



Creativity *and* **Collaboration** *for* **Healthier Cities**



About the National League of Cities

The National League of Cities (NLC) is the voice of America's cities, towns and villages, representing more than 200 million people. NLC works to strengthen local leadership, influence federal policy and drive innovative solutions.

About the Center for Leadership, Education, Advancement & Development (LEAD)

The **Center for Leadership, Education, Advancement & Development** is the go-to place for leadership development for municipal officials. The Center specializes in curriculum-based learning opportunities, as well as fulfilling the mission of the Institute for Youth, Education and Families through technical assistance with a focus on issues impacting young people in cities and towns across America.

About One Nation/One Project and Arts for EveryBody

One Nation/One Project (ONOP) is a national arts and health initiative designed to activate the power of the arts to repair the social fabric of our nation and heal our communities. It is also the leader of **Arts for EveryBody**, a new and audacious campaign demonstrating how participation in the arts can lead to healthier people and healthier communities. ONOP is fiscally sponsored by Tides Center, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

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Introduction

What is this Guide and How Did It Originate?

This guide is the product of a 3-year collaboration between the national arts and health initiative, Arts for EveryBody led by One Nation/One Project (ONOP) and the National League of Cities (NLC), who designed a cross-sector cohort model, technical assistance program, and research agenda for cities and towns across the U.S. Stemming from the recognition that **our most challenging local problems cannot be solved by one sector alone and the belief that artists can operate as instigating agents for deeper, more effective cross-sector collaboration**, Arts for EveryBody brought together a national cohort of cities to work collaboratively across local government, health, and the arts. Over a two-year period, Arts for EveryBody and NLC worked with these communities with the aim of making meaningful improvements to individual and community health.





It is the core belief of the authors that, as skilled facilitators of collaborative and creative partnerships, artists can uniquely help achieve the goals of local government.

This toolkit is designed to equip and enable local government professionals to better engage and partner with artists, and in so doing, improve community trust, increase transparent communication, and flexibly respond to dynamic community needs. It aims to help you consider new ways to collaborate across your departments and agencies, bring more resident voices and perspectives to the table, and build new coalitions within government systems and public settings.

The Value of Arts & Culture for Stronger Cross-Sector Collaboration and Problem-Solving

When city agencies and departments work across silos and collaborate, residents are better served and impact is multiplied. For example, in 2014, a collective of artists in Tucson, AZ successfully created a public engagement strategy and online platform called Transit Talks, aimed at bringing residents into dialogue with public and private decision-makers around Tucson public transit. When transit and planning work together, they are able to develop and deliver more effective, sustainable, whole community solutions, serving the holistic needs of residents and creating positive outcomes. **Put simply, cross-sector collaboration works.**

Unfortunately, city systems and structures often make cross-agency and cross-departmental collaborations difficult for a variety of reasons. **Knowing this, how can collaboration with artists, culture bearers, and cultural workers make a difference?**

More and more artists are being recognized and engaged as creative collaborators who bring cross-sectoral mindsets and approaches to problem-solving, coalition building, and public engagement in civic areas that include health, housing, planning, and sustainability.

ARTISTS, CULTURE BEARERS, AND CULTURAL WORKERS ARE OFTEN COMMUNITY-TRUSTED BRIDGE-BUILDERS WHO...

1. Contribute beauty, energy, and inspiration to their communities

2. Support future-focused thinking and visioning

3. Uplift the voices of local residents

4. Through imagination, can help uncover approaches not yet considered





Through existing relationships, they're also able to center the voices of the very citizens local governments hope to serve and to include those voices in the policies that shape a city's future. Take, for example, the City of Oakland, California's [Cultural Strategist-in-Government \(CSIG\) Program](#). CSIGs are artists and cultural workers embedded within city departments (from Human Services to Economic & Workforce Development to Violence Prevention and Public Works) to "infuse city problem-solving with new perspectives and creative thinking from communities historically under-represented in the city's policy-making staff."¹ As trusted members of the community, these artists assisted the City of Oakland in engaging over 10,000 residents and generating \$1.1M in direct income for Oakland residents in just 18 months.² Artists can help agencies, departments, and organizations make the time, create the structures, and design solutions for long-lasting impact. **Arts and culture workers support the outcomes city governments are already working towards to build communities that thrive.**



It is very difficult to imagine a different future than what is currently around you. That kind of creativity does not naturally flow through government. But it is a skillset of our arts and culture workers."

