and Exhibitions."[11]

RFPs should offer language that inspires wonder and passion. Lead with the challenges and the potential of this creative expression to engage those challenges.

At the same time, RFPs should offer language that inspires wonder and passion. Lead with the challenges and the potential of this creative expression to engage those challenges. Imbue the city or neighborhood with poetry and imagination; be descriptive about the wonderful assets of the place. Explain the need for the park, if it's a new project, or its history, if its existing, to situate the open space in relationship to the community.

Artists and creatives will enjoy this tension between the pragmatic and the poetic.

Where to look for artists

Releasing this call for artists requires an equal amount of thought.

One of the early decisions involves the geography of that search. Most creative placemaking projects tend to use local artists to emphasize the community-focused aspect of the work. "Local" itself has a range of definitions: is local within the metropolitan region, say, the San Francisco Bay Area; or is local the specific neighborhood, say, the Tenderloin in San Francisco? Working in parks and open spaces has its own challenges, so a project team might want an outdoor-based environmental artist, which means that the search would broaden to include state or regional artists. For a signature arts installation in a major city, that artists search might even have to be national.

There is no right or wrong choice. The varying ranges of a search have equal parts value and challenge; the prudent team will discuss these tradeoffs and have a clear position from the outset.

With the scope defined, a plethora of resources exists to facilitate the search. Local arts councils and arts nonprofits frequently have spaces to post these opportunities; and if not, they can help to identify local artists and creative individuals. Small and community foundations often have lists of artists and cultural networks. At larger scales, many states have arts councils, foundations or centers that actively post and distribute opportunities for artists.

Local media platforms can be helpful, such as:

1. Ask artists where they find calls
2. Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
3. Email newsletters
4. Press release
5. Print media
6. Info meetings—you can hold several info meetings to go over requirements/process and answer questions
7. Post flyer at places in the neighborhood where artists hang out—art supply stores, art departments, coffee shops, etc.

Nationally, there are well-established public art databases that have been set up just for these purposes.

1. Americans for the Arts Public Art Network
2. Springboard for the Arts
3. ArtDeadline.com

11. "Policies and Procedures for Artwork Donations, Loans and Exhibitions," *Public Art Chattanooga*, accessed June 12, 2017, http://www.chattanooga.gov/public-art/about/guidelines.

Depending on the level of experience in the arts, the project team can also be proactive in its search. Researching artists with qualifications and work that matches the intent of the project can help with selection criteria and can possibly even identify candidates. Use local networks to investigate the artistic community.

Searches for public artists can be hampered because the "usual suspects" apply (which is not in itself a bad thing). This limited response can run counter to creative placemaking's implicit goal of elevating every voice in a community with unique methods of creative expression. Taking risks in the search and looking deeply at nontraditional voices can be transformative and yield important conversations about inclusive processes.

How to evaluate and select artists and partners

A clear, consistent, and agreed-upon framework to evaluate the artists' responses will make the selection process relatively painless and without controversy. The selection process itself can be designed to accommodate many desires. On the one hand, creative placemaking wants to engage the community in every aspect of the process. This could mean using a community vote to help evaluate respondents (or just finalists). It could mean that community members have a substantial presence in a selection committee.

This needs to be balanced with the pragmatics mentioned above: does the artists have the right level of experience to accomplish the proposed project? Are there issues of liability or risk to consider? Does the proposal meet the budgetary requirements of the project? A good selection process will likely involve a mixture of expert advice plus strong community engagement. Irrespective, the entire process should be transparent and open. The community should be aware of the criteria and how the selection will happen. There should be ample opportunity for participation and comment.

The criteria for selection depend on the type of search and the needs of the project. However, a sampling of criteria could include any of the following:

1. Experience and abilities of the artist
2. Artistic merit of the proposed work or of the artist's previous work
3. Relevance to the community development goals of the project
4. Understanding of the place and context (or experience in similar kinds of places)
5. Ability to work well with diverse groups of people
6. Ability to meet a defined budget and schedule
7. Diversity and representations of artistic team

These criteria are merely examples. Project organizers can mix and weight criteria in any way they see fit. Depending on the selection type, an artist might be chosen from an initial round of review or after subsequent rounds. For example, an RFQ process might receive 13 applications of which the committee selects three to continue to a more in-depth RFP process. Or, a contest might have the community vote for the top three to continue to a selection panel.

