AGENDA
Economic Development Commission Meeting
In-Person Meeting with Public Electronic Access

New Brighton City Hall; 803 Old Hwy 8 NW
Upper Level Conference Room
October 6, 2021 | 7:30 a.m.

- ***Attend the meeting in Person:*** *Members of the public may attend the meeting in person. Attendees required to wear masks and comply with social distancing parameters regardless of vaccination status.*
- ***Watch the meeting electronically:*** *To observe the meeting electronically, visit www.newbrightonmn.gov or tune into CTV Channel 8023 (CenturyLink) or Channel 16 (Comcast).*
- ***Join the meeting electronically:*** *If you would like to interact with our public officials or staff but are not comfortable attending the meeting in person, you may join the meeting electronically. Visit:* https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82196592215?pwd=VGVZZE9DU2xjMUtVQlViRGNKVTA1dz09 *(no app needed) or use your Zoom app to join by entering: Meeting ID:* 821 9659 2215 *and Passcode:* 672150

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call*

- *Chair Harry Carter*
- *Commissioner Bob Benke*
- *Commissioner Bret Fynewever*
- *Commissioner Clint Kuipers*
- *Commissioner Mike Murlowski*
- *Commissioner Max Nundahl*
- *Commissioner Anthony Pledger*
- *Commissioner Jacqui Sauter*
- *Commissioner Paul Zisla*

III. Approval of Agenda

IV. Approval of Minutes

1. August 4, 2021
2. September 1, 2021

V. Report from City Council Liaison

**** A quorum of the City Council may be present.***

MINUTES
New Brighton Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting – September 1, 2021
7:30 a.m.

I. Call to Order

Chair Carter opened the meeting at 7:40 a.m. after waiting for a quorum of members to arrive.

II. Roll Call

Members Present.....Chair Harry Carter and Commissioner Jacqui Sauter.

Members Absent.....Commissioners Bob Benke, Bret Fynewever, Mike Murlowski, Max Nundahl, Anthony Pledger, and Paul Zisla

Also Present .....Ben Gozola – Assistant Director of Community Assets & Development, Jill Cady – DCAD Technician, and Councilmember Pam Axberg

Due to lack of a quorum, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Gozola
Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development

Agenda Section:	**VI**
Item:	**1**
Report Date:	**09/28/21**
Commission Meeting Date:	**10/06/21**

REQUEST FOR COMMISISON CONSIDERATION

ITEM DESCRIPTION: Guest speaker Kersten Elverum- Hopkins City Planner
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S APPROVAL:
CITY MANAGER'S APPROVAL:
No comments to supplement this report ___ Comments attached ___

Recommendations:
- **Listen and ask questions about Hopkins public art initiatives from Kersten Elverum Director of Planning & Development**

History:
- The EDC has previously expressed interest in learning more about incorporating public art and art initiatives into the City of New Brighton

Financial Impact:
- None

Summary:
- Director Elverum will be talking to the commissioners about how the City of Hopkins incorporated more public art into their community, specifically Art street and the Artery, and answer commissioners questions on how New Brighton can learn from these examples.

Attachments: *A) Articles on public art and community cohesion*

Jillian Cady

_____

Jill Cady
Community Assets and Development Technician

Agenda Section:	**VI**
Item:	**2**
Report Date:	**09/28/21**
Commission Meeting Date:	**10/06/21**

REQUEST FOR COMMISISON CONSIDERATION

ITEM DESCRIPTION: Event Tourism Discussion
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S APPROVAL:
CITY MANAGER'S APPROVAL:
No comments to supplement this report ___ Comments attached ___

Recommendations:
- **Listen to Director of Parks and Recreation, Jennifer Fink, on what she believes are the best opportunities to bring awareness and traffic into the city and move forward with a plan of support.**

History:
- The EDC has previously discussed interest in New Brighton hosting sporting events/food truck events/ races/ and capitalizing on some of the several parks that we have in our neighborhoods.

Financial Impact:
- None

Summary:
- Jennifer Fink will talk to commission about the current limitations the city has when it comes to event tourism and suggest specific ways that the commission can support increased traffic and publicity to the city.

Attachments: *No attachments*

Jill Cady
Community Assets and Development Technician

Agenda Section:	**VI**
Item:	**3**
Report Date:	**09/29/21**
Commission Meeting Date:	**10/06/21**

REQUEST FOR COMMISISON CONSIDERATION

ITEM DESCRIPTION: US Bank Redevelopment TIF District #35 Examination	
MANAGER'S APPROVAL:	
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S APPROVAL:	**CITY MANAGER'S APPROVAL:**
No comments to supplement this report ___	**Comments attached ___**

Recommendations:

- **Consider updated information regarding requested TIF support for the US Bank redevelopment project**
- **Consider revising the Commission recommendation on approach to the TIF assistance package**

History:

- 8/4/21 – the EDC heard initial information regarding a request for TIF assistance to support redevelopment of the former US Bank site at 2299 Palmer Drive. Given information available at that time, both the EDC and staff felt that a TIF support package of $2.6M was appropriate for this project.
- Aug/Sept – Preliminary PRD application reviewed and establishment of TIF 35 authorized by Council. TIF agreement approval scheduled for October 12, 2021. Discussions focused on ways to capture additional tax capacity to support needs from this project while providing the most opportunity to support other City priorities. This includes investment in existing or new affordable housing, or redevelopment of blighted properties. Achieving that goal would require an amended approach to TIF District #35 which includes a longer TIF term to capture additional tax capacity.

Financial Impact:

- TIF 35 as current envisioned by the City Council would offer considerable funding and support for affordable units not only in this building, but also throughout the City over the life of the TIF District.

Summary:

- Baker Tilly will be present again on 10-6-21 to walk the EDC through an amended approach to TIF #35 based on discussions with Council over the past 60 days following the EDC's preliminary recommendation. Whereas the goal of most TIF districts to date has been to clear them off the books as soon as possible, Council would like to leverage this market-rate residential building to support affordability in the City for a full 26-year period.

Attachments:

- *<Baker Tilly Attachment(s)>*

Ben Gozola, AICP,
Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development

City of Hopkins enlivens its streets with Forecast's help

The Artery is a three block street connecting the City of Hopkins' Mainstreet with the future LRT station on Excelsior Blvd. Forecast Public Art was hired to help plan a programmable streetscape with custom designed amenities.

Hopkins Minnesota was established in 1893 as a center of commerce and industry. It continued to grow around a central downtown, shaped by all modes of transportation. Art has played a large part in the city's forward-thinking leadership. In the late 1990s, City leaders saw and acted upon an opportunity to build a center for art in Downtown Hopkins, moving the city's image toward a vision of arts and entertainment. Continued support for the arts, and an appreciation of what art and artists can do for a community, led to an infusion of art outside the walls of the Hopkins Center for the Arts and into the streets. By 2008, planning for Metropolitan Council's Green Line Extension established a Light Rail Transit station on Excelsior Boulevard, two blocks south of Hopkins' historic Main Street.

The challenge this posed to City leaders was how to bring transit riders into downtown, and how to best connect Hopkins residents and employees to the Downtown Hopkins light rail station. Making the street experience seductive for pedestrians became the goal. Art was the primary way the street would evolve into a vibrant place, in addition to a separated bikeway connecting two regional trails, and redevelopment of the sites along the corridor into higher density transit-oriented development. City planners discussed using art to communicate Hopkins' story, adding interest to the street and making a statement about the influence of art in the community. The name of the new street, *the Artery*, aimed to emphasize both the importance of art and the importance of the route.

The city tapped Forecast Public Art to bring expertise to the process of developing plans that would set the stage for art in many forms. A focus group of artists informed the corridor design, advocating for more flexibility and less programmed use of the space. They recommended fewer fixed features and more space for art to organically happen. The artists advised city planners to experiment with temporary installations and allow for the artists who use the space to inform its direction. Based on this feedback, the design of the Artery includes open areas for temporary installations and performance art, the opportunity to hang their art over the street, access to electricity and places to meet and experience art.

A national call resulted in 100 responses. Proposals were reviewed and artists selected by the City's public art committee. Along with the commissioned art, several local artists contributed designs—including C.J. Renner, Fawzia Khan, Russ White, and Heather Renaux—which the city used to create screens, add interest and tell Hopkins' story of rich history and current diversity. Four sculptures were commissioned: *Night and Day* by Jason Klimoski, *Moline* by James Brenner, *Dragonfly Wing* by Stanton Sears, and *Photo Op Bench* by Ben Zamora. In addition to site specific design, the sculptures also serve to provide shade and act as a road closure, a photo opportunity and a monument announcing the gateway to the Artery.
Construction of the Artery was completed spring 2018. People are finding a shady spot to have lunch under *Night and Day,* occasionally, the road has been closed to cars using the *Dragonfly Wing,* and James Brenner's *Moline* is a beacon that sets the tone and aesthetic of the Artery. The city looks forward to performances in the future!

Social Cohesion that Advances Equity and Well-Being: Promising Practices in Community Development, Health, and the Arts

Jeremy Liu and Victor Rubin, PolicyLink
April 2021

Introduction

The arts are indispensable for their power to build community with unique depth and meaning, and numerous local projects and other endeavors are testimony to that power. But how does that creative process of bringing people closer together or bridging across divides actually happen? Where has that process been found to advance health equity and community well-being? Are there lessons in the research and in the experience of the people who do this work that can be turned into tools for positive social change?