DR. ROBERT BLAINE*
Senior Executive and Director
LEAD, NLC

* Dr. Blaine is a former Chief Administrative Officer of the City of Jackson, Mississippi, a former Professor of Music, and is a professional musician.



The Value of Creative Government for Healthier Communities

At every level, the arts and artists can be facilitators of health. By building connection, nurturing collaboration, and supporting partnership, the arts can shape both how our systems work together and how individuals within our communities care for one another.

Underscored by the pandemic, one of the most challenging issues facing local communities today is mental health and social isolation. In May 2023, Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy released a public health advisory on the [Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation and the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community](#). In it, he references an article³ that presents the extensive evidence of the importance of social connection to health, including that **“the mortality impact of being socially disconnected is similar to that caused by smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day, and even greater than that associated with obesity and physical inactivity.”**⁴ What’s more, he writes:

“[T]he harmful consequences of a society that lacks social connection can be felt in our schools, workplaces, and civic organizations, where performance, productivity, and engagement are diminished.... Given the profound consequences of loneliness and isolation, we have an opportunity, and an obligation, to make the same investments in addressing social connection that we have made in addressing tobacco use, obesity, and the addiction crisis.... **[Thus,] we are called to build a movement to mend the social fabric of our nation [that] will take all of us.**”

Research shows that the arts uniquely “provide a recognized way of reducing loneliness and social isolation, particularly among people living in rural or disadvantaged areas.”⁵ Additionally, youth who participate in arts and culture are less likely to engage in antisocial and criminalized behavior.⁶ The arts also help to improve individual physical and mental health, significantly reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease, reducing inpatient care and hospital stays⁷ and offering health benefits comparable to weekly exercise among older adults.⁸ A World Health Organization report of evidence from over 3000 studies identified a major role for the arts in the prevention of ill health, promotion of health, and management and treatment of illness across the lifespan.⁹



Youth who participate in arts and culture are less likely to engage in antisocial and criminalized behavior



Likewise, there are health implications in all that cities do.

When we speak of health, we are referring to “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease.”¹⁰ From deciding whether to permit a new factory in town, to conducting code inspections of rental properties, to the speed with which a new small business receives guidance and assistance – **all local decisions and processes that affect economic, environmental, and social outcomes also affect community health.** Ultimately, the end goal of local government – to provide efficient services and effective problem resolution – is inextricably linked to community health. **Better, more effective city engagement and services lead to healthier communities, and more collaborative government leads to more effective cities. Artists can be skilled collaborators in this process** – helping governments reach their goals of creating more effective, responsive departments that bring about healthier, more resilient communities.

To achieve true health and wellbeing in communities, trust is essential; every interaction with local government is an opportunity for public trust in government to be built or worn away. Local government’s ability to problem solve, build coalitions, and engage the public improves trust and collaboration, and downstream can strengthen community health.



There is proof that downstream outcomes can include improved health at the individual and population levels.

What’s the Return on Investment (ROI)?

This guide is not asking you to take on something new that is disconnected from what you’re already doing, but rather saying these approaches will help you achieve the outcomes you are currently working towards more efficiently, effectively, and equitably. These upstream investments of resources and labor are worth it; there is proof that downstream outcomes can include improved health at the individual and population levels. It can also lead to new structural opportunities for cross-agency and cross-departmental collaboration that will last beyond your project.

A Note on the Importance of Creative Process

When you talk about art with someone whose daily life or work is not in the arts, most people generally think only of the things artists make: the performance, the concert, the gallery exhibit, the book, the installation. But they often don't think of the process skills, or the tools, that artists have accumulated and developed over a lifetime of making. **The assets that allow artists to create and produce artworks can also be used collaboratively in a variety of community contexts to produce meaningful change.**

As an example, some artists spend years learning how to bring people with different ideas and visions together in pursuit of a shared vision, on a timeline, with imagination and clarity. That skill isn't only useful in a studio or rehearsal room. It's also useful when cities are trying to solve problems with residents.