After selection of a winner, a few important steps should be undertaken. Due diligence of that individual might be a prudent next step: check references and evaluate the proposed budget. Make sure that all respondents are notified of the committee's decision in a timely manner. Consider a press release to announce the winner and to celebrate the milestone.

CONTRACTS AND FORMALIZATION

In an ideal world, the selection of an artist would presage the beginning of a period of creativity and engagement, unencumbered by formality and legality. In many cases of creative placemaking, this flexibility is not only possible but also recommended.[12] Limiting the noise in a public project allows everyone to relate to the park and to the art in more meaningful ways. However, human relationships are messy, and in more complex and expensive commissions, creating a contract or legal framework is advisable. Negotiating and agreeing to the project's constraints early will allow the artist to maximize her or his creative vision during the process and will limit any setbacks created by crossed signals.

12. The Trust for Public Land and the City Parks Alliance advocate for encumbering projects with the right amount of legal and financial protection. Every project should welcome the appropriate amount of accountability and oversight.

Partnerships and legality
Unlike simple artist contracts with two clearly defined parties, creative placemaking projects can include many more variables and complexities. These projects are often bootstrapped and ad hoc, or they involve a dizzying array of partners. Given these conditions, the contractual and legal relationships should be flexible and thoughtful, appreciative of the various constraints at play.

If any public entity is included on the project team, there will be a host of legal hurdles. Contracting with a city or county government requires special review and due diligence that include a conflict of interest, minority/women hiring, financial performance, etc. Any capital money that flows to or from a public entity will also have a legal framework, including covenants about public ownership and restrictions on eligibility based on the budgeting process.

The possible complexities and variability of working with public entities are too complex to enumerate, but any project should have a realistic and opportunistic understanding of what public partners can accomplish.

Contract structure
Artist contracts can vary, dependent upon the contracting organization, project requirements, and often, the funding sources. The outline on the opposite page, based on a great resource by the Artists Network, outlines important sections and content to possibly include in an artist contract, with notes about specific challenges for working in open spaces.

Any development and review of contracts should, when possible, be accompanied by review from legal experts inside the project team. If this isn't feasible or the project is less formal, many community and arts-based nonprofits offer reduced-cost or free legal services.

ARTIST CONTRACTS

Client Information: Names, organization, address, etc.

Project Information: In this section, the community development outcomes should be clearly stated. This is an important distinction for creative placemaking projects: the artist should understand that the goals often transcend the work itself. Depending on how detailed the artist's proposal was, this section should also describe the expectations of the artistic work, whether it is a sculpture or public performance for example. In short, it answers the what, where, why, how, who, and when.

Project Price and Payment Terms: Every detail about money should be described here. How much will the artist be paid? In one lump sum or over multiple check-ins and deliverables? Many contracts give the artist 50 percent of the fee at the beginning and 50 percent upon successful completion. Others include a payment at the midpoint after the proposed artwork has been approved. What are the capital costs of the artwork or activity – are they lumped together with the artist fee? Are there local or state taxes to note?

Revisions and Review: During the design and execution of the artwork, how many times does the client get to revise the direction and the final product? Clearly defining these back-and-forth reviews protects the artist by limiting endless reviews and it protects the client by providing dedicated review points.

Ownership of Artwork/Files/Intellectual Property: In this section, the parties agree on the ownership of the artwork and the intellectual property, and when that ownership changes, if at all. This section should clarify whether the client – or some other party – owns the artwork and the rights to distribute its images. It should describe what rights the artist has in using images of the work in her or his own professional development. If the artistic contribution was a festival, who owns the rights for any branding or naming? Who owns the collateral, such as a study model or material sample?

Production Schedule and Delivery of a Project: This section should clearly describe when the artwork or event should be delivered and any interim steps prior. If this is a creative placemaking project in a new park, it would be important to coordinate the delivery of any artwork with the master construction schedule.

Claims Period: This section describes the extent to which the client can make claims for defects, damages and/or shortages to a final product. Failure to make claims within a designated period would constitute an irrevocable acceptance of the project.