The new report from Metris Arts Consulting, *WE-Making: How Arts & Culture Unite People to Work Toward Community Well-Being*, addresses these questions with uncommon depth and comprehensiveness, with an extensive literature review, a multilayered theory of change, and insightful case studies from three diverse communities. The report, originally drafted in 2018, was revised and influenced in 2019 and 2020 through additional exchanges and feedback organized by PolicyLink and the Center for Arts in Medicine of the University of Florida, with the active participation of the supporters of the project: Bush Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and ArtPlace America. In this second phase, the voices of community-focused artists and cultural strategists, community developers, public health leaders, and researchers in all those fields were brought to bear on these questions. As the Center for Arts in Medicine reports on its website:

> The goal of [the convening held in 2019 for this project] was to advance dialogue and strategy around several ideas through local site visits, performance, presentations, and structured dialogues. These ideas included:
>
> - people are healthier when they are less isolated and more connected;

- people can improve the health of their communities when they find common ground for organizing;
- arts can be a powerful instrument for the expression of cultural identity; and
- arts are a source for the bonding and mutual support that leads to more cohesive, stronger, and healthier communities.

The discourse was infused with a closely related additional question: What are the equity considerations in promoting social cohesion through the arts? The key questions for assessing equity are sometimes characterized as: Who participates, who pays, who decides, and who is better off? All of these were applied to the ways in which place-based arts and culture strategies have been seen to advance social cohesion. Some participants also asked whether social cohesion is even the appropriate concept by which to frame this kind of organizing for equity, or for the liberation of marginalized communities.

The *WE-Making* report was strengthened by the dialogue engendered by these and other questions. Its relevance was also tested and found to be even more important in response to the crises that engulfed the United States in 2020. As was stated in the Preface to the report:

> At a time when "social cohesion" is challenged in new ways by "social distancing," and when "place-based" art has come to mean arts participation with neighbors whom we only see at a distance or virtually, one well might ask whether resources of this nature are hopelessly obsolete. Far from it. The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent economic fall-out and the protests related to racially motivated violence and discrimination have brought into national focus the persistent long-term threats to health equity. These crises have laid bare the ill effects of social isolation, social scarring, and social divides. These tools — and the lessons learned in their development — remain broadly applicable to those seeking to advance social cohesion, health equity, and community well-being.[1]

This is one of two memoranda that have been prepared by PolicyLink to augment the release of *WE-Making*, to extend its reach, apply its concepts, and amplify its relevance with special attention to issues of racial equity. This is the memorandum on **practice** while the other memorandum is focused on **research.** Both memos address the sectors of community development, public health, and the arts. The memos draw upon the voices and experiences brought into the discussions about *WE-Making* as well as the array of local innovations which the PolicyLink arts, culture, and equitable development team, along with our colleagues who work on health equity, have encountered over six years of documenting and assisting the field.

Social Cohesion: Meanings and Mechanisms

We will not reconstruct or address the whole framework laid out in *WE-Making* but will make references to it, and we encourage readers to examine at least the *Theory of Change and Case Studies* document, if not the other components of the report, to track the ways in which we are using the concepts here.

The mechanisms of social cohesion are worth understanding and promoting because they can strengthen individuals and communities in the four ways listed in the bullet points quoted above from the Center for Arts in Medicine. But social cohesion is formally a neutral term which can also apply to efforts which have the effect of resisting social and racial equity. That dual nature gave participants in our project wariness and need to clarify the distinctions. The concerns about the negative, or the potentially antisocial of social cohesion took three forms:

- Social cohesion can mean that homogeneous communities have strengthened their capacity to exclude other types of people and defend against change, even when that change represents broader democratic values. And that stance has, unfortunately, often been backed by public policy as well as private practices. For example, redlining, for decades a legally sanctioned practice of maintaining residential racial segregation by denying access to home insurance or mortgage loans, is an antisocial manifestation of social cohesion. In contrast, the activities of Black churches are a good example of prosocial impact as they have for generations offered not only support for members and the broader community but also sanctuary and resistance in the face of threats from enforcers of white supremacy.

- Racial equity and equitable development require recognition that different communities have different ways of defining positive social interaction and relationships of family to community and of the role of faith or work in society. These differences must be accommodated in any framework for the practical application of social cohesion. A racial equity framework calls for learning and working with how each cultural community distinctly organizes and understands itself in light of its past trauma and current exclusion. Some Black, Indigenous, and Asian and Latinx communities, having survived not just exclusion and displacement but brutality or genocide in the United States, may have perceptions of what social cohesion looks like and how it can be nurtured that do not conform to the mainstream characterizations.

- The political polarization of the US can be seen, in part, as a splintering driven by increased cohesion within smaller ideological, religious, or cultural groups,

> increased distrust if not vilification of others, and the abandonment of common ground. The country has a vastly diverse population and geographic scope, and for a long time it managed to sustain an imperfect working democracy consisting of 300 million people operating in family, civic, and professional groups, associations, cohorts, of all kinds, all enabled by some variant of social cohesion. But that sense of a common identity defined by democratic ideals is being tested in alarming ways, and the fragmentation is partly a consequence of the social cohesion of like-minded groups reinforcing their own reality with their own "facts."

These caveats reflect historic and contemporary structural challenges to equity and democracy, and while it was important to recognize and incorporate them, they did not prevent the project's continued exploration of the positive potential for community developers, health practitioners, and artists to promote social cohesion to increase well-being.

Five types of strategies were identified in *WE-Making* that organizations use to influence the social cohesion process:

- **Build and share power through community ownership:** Strategies that center around community member co-design and co-creation, and that build community leadership
- **Connect people across difference:** Strategies that invite community members to collaborate and share experiences
- **Include all types of community members:** Strategies that encourage participation from parts of the community that might not otherwise participate
- **Have a consistent presence in the community**: Anchor spaces and organizations grounded in a community that can build on achievement over time
- **Align with community change goals to reinforce desired impacts:** Strategies that are reflective of community well-being goals.

The strategies emerge from activation or strengthening of four "drivers" of social cohesion:

- Place attachment
- Social capital
- Mindset
- Civic engagement

These drivers are in turn dependent on the nurturing of four interrelated dimensions of community interaction:

> Without **orientation toward the common good**, relationships and networks may exclude people. Without **willingness to participate**, sense of belonging may be individualistic and passive. Without **relationships** and a **sense of belonging** orientation toward the common good can't be leveraged collectively. Social cohesion transforms individual feelings and orientations into collective feelings and orientations. The presence of social cohesion ensures that relationships and networks set us up for participation and action. This then will serve the common good of the group or community.[2]

The *WE-Making* paper goes into depth about the ways in which place-based arts and cultural strategies influence the drivers and dimensions that contribute to social cohesion.[3] The mechanism is succinctly described as one that

> "lays the groundwork for collective organization and activity in communities. This plays out in enabling communities to develop shared values and efficacy and take collective action. Cohesive communities, through collective organization and activity, can improve equitable well-being. We see this in action above: residents come together—through song, food, stories—to honor the past, envision the future, and act on that vision. Change will move at the speed of trust.[4]

How can practitioners in the arts, health, and community development fields—the areas of focus for this memo—utilize this understanding to advance equity? These three sectors have evolved with different priorities and ways of perceiving how change happens that color their interest in these drivers. Those differences are more complementary than in conflict, and in recent years, collaborations across these sectors have become the hallmark of innovation.

- Community development corporations have taken on the social determinants of health as the organizing principles for their neighborhood revitalization activity.
- Arts strategists have taken up residence in housing development agencies, addressing their internal processes as well as initiatives for art with residents and on the streets.
- Municipal health agencies have brought on artists in residence to further community-level awareness and responses to racial inequities such as poor birth outcomes.

In every instance, they are working with at least an implicit model of increasing social cohesion. Innovators in all three sectors were working intensively before the COVID-19 pandemic, but that has changed everything, at least for the foreseeable future. The pandemic provides an obvious challenge for efforts to advance social cohesion but also

presents transformational opportunities. While the pandemic has revealed to mainstream society many longstanding systemic injustices, how the arts, health, and community development systems respond to COVID-19 will define the next several decades of racial equity and equitable development. In broad terms, these opportunities are:

- Raising awareness of the connection between individual health and population health and generating support for approaches that take on population health through a racial equity lens.
- Acceptance for shifting paradigms. According to the FrameWorks Institute, paradigms can shift most easily when people feel the disconnect between their values and how society is behaving.[5]
- A chance to move away from incremental change (the standard before) toward paradigmatic change (starting now).

The two questions that underpin any approach to applying social cohesion practices in response to COVID-19 are: How do we bring our people back together in person? And how can we maintain and strengthen the social cohesion that communities rely upon during sheltering-in-place? Focusing on the dimensions of social cohesion—relationships, sense of belonging, orientation toward the common good, and willingness to participate—will be key. The profiles below point the ways for arts, health, and community development organizations to answer these questions, and delineate a path forward in a way that does not simply re-create or bolster broken systems but rather taps into an understanding of how different cultures cohere, and from a place of community and safety, can reinforce bridging bonds that adhere different communities together.