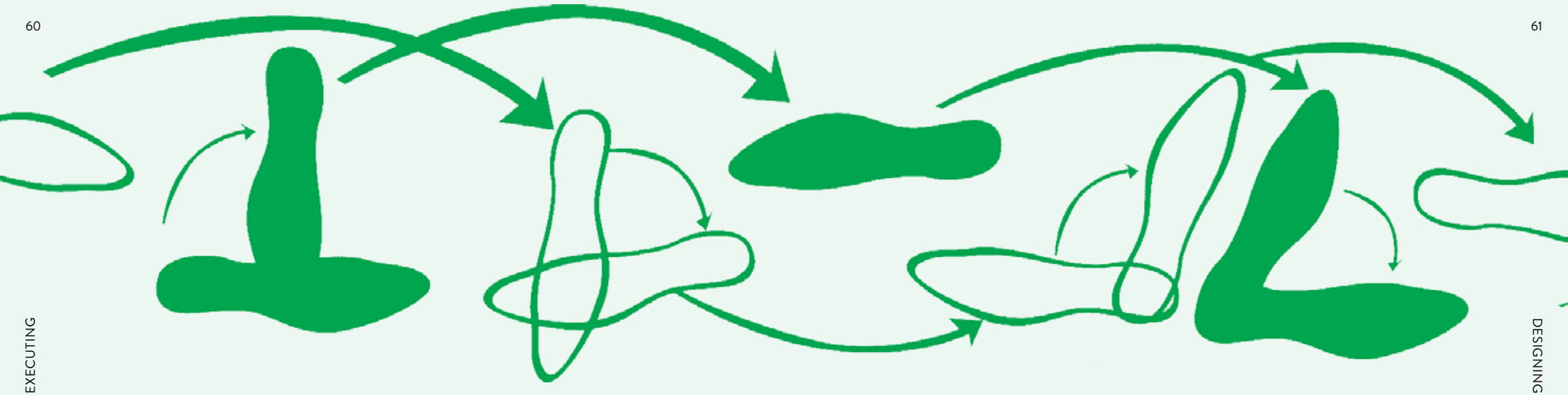
Proofing of the Final Project: This section is where the artist states the final product will be free of defects, damages and/or shortages. It is related to the revision and claims sections above.

Cancellation or Delay: This section would describe what happens if a project is cancelled; it defines who owns the work products to date and what financial terms are available to the artist for work completed to date.

Confidentiality: Some projects need confidentiality agreements. This confidentiality could be scaled back to include just correspondence and other project-related materials, or it could fully limit any dissemination of the project collateral and its existence.

Acceptance of the Agreement: This section formalizes, by both parties, acceptance of the terms described in the document. It should include a signature, printed name, and date for each party.

DESIGNING AND EXECUTING



In many ways, the largest conceptual challenges should have already been addressed by the first two steps; if so, the project team should have a clear roadmap to execute. At this point, the team should know why creative placemaking is important to the park or open space, and who will execute that vision. If a good project schedule has been established, then the team will know when certain milestones should be achieved. This is not say that the process will run smoothly—but when bumps in the road do occur, everyone involved will have a common understanding of the what, why, who, and when.

SCOPE AND FINANCE

Creative placemaking budget tips

In any "how-to" for creative placemaking, advice about fundraising and money often becomes the most frequently requested information. Although raising the money to make anything happen is essential, it shouldn't dominate the planning of a project. Taking the time to strategize and to plan will result in a thoughtful project or idea; and good ideas get funded more often than not.

A number of useful sources exist to find resources for creative placemaking projects. There are a few foundations and entities that support creative placemaking specifically. The NEA is a national leader in creative placemaking funding. The agency's Our Town grants program, in addition to its Art Works funding, should be great first places to explore. ArtPlace America has a national fund for creative placemaking in addition to leadership in building the field writ large.

Creative placemaking can often feel like the cherry on top of a delicious cake, instead of the cherry flavoring that's integral to the entire project, batter, icing, and all. This makes it susceptible to being cut during a scope reduction. During budgeting for a new park project, the creative placemaking elements can be folded into the capital budget as a key part of the project. Instead of thinking that the artistic element is an add-on to projects, it should be embedded in the project itself. Similarly, for artistic events and programming, these costs can be embedded into an outreach or design budget, baking them into the process itself. Working to ensure artistic elements are routinely and habitually embedded into project budgets will help reduce these vital components' vulnerability.

For many activities, such as a performance series or a pop-up activity, the project team could elect to charge fees for those activities, such as an entrance ticket. The same decisions that parks professionals make about where to charge fees for revenue are also at play in creative placemaking. Ideally, cultural experiences used for community development should be as open and accessible as possible. In some instances, part of an experience might help generate revenue. For example, inviting a local craft brewer to an outdoor concert and splitting the profit helps generate revenue without limiting the opportunity for anyone to enjoy the experience.

Ideally, cultural experiences used for community development should be as open and accessible as possible.

During the search for funding, aligning the funder's mission to a product or scope that reflects that mission will result in more successful requests. Often, locally based funders will be the drivers for a certain creative placemaking activity. By having a conversation about their interests and a project's interests, a mutually agreed-to scope can be defined and a new project partner can emerge.[13]

Funders, whether foundations, corporations, or individuals, can serve as important partners in these project, providing not only resources, but resources and intelligence.

Scope development

As with any complex undertaking, the creative placemaking elements of a project should have a well-thought-out budgetary scope. This scope will include any hard costs – materials and fabrication of any artistic elements – and soft costs – artist fees, programming, and staff time.

Artists require fees just as any professional does; those fees often depend on the experience, expertise, and project type.[14] This should be negotiated as part of a contract

13. The **Foundation Center** has ample resources to guide you to funding opportunities and to improve your grant-writing abilities, www.foundationcenter.org.

14. The **WAGE Artist Fee Calculator** is a great tool to estimate the costs associated with working with an artist. https://www.wageforwork.com/certification/2/fee-calculator

or scoping phase.

Other costs might be less apparent. Moving or transport costs can quickly escalate. Permits and fees will be a reality in many public spaces. Insurance and occupancy taxes are often required for any kind of event or gathering. Taxes for commercial activity can be significant.

When developing a scope, consider the range of activities the project team might want to undertake. While a public sculpture or mural has known costs, other activities could include an opening night party, regular programming, or educational activities that might occur around this artwork. If programming is to be ongoing, what regular income will offset those costs? Maintenance costs for permanent installations require early planning.

Many organizations forget about documentation and marketing. Project teams would benefit from having the resources to document the process and end products. This could involve professional photography, journalism, or even a documentary. Marketing the park, artwork, and activities will incur expenses just as any other marketing campaign would. Consider allocating 15 percent of the creative placemaking budget to documentation and marketing.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Community engagement encompasses a range of activities where the eventual audience and user-group for the park or open space is included in the process of imagining, designing, and building that space. One of the core tenets of creative placemaking is its ability and interest in engaging people with creative means and engaging more diverse audiences.

Culture binds us to place. Using culture in community engagement helps bind people to the vision of place to which the project aspires.

Types of engagement

Creative placemaking and community engagement are often synonymous and can have blurred boundaries. Roughly speaking, the following example demonstrates the range of the arts role in engaging with communities in a thoughtful way:

Priority Identification

Before even designing a park, artists can help devise creative ways to determine the priorities or needs of a certain community. They can use storytelling or visual maps to zero in on issues that might not be visible otherwise or ask creative questions about how to transform underused spaces.

Design Engagement

Engagement practices can sometimes feel rote and impersonal, a formal meeting in a community center with an audience and a panel. Artists can devise clever ways to gauge the needs and dreams of people. This could involve interactive fabrication, Photovoice projects, curriculum development in schools, or artist-led walking tours. These experiences move people away from what they are expected to say about a project and opens the imagination. The following are general categories of types of community engagement.

Participatory Design

Participatory design is a great tool that allows residents and end-users to codesign alongside professionals. Artists and other creatives can be a great addition to participatory design teams, inventing novel ways to gather feedback and ensure the community has a voice in the process. They might develop games to gather more engaged feedback or they might lead a mural project to understand what values are important to communities.

Site Activation

The time between the genesis of an idea to build or renovate a park and substantial completion can span many years, leaving residents feeling like they were promised something that wasn't delivered. Hosting events and programming on a site before construction starts allows people to acclimate to the site as

a civic resource and amenity. It builds a community of trust around the space and can help highlight design changes that might be necessary. Communities love to gather around cultural activities: concerts, farmers markets, school events, sports leagues, fairs, dance classes, etc.

Post-Project Engagement

Engagement doesn't only have to occur only before a project to gather feedback about a project; it can also help to sustain a community's connection to a park or open space over the long term.

Public Art Feedback

Any artistic elements that will become permanent parts of a space should have their own engagement and feedback process. Although the artist should have ultimate creative control, the community can help define what values and issues matter, which gives the artist more creative direction. Feedback around public art will also help uncover more practical information, such as what might cause vandalism or where an element might impede on another activity.