Social Cohesion in Health Equity, Arts Management, and Community Development: Profiles and Innovative Efforts

At PolicyLink, we have learned from local organizations in health equity, arts management, and community development whose leaders have taken risks. Sometimes that has been by building bridges to unexpected partners, and by tossing aside the playbook of rules and definitions of expertise by which their day-to-day goals had been accomplished to reach for the chance to make more fundamental changes. Bringing the techniques and sensibilities of art and artists into domains of practice generally governed by real estate finance or medicine takes managerial acumen and patience as well as creativity. And for artists, learning how to operate effectively in nonprofit or government agencies similarly calls for stretching well beyond one's normal environment and skill set.

The three organizations profiled below offer insights into strategies for redefining and operationalizing social cohesion. All are engaged in strategies that influence the **drivers** of social cohesion and have core priorities that touch on the **dimensions** of social cohesion. Each of these entities has what we call a systems focus and seeks to influence how the field changes or learns, and are explicitly committed to or have experience in racial equity.

These examples are based mainly on conversations with B.J. McBride (BE-Imaginative Collective), Meghan Tompkins (Cheyenne River Youth Project), and Jerome Chou (Kounkuey Design Initiative) at our convening in Lexington, Kentucky, in September 2019, complemented by published material about their projects and our other contacts with them. The convening was held as part of the University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine's *Creating Healthy Communities: Arts and Public Health in America*, one of the sector research scans commissioned by ArtPlace. (https://arts.ufl.edu/sites/creating-healthy-communities/collaboration/lexington-ky/)

Following each of the profiles is a list of organizations, not comprehensive but a sample, illustrating the potential for strategies to advance social cohesion to have broad impact across different sectors. The breadth and depth of these entities in their respective sectors and in their geographic or social spheres of influence suggest exciting prospects for the uptake of the *WE-Making* social cohesion framework.

Health Equity

Over the past decade, as awareness of the central role of social determinants in shaping health outcomes has become far more widespread and sophisticated, the possibilities for improving those social conditions with arts and culture have proliferated as well. The uses of arts and culture to advance social cohesion are almost infinite in variety: building communities for mutual support, overcoming isolation and exclusion, integrating health services more effectively into communities, reframing issues that had been viewed as consequences of individual behavior as structural and economic, and many more.

Profile: The BE-Imaginative Collective

Benjamin "BJ" McBride, co-founder of the BE-Imaginative Collective, is a multifaceted, creative community development practitioner with a particular focus on health and healing through the intersection of arts, social justice, and communications.

The BE-Imaginative Collective (https://be-imaginative.org/) is an assemblage of artists, activists, and others committed to social change. The Collective was launched after the police slaying in San Francisco of an unarmed Black man, Mario Woods, and strives to lift

up the voices that are typically marginalized. It provides holistic healing retreats for mothers who are isolated and in need of coping mechanisms after losing children to gun violence. The Collective also offers community arts and activation spaces with the aim of turning "empathy to action, pain to passion." The Collective supports peer-to-peer mentoring and "healing for the heart."[6] Artists and creatives are invited into healing circles to create artistic representations from the stories that they hear. In addition, the Collective gathers the community together with stakeholders to have dialogue about key issues and how to collaborate with others working to end violence.

The Collective began in Oakland and was initially funded by the organizing network formerly known as PICO California, now Faith in Action, and has expanded to seven other cities in California, as well as New York City, New Orleans, and Washington, DC. Their goal is to reach 10 cities that are experiencing gun violence and implement the program in partnership with local people in the community.

Social cohesion as a concept does not adequately express the intense empathy and passion that the mothers provide to each other, or the ways in which the contributing artists contribute to the creation and preservation of a community of people who can not only grieve and heal but then act. But that is exactly what BE-Imaginative produces.

Other Innovators in the Health Equity Field Working Toward Different Aspects of Social Cohesion, Whether or Not They Use that Terminology

- **Ambassadors for Health Equity** is a mid-career fellowship, administered by PolicyLink and supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Leaders from a wide range of human services, economic development, and artistic backgrounds learn and apply the principles of health equity to their fields and share their insights and gifts. The second cohort, for example, featured two musicians, one Indigenous and one Black and Latinx, whose work was centered on environmental justice and social change, and they interacted with leaders in education, social investment, and philanthropy. The third cohort is currently underway, concentrating on the relationship between housing and health (https://www.policylink.org/our-work/community/health-equity).
- **Jackson Medical Mall Foundation (JMMF)** in Jackson, Mississippi, is a repurposed shopping center that has become not only a large and comprehensive health center but a true community hub. JMMF's numerous cultural strategies, from music and public art to quilting and gardening, draw in, engage, and motivate thousands of residents and have improved not only the social and physical environment of their facility but the surrounding neighborhood. The Foundation changed their mission

statement to directly reflect their commitment to arts and culture as part of their expansion from medical services to community well-being (http://jacksonmedicalmall.org/).

- **Inner-City Muslim Action Network** in Chicago (https://www.imancentral.org/) is a community organization supporting health, wellness, and healing by organizing for social change, cultivating the arts, and operating a health center. Their investment in arts and culture supports the "creation, collaboration and presentation of community-engaged art that unites disconnected communities, facilitates transformative healing, and fosters the ability to radically reimagine the world."[7]

Social and Civic Practice of Art and Arts Management

Artists often show grace, creativity, depth of feeling, and unique insights when their work expresses a socially conscious message, and the arts have great power to move and motivate people and help them see the world in new ways. But the most influential ways of building toward social cohesion in communities have come when artists, as individuals or as part of cultural organizations or collectives, have become well-integrated partners with agencies in the social sector. The learning in both directions can be deep and extensive, and through these partnerships, art can be elevated from social practice to a more collaborative and strategic "civic practice." As leading innovators have written, "with the right approach, the same tools and capacities that artists use to make art can be utilized to transform systems and improve the impacts of government and community-driven efforts and programs." [8]

Profile: The Cheyenne River Youth Project

Meghan Tompkins is the past deputy director of the Cheyenne River Youth Project (CRYP) and she presented the context for the approach that they take in utilizing the influencing factors and dimensions of social cohesion. CRYP (https://lakotayouth.org/) is located on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation, home to a large Lakota population in an isolated region of South Dakota. It is one of the poorest counties in the nation, with high unemployment and suicide rates and a history of forced relocation and repression. It was illegal to practice the native religion until the 20th century. However, the arts are entwined in everything to the extent that there is no word for art in the Lakota language. CRYP itself is similarly intertwined in the community, woven into the social fabric. According to Tompkins: "We are a community staple. We work alongside the tribal government. They were involved from the beginning."[9]

CRYP began in 1988 when a bar was converted into a youth center. It now offers paid internships, job training, and cooking classes in Indigenous cuisine. Community meals, weekend arts and culture camps, arts fellowships, and a graffiti jam connect youth to their art and culture. The graffiti jam, which just celebrated its fifth year, consists of two days of creating murals followed by a two-day festival. Youth involved in the project are mentored by artists in the community and media partners. Graffiti jam beautifies the city by selecting empty buildings to improve through art. The project simultaneously preserves the Lakota language through its use in street art. The project functions through multiple partnerships and contributions from volunteers; some forty volunteers participated in this year's graffiti jam. The impact of the project is much more than just art on the walls, as it facilitates reflection of heritage and tradition, particularly for youth in the community. "It's healing… when you're painting, your mind is going somewhere else, creating just enough room for a positive thought to come in."[10]

CRYP is a national leader as well as a local asset, and public art as a means for making heritage and culture the foundation of positive youth development has been taken into other Indigenous communities, such as by the Zuni Youth Enrichment Project. ZYEP and its local partners created H'on A:Wan Park to provide a healthy recreational space for young people, and indeed the entire pueblo, that was designed from the ground up to embody Zuni history, tradition, and culture.[11] It provides children with tangible expressions of where they come from and who they are, and the artist-guided process of designing and building the park generated intent among residents to have future development in the village undertake similarly high levels of engagement.

Other Innovators in the Arts and Arts Management sector that Have Focused on Social Cohesion

- **Design Studio for Social Intervention** (https://www.ds4si.org/) is an artistic research and development organization in Massachusetts committed to changing how social justice is imagined, developed, and deployed in the United States. They explore beliefs, imaginations, tacit and explicit agreements that shape institutions, laws, and cultural norms. They partner "with artists whose work expands our imaginations, with cultural workers whose understandings have kept communities alive in the most dangerous games, and with systems gurus of all stripes, including writers, tricksters, clowns, and trouble makers who trouble the rules at play." Their most impactful work involves supporting place-based investments of entities like the Boston Transportation Department and the Fairmount Cultural Corridor.

- **Letcher County Culture Hub** (https://www.letcherculture.org/) is a network of community-led organizations in Letcher County, Kentucky, who work together to build a culture and economy grounded in community and resident ownership over the inputs, outputs, and benefits of the economy: "Initiated by community organizers at Appalshop, Culture Hub partners have worked together to start businesses, revive cultural events, influence public policy and bring more and more citizens of Letcher County into the process of imagining and building our future together." As proof of their potent mix of arts and organization, they have utilized cultural strategy to build coalitions among artists and former coal miners to successfully advocate for statewide policies to promote solar energy.

- **Forklift Danceworks** (https://www.forkliftdanceworks.org/) is a civic practice dance company based in Austin, Texas. Forklift collaborates with people and organizations that have no dance background through a process that is rigorous and based on shared learning and listening "in which trusting relationships are built and our collaborators have agency to tell their stories in ways that are authentic to them." Their average project takes three years of production, a long-term commitment for a dance company, that "amplifies the voices of community collaborators."[12] Their "My Park, My Pool, My City" trilogy in collaboration with Austin Parks and Recreation's Aquatics Division, brought enough attention to the inequitable distribution of crumbling swimming pools particularly in East Austin to change the City Council's investment decisions.

- **LA Commons** (https://www.lacommons.org/) engages communities in the creation of art for public spaces that tells their unique stories, serving as a vehicle for dialogue, interaction, and better mutual understanding among Los Angeles communities. LA Commons strengthens community by enhancing everyone's sense of belonging and builds stronger bonds between the many different people and places of Los Angeles. Featuring "Innovative Grassroots Cultural Discovery" such as the use of story circles, they design processes for artists and communities to work together to create and advocate for a vision of Los Angeles where everyone thrives: "Art is a critical tool to bring underground community stories to light and shift to a societal narrative that values everyone, not only the wealthy and powerful."

- **New England Foundation for the Arts' Public Art Grants** (https://www.nefa.org/grants/grant-programs/public-art) invests in artists and a community of practice to evolve the field of public art and inspire "more vibrant public spaces and public life throughout the region." This area of investment is grounded in their belief that "public art can help us all see, feel, experience and

imagine decolonized and/or indigenized places. These tangible experiences are essential on the journey towards realizing more just futures for our public spaces and public culture." They are explicit in naming that "diverse cultural and artistic expressions of Black, Indigenous, People of Color are essential to more equitable and vibrant public spaces" and that "addressing the intersectionality of spatial justice and racial justice is critical to cultivating a more vibrant public art ecosystem." And perhaps most radically for a long-established, arts funder, they publicly state that "public art practices that reduce people, places and stories to tools for artmaking are harmful" and that "the arts sector has a legacy of benefiting from and perpetuating white privilege, and therefore we are committed to working towards racial justice."

Community Development

Perhaps no field has embraced arts and culture strategies as widely as community development, with hundreds of local projects, extensive training curricula, and other capacity building from the national intermediaries, including LISC, Enterprise Community Partners, and NeighborWorks America, widespread support from philanthropy and banking, and a body of research and documentation that grows more expansive each year.[13]

Profile: The Kounkuey Design Initiative

Jerome Chou is the planning director of Kounkuey Design Initiative (KDI). KDI (https://www.kounkuey.org/) was founded in Nairobi, Kenya in 2006, and now has offices in Los Angeles and the Coachella Valley of California. The organization works closely with residents in underdeveloped communities to create resources that address physical, social, and economic priorities through design. Meaningful participation is at the heart of the work with community organizers to cultivate leaders and make planning and design accessible. The organization works toward the creation of permanent spaces and toward policy change to create more of these spaces: "We have some close partnerships (like the DOT in LA). In other places where communities are not recognized or are neglected, we drag the city along and try to change how they work."[14]

Chou shared the work that KDI has done in Kibera, a low-income neighborhood of Nairobi with frequent flooding. They recruited unofficial celebrities from the neighborhood and made billboards with their pictures and warnings about potential flooding and how to prevent it. After seeing how effective KDI has been using design for community development, government agencies became very interested in replicating this model.

In Los Angeles, KDI adapts this placemaking approach to the United States context. When the local government was not interested in building the parks that the community wanted, KDI invented a "wobble" (a durable plastic play object that can be assembled to create the world's largest rocking chair) that they deployed along with other objects to create pop-up "play streets." They are in the process of working with the Department of Transportation to expand this work. "Play streets" improve the quality of community, feelings of safety, activity, and reduce stress.

KDI's work in the low-income, unincorporated settlements of the Coachella Valley also employed participatory community design for processes and outcomes that were as much in the social environment as the physical. As their website puts it, "the result is a growing network of community parks and programs that are improving economic opportunity, social cohesion and environmental resilience in the disadvantaged communities of the Eastern Coachella Valley."[15]

Other Innovators in the Community Development Sector that Have Utilized Arts and Cultural Strategies to Build Social Cohesion

- **National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations (NACEDA)** (https://www.naceda.org/) serves as a national convener of the community development sector. Since 2015, NACEDA has worked to make creative placemaking a frontline strategy for community developers. They support their members to use arts and cultural strategies to improve the physical and social character of places: "Artists have engaged neighborhoods in development plans. CDCs became arts advocates. Banks became arts investors. NACEDA networks throughout the country began thinking how artists and cultural strategies could enhance the impact of traditional community development."[16]
- **Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO)** (https://www.apano.org/) is a community organization advocating for and with Asians and Pacific Islanders in Oregon. They utlize storytelling and imagining and shifting narratives to highlight their members' lived experiences and connect them to issues: "APANO aims to advance a long-term cultural strategy to impact beliefs, actions and policies through centering the voices of those most impacted and silenced, resisting and shifting harmful narratives and ideas, and moving beyond defensive strategies to envisioning alternatives."[17]Their place-based work includes providing a neighborhood space where artists and communities are shifting perceptions and re-envisioning an equitable community in the Jade and Midway Districts and greater East Portland.

- **Cook Inlet Housing Authority** (Anchorage) (https://www.cookinlethousing.org/) is a tribal housing agency serving urban and rural areas. Through adopting an approach grounded in cultural strategies the agency discovered how Alaska Native village values of communal support and solidarity could refocus and guide its work, and how a wide range of arts activities could bring diverse residents together and revitalize the homes and commercial district of the Spenard neighborhood of Anchorage.

An Overarching Fourth Sector: Power-building and/or Civic Engagement Organizations

While we will not delve into it with comparable detail, it is important to acknowledge that organizing for political change and civil and human rights, and for the empowerment of workers and the constituents of low-income communities, is critical as a force for generating social cohesion. Indeed, we see organizing groups referenced explicitly in the other sectors, as with BE-Imaginative having been seeded by PICO/Faith in Action. The strategies about building and sharing power, operating inclusively, and tying actions to larger community goals, identified in *WE-Making* and quoted in the opening section of this memorandum, are like the guiding principles of many community organizing and movement building groups. Three diverse examples illustrate those strategies.

- **Coalition of Immokalee Workers**[18] [19]

  The Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) has achieved groundbreaking political solidarity derived, in part, from a culture of playfulness in their strategies, often featuring Son Jarocho folk music, popular education theater, and protest art making. Sociologist Melissa Gouge's research on CIW advances our understanding of how emotions and culture interact to generate democratic political solidarity.

- **Detroit Action** [20]

  Detroit Action grounds their work in what they call Cultural and Relational Organizing that asserts that "elections, politics and organizing don't have to be boring. By definition, community organizing exist in order to build relational power with community. We can set the terms of our discussion with elected officials and our community by engaging them with our culture. Through both technological innovations, cultural and traditional organizing, our organization aims to build community and engage members on issues by meeting them where they are."

- Arts and culture are central to the work of building the **Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival**. This national anti-poverty campaign, considers arts and culture as essential for building up the power of people and state-based movements to serve as a vehicle for a powerful moral movement in the country and to transform the political, economic, and moral structures of our society.[21] The legacy of the Campaign is even grounded in a prescient act of radical placemaking when, in 1968, thousands converged on the National Mall in Washington, DC to erect "Resurrection City," in response to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s call to demand federal funding for full employment, a guaranteed annual income, anti-poverty programs, and housing for the poor. The temporary city of 3,000 wooden tents lasted for 42 days from May to June of that year and stands as a moral precedent for the way creative placemaking can advance racial and economic equity.

Supporting practices for social cohesion: Implications and strategies for funders and policymakers

Implications

In the context of the equity movement, social cohesion practices offer important opportunities to build coalition movements across different sectors, communities, geographies, and generations. Faced with a chaotic political context usually focused on short-term issues and crises, the equity movement needs to move advocacy efforts "upstream" to take on, as effectively, the democratic system and political economy of the nation. It is at that level, where policies affect social, civic, and political systems, that justice can be wrought.

Opportunities for funders and policymakers are rapidly emerging, further sparked by the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, in which the fundamental reset of the mores of society are possible. The central challenge for funders and policymakers will be to recognize when proposed efforts are recreating or only modestly improving the dominant systems and structures, rather than transforming them. As well, the challenge will be to understand the potential, and have the patience for identifying and encouraging local, grassroots efforts in support of these transformative changes. Social cohesion practices can be essential bridging practices that bring efforts to scale, stretching local and regional activities to reach statewide or even national scope. The essential need for getting to that kind of scale is for communities to recognize their sameness while also embracing their differences.

For policymakers, it will be important to grasp the fundamental need that people feel to be grounded in a place and community of their own while simultaneously feeling connected to other places and communities not of their own. This should inform policymaking. At PolicyLink, we had useful experiences with this concept when we made recommendations for applied research into the benefits of an innovative relocation assistance in public housing for national housing policy. The case, in Seattle, was the first of its kind to build social cohesion through cultural strategies with the once and future residents. But while the arts were specific to the largely Asian American community and the environment of the Yesler Terrace development, the concepts and principles may prove to be widely applicable around the country.[22] In another of these "research agendas," PolicyLink pointed out the practical application of broadening the measures of progress in healthy food retailing to encompass how immigrant ethnic food systems serve as a bridge from local efforts to national practice.[23]

Strategies

A key lesson for social cohesion practices reinforced by our examples from each of the three fields is that place-based arts and culture strategies take time, that trust cannot be rushed, and authenticity will not result from a simple transaction. If these qualities are valued, both for more effective and democratic processes and for better outcomes in the community, then the assumption that faster is better must be disrupted. More community involvement and funding are necessary to advance the work. The need to hire community organizers whose practices are grounded fundamentally in social cohesion practices will be key to advancing social cohesion approaches in these three sectors. New relationships with entities outside of their sector, bridging to other areas of work, would also help accelerate the practice.