Parks live and breathe alongside their communities; creative activities can help ensure that members of the community feels connected to their parks and open spaces.

Long-Term Stewardship

Parks live and breathe alongside their communities; creative activities can help ensure that members of the community feel connected to their parks and open spaces. This means developing ongoing support for programming and activation. Perhaps a local cultural organization can take over regular programming or a local CDC can provide social service opportunities.

Whose voices?

Community engagement is the right context to discuss a key question for anyone developing parks or park-based activities: whose voice matters? Equity, inclusion, and equality are important issues in communities; engagement offers an opportunity to validate the importance of people and their voices.[15]

PROGRAM AND PROJECT DESIGN

Delivering a creative placemaking project requires the same management skills as would any other project: budget setting, scheduling, delivery, and review. Project management isn't the focus of this *Field Guide*, except for emphasizing that every project has its own distinctive needs. Designing an effective project management structure should reflect this specificity and nuance.

Design process

Most capital projects, parks included, follow a typical design process organized around a series of phases. These phases include concept design, where overall concepts and ideas are brainstormed and refined; schematic design, where overall plan and programming layouts are refined; design development, where materiality and precision enter the plan; construction/contract documents, where legally binding design drawings to be used by a contractor are developed; and construction administration, where the design team supervises the construction process.

Creative placemaking initiatives fits into every step in this process. Ideally any artistic elements are considered part of the planning for every phase. For example, during the early phase, those public art pieces should be considered integral parts of the design and not as a separate design to be incorporated at a later part of the project. This alignment will ensure consonance with the overall themes of the project and that any technical challenges are addressed early.

In other instances, creative placemaking will be a tool to facilitate that process, such as artist-led community engagement or early site activation. These practices serve to make the design process more successful, such that the park becomes a reflection of the community's culture and that the community feels ownership of the space. Artists can help translate what can be a technocratic design process into something that feels human and personal, some-

15. "Dick & Rick: A Visual Primer for Social Impact Design," Equity Collective and Ping Zhu, accessed June 12, 2017, /http://welcometocup.org/Projects/TechnicalAssistance/DickRick/.

thing that feels like a cultural experience.

Maintenance planning

Every creative exercise wants to maximize its willful, exuberant, and playful side and minimize its inhibitions, constraints, and realities. This tension unfairly burdens the design process because, in the world, stuff happens. Every creative project must balance these constraints; in fact, a good creative project benefits from these real-world limitations by using them as sources of inspiration and guidance.

Artwork, in the instance of a sculpture or mural, has its own "material" concerns that should be vetted throughout the design process. These include:

Artwork Design Planning

1. Will the work weather well in the location's climate?
2. Will the work require excessive maintenance and repairs?
3. Will the work be subject to vandalism and graffiti?
4. Will the work alter its site in any negative ways?
5. Will the work require special site requirements burdensome to the overall project?
6. Does the work require special approval by a local agency or government?

A performance or temporary initiative, such as a pop-up food cart or a music stage, will have its own set of concerns:

Artwork Maintenance Planning

1. Will the temporary work leave permanent site damage?
2. Does the temporary work require excessive staff time and oversight?
3. Will the temporary work require difficult and excessive permitting?
4. Will the temporary work be disruptive to residents?
5. What infrastructure (electrical, water, etc) is necessary for the temporary event?

Creative placemaking activities, permanent or not, require more engagement than does the construction of a park or urban place done in a more everyday way. Many designers assume that a good idea can stand on its own merits, instead of exploring its repercussions. A public sculpture requires regular maintenance and oversight; hosting a music festival takes a dedicated and organized staff. These future contingencies must be considered and discussed early in the design process.

In other instances, the park itself needs to change based on the desired cultural activities taking place. A call for artists might produce a proposal that the community loves, but requires changes to the park design's circulation or infrastructure. In the ideal world, the artistic work is embedded into the design as an essential element.