- Funders should invest in community organizing efforts in arts, health, and community development, and these should support strategies that ground communities in safe and healthy places while also advancing cross-sector, trans-geographic, and intercultural approaches. One example is the recently reorganized California Wellness Foundation, which has a new Leadership for Wellness and Change program area.

- Policymakers should utilize a culture-in-all-policies approach that equips every policy with the perspective that one size cannot fit all and that policies that take an intentional approach to supporting social cohesion can be a bridge between specific and general approaches.

- Funders and policymakers need to consider insights from international examples of truth and reconciliation commissions that directly confront the need for justice. The

> failure to support truth and reconciliation will create an insurmountable obstacle to the social cohesion necessary for a transformation into an equitable and just society.

The proliferation of creative experiments and innovations has led to a powerful body of evidence about how the process of building social cohesion to advance equity and well-being can work. The theory of change explicated by Metris in *We-Making* provides the language by which to describe and analyze those efforts. If we want to support groups in a range of fields to adopt arts and culture strategies to advance social cohesion, then we need to generate more community-driven innovations along with the systematic thinking and research by which to understand how social cohesion works and communicate what it means.

Notes

[1] Metris Arts Consulting, *WE-Making: How Arts & Culture Unite People to Work Toward Community Well-Being: Theory of Change and Case Studies,* page 6. Accessible at https://communitydevelopment.art/issues/social-cohesion

[2] Metris Arts Consulting, *WE-Making: How Arts & Culture Unite People to Work Toward Community Well-Being, Theory of Change and Case Studies,* page 29.

[3] See page 11 of *WE-Making: How Arts & Culture Unite People to Work Toward Community Well-Being: Theory of Change and Case Studies* for the overall diagram of the processes by which place-based arts and culture strategies can amplify the drivers of social cohesion to nurture coordinated community organizing and activity and thereby lead to increased equitable community well-being.

[4] *WE-Making: How Arts & Culture Unite People to Work Toward Community Well-Being, Theory of Change and Case Studies,* page 29.

[5] Frameworks Institute. www.frameworksinstitute.org

[6] https://be-imaginative.org/

[7] https://www.imancentral.org/arts-culture/

[8] Center for Performance and Civic Practice, https://www.thecpcp.org/

[9] Comments of Meghan Tompkins of CRYP at University of Florida, Center for Arts in Medicine convening in Lexington, Kentucky, September 9, 2019. For an account of the three cases profiled here, including CRYP, see the Working Group Proceedings at https://arts.ufl.edu/sites/creating-healthy-communities/collaboration/lexington-ky/

[10] Meghan Tompkins, quoted in the Lexington Working Group Proceedings at https://arts.ufl.edu/sites/creating-healthy-communities/collaboration/lexington-ky/, page 24.

[11] See https://www.communitydevelopment.art/communities/zuni as well as articles in *Health Affairs and Forecast Public Art* which can be accessed at https://www.communitydevelopment.art/About_CDI/press_and_media

[12] https://medium.com/dance-usa-fellowships-to-artists/all-of-us-are-dancers-a-trio-of-dance-artists-creates-work-with-non-traditional-populations-4e8ffe6d33bf

[13] For the perspectives of a cross-section of these local practitioners and national organizations, see Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. 2019. "Transforming Community Development through Arts and Culture," *Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco Community Development Innovation Review* 2019-2.

[14] Comments of Jerome Chou quoted in the Lexington Working Group Proceedings at https://arts.ufl.edu/sites/creating-healthy-communities/collaboration/lexington-ky/, page 26.

[15] https://www.kounkuey.org/projects/eastern_coachella_valley_pps_network

[16] https://naceda.memberclicks.net/index.php?option=com_dailyplanetblog&category=creative-places

[17] https://www.apano.org/programs/community-organizing/

[18] https://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1317&context=cusrd_abstracts

[19] https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/junior-sociologists/dissertation-abstracts/list-of-abstracts/1116

[20] https://detroitaction.org/programs/

[21] https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/arts-culture/

[22] https://communitydevelopment.art/applied-research-relocation-assistance

[23] https://communitydevelopment.art/applied-research-immigrant-food-systems

April 21, 2021

How Can Public Art Aid Social Cohesion and Community Wellbeing?

by Julia Weis as posted on www.salud-america.org

How can art help a community?

Art and cultural practices can help boost social cohesion and overall community wellbeing, according to a new report, *WE-Making: How Arts & Culture Unite People to Work Toward Community Well-Being*, which explores this concept.

“A cohesive culture for health equity is one where everyone works individually and as a group to ensure that each person has a fair, just opportunity for health and wealth, as well as equitable access to basic resources required for these goals according to a *Salud America!* research review.

The *WE-Making* report was developed by the National Endowment for Arts and the Kresge Foundation, with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Bush Foundation, and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

The Report on Arts and Social Cohesion

WE-Making highlights several case studies on how arts and culture impact social cohesion, as well as the conceptual framework behind social cohesion and a literature review on previous research.

The researchers also point out that social cohesion through art is necessary in times of isolation, such as the COVID-19 pandemic that has disproportionately harmed Latinos.

"At a time when 'social cohesion' is challenged in new ways by 'social distancing,' and when 'place-based' art has come to mean arts participation with neighbors whom we only see at a distance or virtually, one well might ask whether resources of this nature are hopelessly obsolete…These crises have laid bare the ill effects of social isolation, social scarring, and social divides. These tools — and the lessons learned in their development — remain broadly applicable to those seeking to advances social cohesion, health equity, and community well-being," according to the Arts, Culture, and Community Development website.

Based on the case studies, the report had some key findings on the connection between art and social cohesion:

- Place-based arts and cultural practices do grow social cohesion for community well-being, while presenting opportunities for further research and investment.
- Community well-being is not restricted to mental and physical health but encompasses individual benefits, such as happiness and communal creative responses to trauma and racism.

"The arts are indispensable for their power to build community with unique depth and meaning, and the diverse cases found throughout this website and beyond are testimony to that power," according to the Arts, Culture, and Community Development website.

Case Studies: Using Art to Promote Social Cohesion

The WE-Making report showcased several case studies of how art and culture have impacted social cohesion in communities of color that face many disparities.

One case study focuses on a Black community in Natchez, Mississippi.

In Natchez, a project called Girls'nPearls aimed to uplift young Black girls and connect them to the history of the area with performance arts.

"Girls'n Pearls is a group of girls ages eight to 18 mentored by the Southwest Mississippi Chapter of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, the group that hosted the event. The singing group was just one part of a weekend-long art exhibit and

performance series. The series strove to 'lift up the often untold stories of African Americans throughout [Natchez's] 300-year history.' The events centered around St. Catherine Street, which leads into downtown Natchez. It's an area with deep historical meaning for the African American community," according to the report.

Organizers felt the event was successful because it helped educate and bring together the community.

"The event helped to develop a sense of belonging and ownership to place. It also invited people of many ages to celebrate community and history. And, it strengthened individual and organizational relationship bonds," according to the report.

Another case study in the report featured a rural town in Pennsylvania that asked residents to write letters and send in submissions with their feelings about the town, which they then used to create art.

"Many former coal and steel communities, like Tamaqua, have a deep-seated pessimism about the future. Rural communities face challenges due to unemployment, poverty, and lack of access to health care … In 2016, the researchers found significant improvements in reported connectedness. Residents had expanded networks by forming new connections and trust with one another (social capital). Even more, community members felt like their voices mattered (mindset)," according to the report.

Beyond the report, other initiatives for public art have also been successful in promoting social cohesion.

In Tallahassee, FL (19% Latino), the local government and a creative institute paired up to decorate utility boxes with local art.

"Public art increases community engagement, improves mental health and encourages social cohesion," said Betsy Couch, Executive Director of the Knight Creative

Communities Institute, according to the *Tallahassee Democrat*. “Art of the Box provides a variety of benefits including economic opportunity and marketing for local artists while showcasing the diversity of talent we have in Leon County.”

Salud America! also found that public art can help Latino communities.

“Investing in Latino placemaking is defined as creating a culturally relevant Latino public space to spur vibrancy in the neighborhood. Murals play a large role in Latino culture and placemaking. In both Boyle Heights and Logan Heights [in California], planners commissioned local artists to provide public art at their development. In doing this, representations of the everyday lived experiences, both historic and present, as well as the cultural aesthetic of current residents were represented and respected,” according to a *Salud America!* research review.

Along with other policies to improve Latino communities, public art can benefit residents and curb gentrification.

“When transit-oriented developments are able to expand the stock of affordable housing, establish culturally relevant Latino public spaces, invest in community-based public arts, and collaborate with local residents to make developments as community-oriented as possible, there is a strong chance they will be successful at limiting displacement and providing benefit to the current residents,” according to a *Salud America!* research review.

How Can We Continue to Build Social Cohesion for Latinos?

Social cohesion is vital to building a more equitable society.

The WE-Making report suggested ways that art initiatives can continue amplifying social cohesion, such as:

- Build and share power through community ownership
- Connect people across difference
- Include all types of community members
- Have a consistent presence in the community
- Align with community change goals

In addition to empowering the community with art, helping people understand the mechanisms that inhibit a cohesive culture is also important.

“To achieve a more cohesive culture, we must help people understand and overcome the mechanisms — implicit bias, system justification, moral disengagement — they use to discriminate against people of color and/or justify poverty,” according to a *Salud America!* research review.

You can help by learning about implicit bias and addressing your own biases.

Implicit biases are stereotypes that affect our actions and decisions about others, beyond our conscious control. Fortunately, these biases also can be “rewired” toward more compassion for others.

Download the free *Salud America!* Action Pack “Find Out If You Have Implicit Bias and What to Do Next.”

This Action Pack will help you see if you have implicit bias, learn from others who have overcome their own implicit bias, and also encourage others to learn about implicit bias, too.

Strengthening Communities Through Public Art

https://centerforactivedesign.org/publicart-engagement

Public art has long been recognized as a community asset, but because many of its benefits seem intangible, it is often treated as a low priority, especially during challenging economic times. Yet, several communities across the U.S. have shown that prioritizing public art can lead to increased levels of community engagement and social cohesion. Project examples that feature public art also show that it can function as a powerful catalyst for improved mental and physical health. This article examines how public art has been used as a tool for fostering community revitalization, social connections, and improved health outcomes.

Cities across the U.S., including New York, Los Angeles, and Buffalo, have instituted “Percent for Act” programs, which mandate that a portion of the budget for city-funded construction projects is used to fund and install public art. In 1983, New York City launched its Percent for Art program, and has since commissioned over 300 site-specific, permanent public art works in schools, courthouses, police precincts, and transit sites. One of the latest works, a sculptured water fountain called *The Source*, was designed as the cornerstone of a new plaza in the Washington Heights neighborhood. The artist’s use of brightly colored mosaic patterns reflects the richness and diversity of the predominantly Dominican local culture. Together with the newly renovated public space, this Percent for Art project creates a new visual landmark that anchors the community’s collective identity.

The Mural Arts Program is a public-private partnership between the city of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Mural Arts Advocates, which creates transformative murals within communities across the city. One of its key initiatives, the Porch Light Program, uses public art to promote health and wellness in Philadelphia. The program organizes participatory mural making with local organizations to create venues where people with and without behavioral health challenges can work alongside one another to reveal a shared purpose. In one example, a team of artists was paired with youth and parents from a local, supportive housing agency, whose residents are often faced with persistent homelessness and poverty. Workshops were held to write and share poetry, which was then illustrated into a mural.

Porch Light is collaborating with the Yale School of Medicine to assess the program’s impact on health outcomes. After two years, researchers found a sustained increase in collective efficacy and improved perceptions of both the pedestrian environment and neighborhood safety. They also observed a decrease in stigma toward individuals with mental health or substance abuse challenges.

Detroit residents responded to an increase in abandoned homes and visual blight with grassroots initiatives that use art to revitalize and repurpose hundreds of vacant lots throughout the city. A large driver of this movement is Power House Productions (PHP), an artist-run, neighborhood-based nonprofit organization that creatively adapts vacant properties to stabilize neighborhoods and inspire the community. PHP first began when its founders invited neighbors to renovate an abandoned home into a community art center. The resulting space is embedded in the residential neighborhood and has become a public venue for engaging in art through theater, contemporary dance, and experimental film. PHP demonstrates the ease with which public art can be used to create new value and strengthen social bonds, especially for neighborhoods struggling with disinvestment.

Whether driven by the community or municipal agencies, public art moves beyond improving aesthetic quality within neighborhoods, by reinforcing social connections, fostering improved health outcomes

Public Art and the Art of Public Participation

By Jan Brennan

https://www.nationalcivicleague.org/ncr-article/public-art-and-the-art-of-public-participation/

Public art plays an invaluable role in the process of community building. Not only does it establish and beautify public spaces, it expresses and supports a sense of neighborhood history, culture and identity and helps drive economic vitality. One aspect of increasing interest is participatory public art, in which the public plays an active role rather than merely being appreciative viewers.

Public Art Basics

Although we often think of outdoor murals and sculptures, public works of art can take any shape or form, use any artistic medium, including performance, be either permanent or temporary, located indoors or outdoors, and be integrated into the architecture and site design or stand alone. Beautification, enrichment and enjoyment are valuable benefits of public art, but it is also often designed to elevate cultural history, help address urban issues, support economic vitality and build community cohesion.

Public art projects are most often site-specific works triggered by public construction and development projects. The most common funding mechanism for municipal public art are percent-for-art ordinances, dedicating a small percentage of capital improvement building or infrastructure budgets to fund public art associated with the project. State and local budget appropriations, public and private foundation grants, corporate sponsorships and individual donations are also sources of support.

Public art processes are managed by a wide variety of entities responsible for public space, including cultural offices, parks and recreation departments, economic development entities, educational institutions, transit authorities, nonprofit organizations and even private developers. Public art selection processes include direct commissions and selection through a competitive request for proposals or qualifications. Review and selection may be conducted by staff or an appointed selection panel, typically comprising both community members and arts professionals, with final approval from a public art commission or department.

What Makes Public Art Participatory?

The role of the public in the public art process described above is limited, primarily as passive consumers of the finished public artwork. More public art agencies are turning to participatory approaches that increase involvement and make public art more reflective of the communities in which it is located. Artists are being asked to create works responsive to a specific area's culture, history and residents, rather than proposing artworks that could be dropped into any park or neighborhood.

Public art allows for varied participation, including public engagement in planning, selection, creation, installation, maintenance and collective appreciation. Participatory public art better reflects

neighborhood identity, culture and history. The shared experience of creation and interaction with public art builds community cohesion. Participation amplifies the sense of ownership, discouraging graffiti and vandalism while supporting beautification, safety and economic development. At a time when public budgets are stretched thin, there is also a recognition that greater public participation increases voter support for public art programs and investments.

Strategies for Participatory Public Art

1. **Participatory Planning**

   Municipal and regional planning for public art is the first opportunity for public participation. Plans are typically driven by staff, but public input helps ensure public art programs align with community priorities and values and can help improve public art access and impact.

   One challenge of public art planning is the popular percent-for-art funding mechanism, which links new artworks to the physical location of capital improvement projects. This approach may concentrate public art in downtown areas and new developments, leaving established residential and low-income areas as public art deserts. A good opportunity for public participation in planning is to help identify and address inequities in public art across the program geography and constituents. Consider changes to policies which limit use of all percent-for-art funding narrowly to the physical location of capital projects, creation of an alternative public art funding mechanism for areas with little new construction or creation of mobile collections and loan programs that can help get public artworks into under-served locations.

   Another valuable impact of participatory planning is to challenge the traditional Eurocentric orientation of many public art collections. Public art programs should monitor the diversity of both their art collections and selected artists to assess whether they are inclusive and representative. Public artworks have also become more diverse in discipline, for example, including more textiles, digital media and performance works. Public participation can play a valuable role in assessing and planning that increases diversity and cultural pluralism reflected in public art.

   A final participatory art planning opportunity is presented by public budgeting. As with other areas of public budgeting, public art is an area in which the public can be invited to direct neighborhood investments and improvements. Chicago residents have several opportunities to direct the investment of public art funding. The Rogers Park Business Alliance highlights local public art projects developed through participatory budgeting.1

   ACTION ITEMS

   - *Gather public input to identify art deserts and generate ideas to improve equitable access to public art.*
   - *Consider alternative funding mechanisms and mobile collection or loan programs that can help provide public art in areas without major capital projects.*
   - *Include public input into assessing the diversity and inclusiveness of your public art collection and artists and identifying gaps.*

- *Allocate public art funds that can be directed through participatory budgeting to allow residents more input into the artworks in their neighborhoods.*

2. **Participatory Selection**

Current public art models most often include community participation in the selection process. While formal arts expertise is important, most public entities have opted for a balanced approach, ensuring artistic skills and experience while also including locals on site-specific selection committees. Denver Public Art, for example, appoints selection panels with a "balance of community members who live or work near the project site and members who are more widely experienced and knowledgeable about art."2 This is a beneficial practice, providing the selection committee with local input and heightening the responsiveness of public art to neighborhood context, history and culture.

The City of Tampa, Florida includes both community and arts knowledge in criteria for participation in public art selection panels. Criteria for arts expertise includes "experience implementing public art projects; knowledge of public art trends and artists; knowledge of local, regional and national artists; ability to assess the creativity, design skills and problem-solving abilities of the artists under review; and knowledge of materials and methods of fabrication." The value of community is also recognized, including criteria such as "experience and interest in working with Tampa's communities; ability to represent neighborhood where the project is located; and ability to work cooperatively and effectively in a panel process."

Tampa's policy also calls for "cultural, racial and gender diversity," and provides for non-voting participation from "community groups or other interested parties."3 While inclusion of community representatives in public art selection panels offers some participatory opportunities, such opportunities are typically limited to a few individuals who are recommended for selection panel membership by the public art staff.

Some communities have allowed the public to more broadly participate in public art selection. Wheeling, Ohio, Golden, Colorado, and Seattle, Washington, last year allowed community members to select among finalists from public art commissions. The common approach to balancing expertise and community participation in these cases is to have arts professionals identify finalists, from which the popular vote determines the winner.

In reviewing policies related to art selection panels, improvements might clarify a commitment to public input in the selection process, share benefits of public engagement, clarify how diverse community representatives will be identified and included in the selection process and ensure criteria are in place which values both arts experts and community representation.