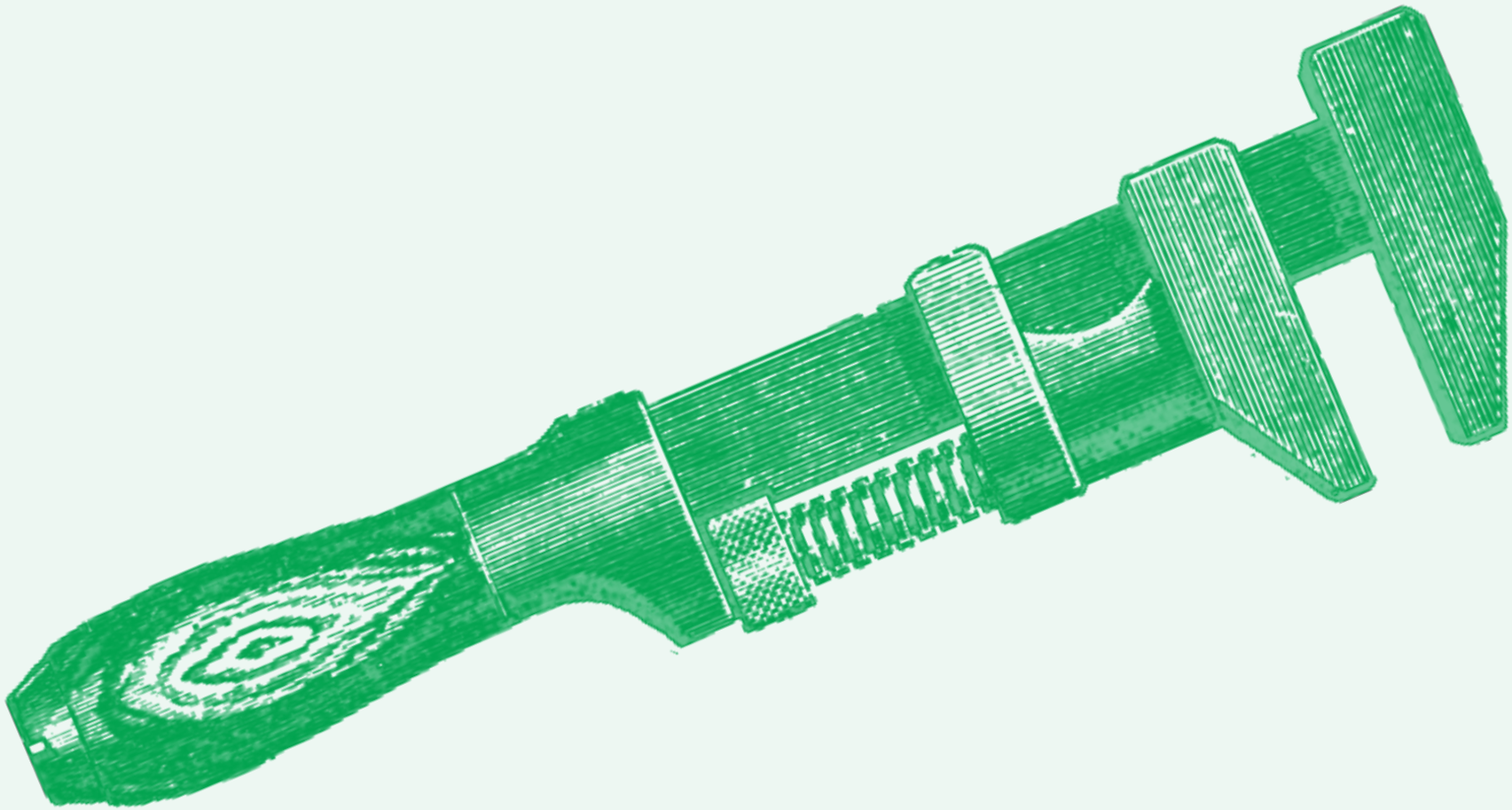
Construction, fabrication, and celebration

After all the strategizing and planning, the realization of an artistic element can be a euphoric and beautiful moment. The team should celebrate this accomplishment.

Yet, the project team should be diligent in ensuring that the work reflects the goals orginally defined by the team and that it meets all the technical requirements. The project team has every right to ensure the work conforms to the contract and to the proposal. For art projects, or even for experiences, the team can review the soundness of the proposed work through material samples, models, dress rehearsals, or run-throughs.

The community can also help to ensure the work is successful and make last-minute adjustments. They can serve as volunteer fabricators and assemblers, helping to strengthen the connection between place and product. Having local residents build pieces in a park significantly strengthens their sense of ownership over that place.