ACTION ITEMS

- *Review and update your art selection panel policies to allow or enhance community representation.*
- *Ensure that community members are aware of opportunities to participate in the selection process and how to put themselves forward.*

- *Expand your public art program pool of community representatives to be more inclusive and diverse.*
- *Consider opportunities for public selection of artworks through voting. Public voting would typically occur among finalists identified by* qualified experts to ensure appropriate design and materials.

3. **Participatory Creation**

Certainly one of the most exciting aspects of participatory public art is the trend towards engaging the public directly in the creative process. There are three primary models for participatory arts creation: collaborations in which the public works closely with the artist to inform development of the artwork; projects in which the public directly participates in creating the artwork; and projects in which the artwork is only realized through public interaction. Participatory creation is not new, but it is an area of rapid expansion in public art. Public art programs are stepping up to promote and facilitate public engagement, rather than merely relying on the artist to conduct community outreach and research to inform their public art proposal or project.

Let's examine a few recent public art projects which used participatory creation. Several of the models are drawn from Americans for the Arts' Public Art Network and Year in Review Database,4 a key source for best models of innovative public art.

Philadelphia's Mural Arts Program has helped brand them as the "City of Murals." Mural Arts annually engages residents to create 60 – 100 murals. As in many cities, Philadelphia's mural program originated through anti-graffiti efforts. Fishtown's newest mural Welcome to the Neighborhood demonstrates several participatory elements. First, the mural design was created through a public contest open to anyone and the selection was based on voting by over 2,000 residents. Going beyond public input and voice, the project included public paint days in which neighborhood volunteers directly participated in creating the mural, which features a collage of current and historic Fishtown leaders and locations.

Pathways to Freedom (Boston, Massachusetts) was a temporary installation on Boston Common during Spring 2018. Sculptor Julia Vogl engaged 1,800 residents at 27 community locations to directly participate in creating the artwork. Each person created a round pin with stickers representing their responses to questions regarding freedom and immigration. Vogl then incorporated the pin designs into a 6,000 ft. public installation covering the pathway around the Soldiers and Sailors Monument. Over 25,000 individuals visited the art project, which also included audio stories recorded by residents.

Poetry on Buses (Seattle, Washington) featured resident poems on buses, light rail and streetcars through a collaboration of transit agencies, the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture and King County cultural agency in 2016 - 2018. Community Liaisons conducted outreach and poetry workshops in diverse ethnic communities based on the theme "Body of Water" established by artist Jourdan Keith. Over 1,600 original poems were submitted, from which 365 were selected for the project and 125 were displayed in transit vehicles and stations.

When West Hollywood, California, completed a community-based cultural plan in 2017 Sean Noyce was one of the artists commissioned to create artworks based on visualization of public input to the plan. His Dream Cloud balloons and other artworks show word clouds based on the words that were most often used during the input process. The public not only informed the plan through their input, they had the chance to see their cultural input flying high.

When St. Louis wanted to engage the public with municipal data, they turned to artist Jer Thorpe. His St. Louis Map Room public art project allowed 29 groups of residents to create maps reflecting their lived experiences of the city. Residents mapped their realities, from their routes to work or school and service locations they access, such as food banks, churches and parks, to areas of the city they considered safe and those they considered dangerous. Resident maps were then overlaid with city data, ranging from poverty statistics to bus routes. The project, which has been recreated in other cities, used public art to seed important community conversations, empower residents and allow groups to experience the city through the eyes of their neighbors.

This fall, Old Town Alexandria (Virginia) has featured an interactive public artwork Mirror Mirror, commissioned by the City's Office of the Arts. The 25-foot long, eight-foot tall installation is sound-responsive. Viewers clap, stomp and shout to produce bright rainbow hues, posing for selfies and enjoying local music performances that take advantage of the space. This is an example of an artwork that is intended to be activated and realized through public interaction with the work.

ACTION ITEMS

- Review public art policies to ensure they allow or encourage new technology and innovative art forms that facilitate public participation and interaction.
- Provide mechanisms to make the public aware of upcoming public art projects and solicit their feedback.
- Craft upcoming public art requests for proposals or qualifications to prioritize participatory and interactive public proposals.
- Offer a workshop for prospective public artists to increase their understanding and use of participatory and interactive approaches.

4. Participatory Maintenance

Maintenance of public artworks is a fourth opportunity for public participation. Public art staff are often challenged to monitor the condition of large public art collections distributed throughout a city, region or state. Programs can benefit by facilitating participatory monitoring and data collection. Seattle's Office of Cultural Affairs Public Art Program maintains a tip line to report works in need of repair and offers workshops in artwork stewardship for interested volunteers, guiding them in inspection, reporting and some routine cleaning. By offering proactive workshops, the Public Art Program hopes to discourage well-intentioned, but often damaging attempts by the public to remove tagging from artworks.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Create and promote a phone line and email for the public to report vandalism or damage to public artworks. This should be coordinated with graffiti reporting.
- Create a community workshop to help volunteers effectively support condition assessment and simple cleaning of public art.
- Establish a public art volunteer group to systematically monitor and report on the condition of works in the public art collection.

5. Participatory Collective Appreciation

A final area for participatory public engagement is through activities and events that promote collective enjoyment of the artworks and use them as a platform for community-building. “More than ever before, public artworks are stimulating and inviting active dialogue rather than just passive observation,” notes the Project for Public Spaces, “thereby fostering social interaction that can even lead to a sense of social cohesion among the viewers.”5

One aspect of collective appreciation is to drive understanding of artworks and how they reflect neighborhood culture and history. Public art programs don’t stop once an artwork is installed. The public needs education and opportunities to appreciate the artworks, particularly as a community. You might draw inspiration from this National Arts Marketing Project video How to Look at Public Art: A Six-Year-Old-Explains.6 A community mural highlighting historic figures and events can be the platform to provide interpretive information that builds shared community identity and civic pride. The Association for Public Art promotes Public Art Lesson Plans.7 Apps, maps and databases are key aids, linking public artworks to additional online content. Staff and volunteer docents can enrich the experience by conducting public art tours, with many communities adding bicycle and scooter tours.

The act of coming together as a community to engage with public art drives placemaking and builds relationships and social capital. It is challenging to gather a group of residents to interact with a painting, but participatory art is intended to provide rich engagement opportunities. Building programming and events around public art themes and spaces allows for richer, collective community experiences.

Provide on-site and online interpretive materials, maps, apps and searchable databases that provide the public a greater appreciation of the artworks and their community context.

Solicit and train diverse public representatives to offer guided experiences of artworks and promote these opportunities to all communities.

Develop and promote lesson plans and educational materials aligned with themes in the public art collection.

Organize regular community events that engage residents collectively with public artworks.

Conclusion

Participatory approaches can increase the appreciation and impact of public art, honor the history and culture of neighborhoods, provide collective cultural experiences and build residents' sense of ownership and pride.

But participatory public art only works effectively when it is broadly and inclusively participatory. Public art programs can fall prey to including a few "usual suspects" and fail to reach and include audiences who are currently disengaged. Participatory public art is also only one small component of community-building. "Public art projects will be most effective when they are part of a larger, holistic, multidisciplinary approach to enlivening a city or neighborhood," observe Kent and Niktin. 8

Jan Brennan is a Senior Fellow of the National Civic League and Mountain West Director for the Campus Election Engagement Project. Jan's passion is to promote civic learning and engagement, from the classroom to public space, drawing on her experience as the Director of the Denver Office Cultural Affairs and Project Lead at the National Center for Learning and Civic Engagement.

1 *Rogers Park Business Alliance. Public Art: Participatory Budgeting. Retrieved from https://rpba.org/public-art-participatory-budgeting/*

2 *Denver Public Art, FAQ, City of Denver, retrieved from https://denverpublicart.org/about/#faq-section*

3 *Tampa Public Art, Art Selection, retrieved from https://www.tampagov.net/art-programs/Programs/public-art/art-selection*

4 *Public Art Network. 2018 Year in Review Trends and Themes: Participatory and Performative. Retrieved from https://blog.americansforthearts.org/2019/05/15/2018-pan-year-in-review-trends-and-themes-participatory-and-performative*

5 *Kent, F. & Nikitin, G. (January 22, 2012). Collaborative, Creative Placemaking: Good public art depends on good public spaces. Project for Public Spaces, retrieved from https://www.pps.org/article/collaborative-creative-placemaking-good-public-art-depends-on-good-public-spaces*

6 *National Arts Marketing Project. How to Look at Public Art: A Six-Year-Old Explains. Retrieved from https://namp.americansforthearts.org/by-topic/public-art/how-to-look-at-public-art-a-six-year-old-explains*

7 *Association for Public Art. Public Art Lesson Plans. Retrieved from https://www.associationforpublicart.org/resources/public-art-lesson-plans/*

8 *Ibid vi*

City of New Brighton
EDC Meeting

Tax Increment Financing
District Summary

October 6, 2021

bakertilly
MUNICIPAL ADVISORS

Proposed TIF (Redevelopment) District No. 35: Redevelopment of US Bank site at 2299 Palmer