SUSTAINING AND MAINTAINING



To this point, creative placemaking in parks has been described in a linear, one-off process; rarely is this the case. Creative placemaking typically unfolds as a lengthier process with many activities and projects. This section describes the ongoing activities in a process that help build longevity and depth to any initiative of this kind. This ranges from stewarding the work over many years to replicating that work on other initiatives to evaluating the success of the work.

STEWARDSHIP MODELS

Regardless of the creative placemaking activity, the project will require some level of stewardship planning. Who organizes for the care of a work of art or who continues programming in the park? Thankfully, these questions parallel the needs of every park and open space, a frequent topic in urban parks: how do you successfully steward spaces over the long-term? Creative placemaking, in most cases, should be embedded within those entities that are also taking care of parks and open spaces.[16]

Local governments and parks and recreation agencies often have a large role in overseeing the stewardship of a park or open space. This oversight can include regular maintenance, athletic and cultural programming, and regular capital investments. This work can often extend to include maintenance and repairs of works of art. (Frequently, other city agencies, such as a cultural affairs department, will have a public art division and can provide oversight and management.)

Like local parks agencies, nonprofit parks conservancies or land trusts operate as stewards of a space, making sure the trash is collected and that the park is well used. As a private entity, the conservancy can sometimes support programming and activation.

Local neighborhood groups, such as a community-development corporation, are well positioned to steward the creative placemaking activities in a park. With their place-based focus on community issues, CDCs will understand creative placemaking as a practice and will be inclined to support such activities in public places. These organizations do well at hosting regular events, concerts, festivals, markets, and other programming. Often, a partnership between a parks agency and a local CDC can result in a well-balanced stewardship strategy, with the former providing regular maintenance and the latter providing programming and community-focused activities.

One of the promising opportunities for creative placemaking is its ability to spur the creation of new organizations. Parks and open spaces greatly benefit from enhanced organizational capacity. If a creative placemaking activity—a concert, for instance—results in the need to develop more sophisticated management and the creation of a full-fledged organization, that benefits the park, the festival and the surrounding community. Ultimately, these organizations can hire locals, engage with the neighborhood, and build more sophisticated models of practice.

16. The Trust for Public Land's *Center for City Park Excellence* and The City Parks Alliance have ample resources on their knowledge hubs about methods and means of park stewardship.

EVALUATION

Evaluation is one of the most important aspects of creative placemaking, and perhaps one of the least practiced. The ability for the arts to make change in the world—to make an impact on our communities—is a truth that can feel largely based on intuition and trust. We intuit that the arts make us happier, connect us to others, and make us feel closer to place. But as creative placemaking becomes more "professionalized," with funders and governments adopting it as an official policy agenda, there is new focus on validating the role of the arts in community development.

Translation into an impact evaluation framework

As described earlier, evaluation structure can vary significantly based upon the type of project, established goals, and intended outcomes. While evaluation can be based on quantitative or qualitative evaluation—and often a mixture of both—a few principles are important to state upfront.

First, given the fluid nature of creative practices, defining what success looks like at the beginning of the project will

help to create more robust evaluation methods and results. This means that evaluation isn't about meeting the expectations of a funder or governing body, but about informing the team what worked and should be continued, what should be changed, and what shouled be stopped.

Second, creative placemaking projects have their own requirements for evaluation beyond say, the success of a park on its own terms. Often times arts-based strategies aim to address social cohesion, participation, belonging, or other types of outcomes. Care should be taken to differentiate, or at least to define, a parks-focused evaluation (is the park succeeding?) and a creative placemaking evaluation (did the arts-based strategy help deliver on the goals determined at the beginning?).

Just as important as capturing these data and stories is the need to package and present this information in meaningful ways.

The follow examples illustrate different examples of evaluation. However, each methods of evaluation can be used to gather quantitative or qualitative data. For example, a survey can gather data about participation or attendance, but it can also gather subject opinions and perspectives.

Quantitative

Quantitative evaluations can help determine how a project helped create change before and after the intervention occurred. For example, after a new outdoor music program was started in a neighborhood park, attendance jumped 37 percent. Likewise, it could make comparisons to examples in other parts of the city or country. For example, when a local schoolyard hosted music programming, parents attended afterschool events at a 17 percent higher rate than did parents at other schools in the district.

This type of quantitative data can be collected in a variety of ways. Attendance numbers or observed participation can indicate the intensity of usage of a space or activity. Surveys and questionnaires can capture data before and after the intervention. Project teams should be thoughtful about who receives the questionnaire and what inferences are derived. Quantitative information can include:

Direct Observation

This is a method for collecting information by viewing participants in a particular setting—in this case likely a park in which an intervention has taken place. In research and practice, a commonly used tool is the System for Observing Play and Recreation in Communities (SOPARC), which can provide information about park activity and characteristics.

Tracking

This method involves an organization, typically the organization leading a set of events or a parks department that manages recreation programs, keeping track of the number of events held and potentially the number of people attending. Attendance numbers or observed participation can indicate the intensity of usage of a space or activity. The number of people participating in community engagement activities can also be tracked.

Surveys

Surveys are important tools in social science research, and involve asking participants questions, often to obtain information about perceptions, insights, attitudes, or experiences. Project teams should be thoughtful about who receives the questionnaire and what inferences are derived.

Quantitative data can include information collected from individuals, at a community scale, or at even broader scales. This data can demonstrate the impact if collected before and after an intervention, can be more generalizable or standardized, and tends to be more precise.

Qualitative

Qualitative evaluations tell another story about the success of a park or open space and a creative placemaking intervention. They allow for project teams to understand the human dimension of their work. Stories and anecdotes offer an accessible medium; interviewing nearby residents or park users reveals powerful stories that everyone can relate to and that offer a high degree of nuance.

Interviews can capture more than quantitative data; they can also capture stories and opinions. Going door-to-door or hosting community forums offers the chance to understand and act on this qualitative data.

For example, a community with strong Eastern European roots might talk about how a new Balkan food festival at a riverfront park has increased their sense of social cohesion. Such data is imprecise, but it provides valuable feedback. Qualitative information can include:

Interviews and Focus Groups

These involve a moderator or researcher interviewing an individual or bringing together a group to gain information about a specific issue. Questions should be standardized, and there are guidelines for the number of groups convened, the number of participants, and protocol for the moderator.

Oral Histories

These involve the collection of stories or historical information from people who have personal knowledge of either past events or conditions.

Kids in the Park. 2016. Source: Dance Place.

Evaluation and measurement takes time and commitment. These efforts will require staff time in the organization or a significant partnership with another organization. Many of the evaluation tactics described in previous sections are labor intensive but not terribly difficult. These present wonderful opportunities to hire local students or residents to conduct the surveys. This makes the evaluation a form of engagement itself.

Just as important as capturing these data and stories is the need to package and present this information in meaningful ways. While a funder might want to see a report about the impact, a local newspaper might like to write about some of the impacts from a narrative point of view. If the evaluation and analysis tells interesting stories, that work should be disseminated. Write a press release, contact local news outlets, publish a blog post, present at a local or national conference, write a list of key contacts, or hold a community event.

Opportunities

In an ideal world, these creative placemaking practices allow for these ideas and concepts to continue, expand, and improve (and for the gaps and challenges to be minimized). Success will often appear in the least of expected places. Creative placemaking, no matter how tightly planned, is a process that touches on culture and creativity; it's a winding pathway.

And, this is *good*.

These pathways open up new opportunities and new ways to see the world. Sometimes, errors will present themselves as creative opportunities to do something different. These elisions can become opportunities to develop new ways of thinking and doing.

Creative placemaking and parks have been natural allies; with even more intentional cultivation, these two practices can expand the cultural benefits of our public space.

CASE STUDIES OF CREATIVE PLACEMAKING IN PARKS

How to Use

The eleven case studies in this *Field Guide* are organized by the type of park, which range from formal parks to pop-ups in open spaces. Each case study is then described in four parts as outlined below.

Four Parts:

A. **Geographic context.** The first section will describe the context for the project by explaining the history and the geography of the neighborhood, city, or region.

B. **What were the goals?** Then, each case study will explain which community development goals were important and why creative placemaking in parks could address those goals.

C. **Arts-based strategy.** Each case study is explained in terms of how it used the arts to help achieve that goal.

D. **What happened?** Finally, the outcomes of the project are described. What can be learned from this project and applied to other parks and open spaces around the country?

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Creative placemaking is a term that describes the practice of using the arts as a tool for community development. This book is intended to serve as an introduction to creative placemaking for those interested in using the practice to create more and better parks in their community. It will answer two important questions through lessons and case studies: first, "What is creative placemaking?" and second, "How does creative placemaking make for better parks?" It tells the story of the natural connection among culture, public space, and community.

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