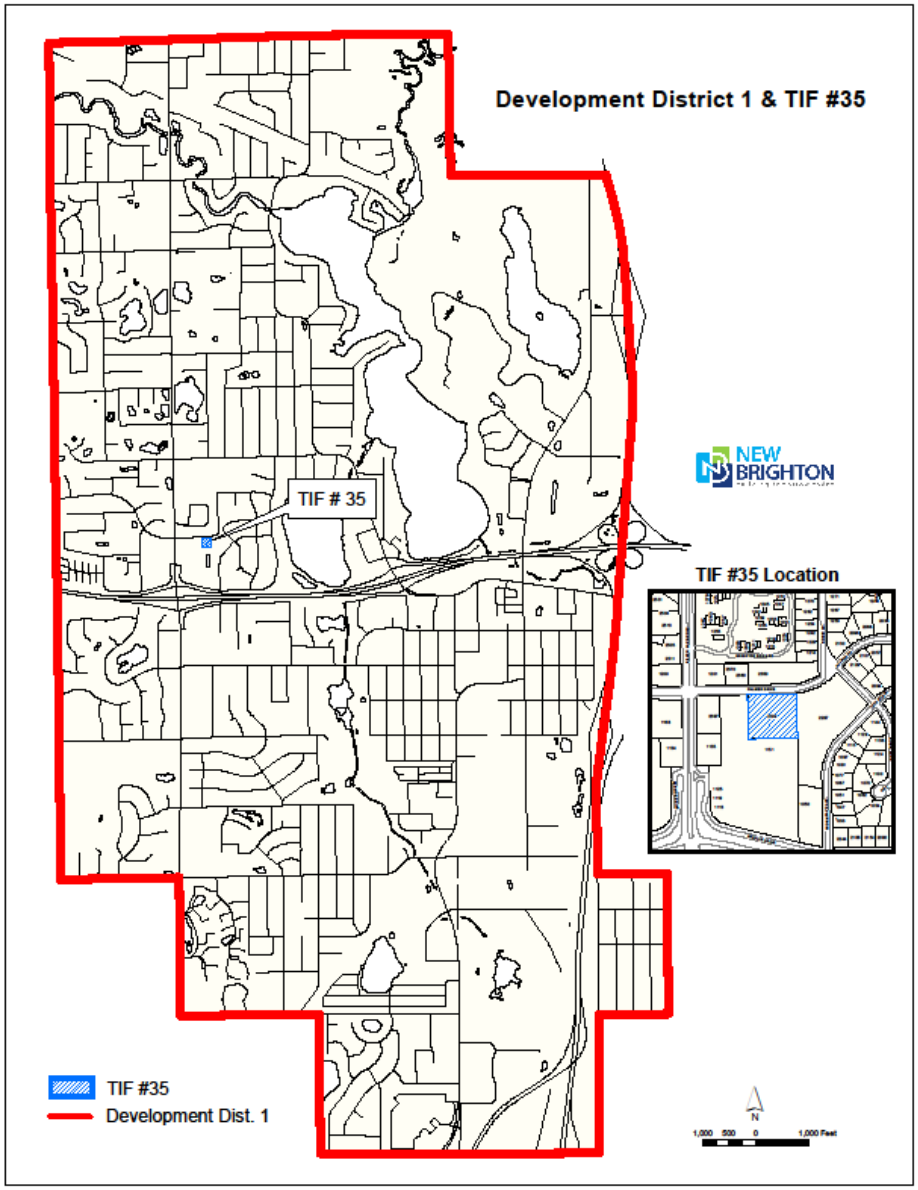
Proposed 132-Unit Multifamily Development

- 40 studios
- 59 1-bedroom units
- 33 2-bedroom units

10% of units would be affordable at 60% AMI

Request for Tax Increment Financing assistance

- Qualifies as 'Redevelopment' TIF District
- Assist with financing of extraordinary costs
  - Acquisition, demolition, site preparation, other redevelopment costs
- 90% of increment for up to 26 years ($3.9M estimate)



Map of Proposed Tax Increment Financing (Redevelopment) District No. 35

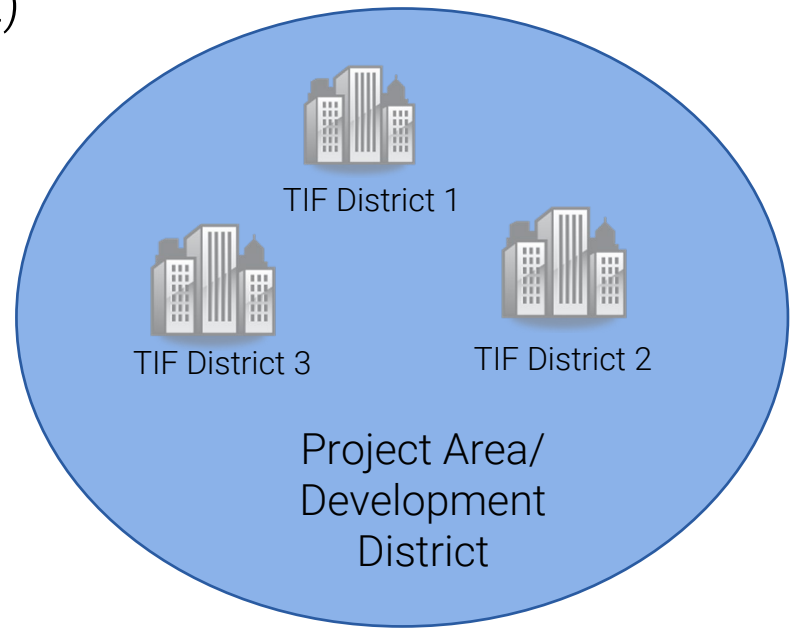
Fundamentals of Tax Increment Financing

Project Area (Development District)

- Where portion of TIF dollars can be spent, with limitations

TIF District (Specific Project)

- TIF Plan
  - Budget
  - Geographic boundaries
  - Purpose
- Public Hearing
- Certification



Fundamentals of Tax Increment Financing
Definition of Pooling

- ‘Pooling’ is ability to spend portion of tax increments outside District and within Project Area
- Redevelopment District: up to 35% of tax increment revenues may be ‘pooled’
  - Administrative (up to 10%)
  - Redevelopment related (up to 25% - includes admin.)
  - Qualified housing (up to additional 10%)

Fundamentals of Tax Increment Financing
Definition of Pooling

- Maximize use of tax increments
  - Finance specific district project costs plus allowable pooling expenses
  - Collect up to full term of incentive
  - Reduced use of tax increments
- Finance direct improvements only and no/limited pooling
  - Minimize term of collection
  - Property value increase on tax roll

Common Methods for Financing Costs

G.O. Tax Increment Bonds

- Can be issued without a referendum if tax increment contributes at least 20% of debt service costs

Pay-as-you-go Notes

- Project financed upfront by developer
- Developer is reimbursed over time

Revenue Bonds

- For seasoned development with a “coverage” factor and/or guaranteed

Proposed TIF (Redevelopment) District No. 35: Redevelopment of US Bank site at 2299 Palmer

Purpose of financial review is to assist the City with making a determination:

1. if the project as proposed would be unlikely to proceed “but-for” the requested Tax Increment Financing (TIF) assistance and
2. if assistance is necessary, to determine the appropriate amount and terms of public assistance.

Proposed TIF (Redevelopment) District No. 35: Redevelopment of US Bank site at 2299 Palmer

Estimated Total TIF Eligible Costs	Eligible	Extraordinary
Affordability		$1,900,000
Acquisition	$1,700,000	$0
Demolition	$748,500	$748,500
Site Preparation/Improvements	$2,773,000	$1,319,500
Utilities/Streets	$438,000	TBD
Total	$5,659,500	$3,968,000

Proposed TIF (Redevelopment) District No. 35: Redevelopment of US Bank site at 2299 Palmer

Parameters for an appropriate level of public assistance that were considered when identifying the extraordinary costs:

- Return on Investment
- Purchase price and other development costs
- Public to private investment
- Public assistance (TIF) and private equity
- Extraordinary costs
- Financial gap
- Term of collection (district)
- Other necessary public improvements

Proposed TIF (Redevelopment) District No. 35: Redevelopment of US Bank site at 2299 Palmer

Sources	Amount		Uses	Amount	
First Mortgage	$21,657,912	65%	Acquisition	$1,700,000	5%
Equity	$6,634,199	20%	Demolition	$748,500	2%
Deferred Developer Fee	$850,000	3%	Construction with Cont.	$25,424,520	77%
Tax Increment	$3,510,000	12%	Fees	$846,796	2%
			Developer Fee	$1,000,000	3%
			Soft Costs	$1,517,840	4%
			Capitalized Interest	$1,414,455	4%
Total	$32,652,111		Total	$32,652,111	

Proposed TIF (Redevelopment) District No. 35: Redevelopment of US Bank site at 2299 Palmer

Tax Increment Revenue Estimates – Maximum TIF District Term and Pooling Option	
Estimated total available gross tax increment (26 years)	$11,084,642
City retainage (35%)	$3,879,631
Net amount available for development (65%)	**$7,205,011**
Estimated Developer TIF Note Assumptions (26 years of payments)	
TIF Note Principal	***$3,968,982***
TIF Note Interest at 4%	$3,111,254
TIF Note Total Payments	***$7,080,236***
Estimated Surplus TIF Dollars ($7,205,011 - $7,080,236)	$124,775

Proposed TIF (Redevelopment) District No. 35: Redevelopment of US Bank site at 2299 Palmer

Next steps

October 12: City Council Consideration:

- Administrative Amendment of TIF Plan for TIF District No. 35
- TIF Agreement

Questions

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