This guide seeks to amplify how both arts experiences and artistic process can improve wellbeing. Local artists of many different disciplines can be powerful contributors to the work of building healthy and equitable communities. So whether you're employing an artist in a city department or funding local artists to engage with the community, **artists are an investment for cities looking to improve resident health.** As you read this guide, we invite you to consider artists as both imaginative producers and as process designers. They are your community experts; they are your consultants. They are collaborators who can help co-imagine futures with communities, not just for communities.



Public art can be so much more than a mural. Sustained artist partnerships within municipal and quasi-governmental agencies can be opportunities for practitioners to experiment with new forms and creative processes that yield surprising material outcomes and new social formations, both within government and without.”

DR. MICAH SALKIND
Deputy Director
*Department of Art, Culture, and
Tourism, Providence, RI*





How to Use this Resource

This resource is for city leaders, those working in local government, advocates for the arts, and artists with a civic practice. It is intended to be a starting point for local governments to partner with artists to work towards equitable outcomes. The guide is organized according to three common practices of local governments: coalition building, public engagement, and problem-solving. These are practices through which cities can create equitable community outcomes – all which can benefit from the involvement of artists within cross-sector, collaborative approaches.



This guide is: a document to help city leaders translate goals, processes, and work structures across cross-sector partners (specifically partners within local government, health, and the arts). It will help you identify **1)** the lens through which you enter partnerships; **2)** how to create roles for artists within your team; **3)** budgetary considerations and best practices; and **4)** how to think creatively about process.



This guide is not: a comprehensive “how-to” for every step in the process of partnership. Resources for more exploration are available at the end of this guide.



Translation Tool Notes

Throughout the guide you will also find “translation tool notes” from arts and culture workers. The notes will share tips and best practices for engaging with their sector. When we use the word “translation,” we mean the work of finding a shared language across fields and disciplines, such as from the arts to public health or from housing to education. Translation is particularly helpful in building bridges of meaning and understanding, so that unlikely collaborators can work effectively and with ease. Here are some examples:



TRANSLATION TOOL

Creative process is not always linear. Be prepared to embrace uncertainty and risk at times. Be clear about expectations and timelines for deliverables at the beginning.



TRANSLATION TOOL

Discovery conversations are often unpaid, yet valuable time for laying a foundation of how a collaboration will manifest. Be mindful of an artist’s time and the compensation associated with the time provided. Limit discovery conversations and ensure compensation begins as soon as possible.



TRANSLATION TOOL

Creative process, translation, and building a shared culture takes time. Don’t be discouraged by miscommunications or collaboration challenges at the beginning. Use them as opportunities to renew clarity, increase trust, and strengthen relationships.

Key Terms

Co-design: Shared decision-making on all creative and authorial choices; a recognition that agreed-upon goals may evolve, but all parties have equal say in that evolution.

Iterative: The nature of a working process that allows itself to be responsive and emergent, seeing change not as a set-back or challenge but as a natural part of moving forward; incorporating change in response to feedback.

Discovery potential: An assessment of how an institution or system is or is not prepared for discovery, iteration and change; examines habits, structures, regulations, and temperament to anticipate challenges and opportunities.

Artists: Individuals who use their imagination to create something original, regardless of the medium or purpose. Artists may also aspire to sustain themselves through their practice and continue it over time.

Cultural workers: Individuals (artists, creatives, designers, culture bearers) who use their creative skills and process tools to collaborate in arts and non-arts settings for a variety of reasons.

Culture bearers: Individuals who practice and preserve cultural art forms, beliefs, and traditions, often through intergenerational lifeways. Culture bearers often share their practices with youth and across communities.



Practice 1:

Public Engagement

Local government works hard to build and maintain a healthy, responsive relationship with its residents. Municipal staff know that the more trusting their relationship, the more successfully they can serve every member of their community. The cornerstone of that relationship is a city's ongoing public engagement efforts.



As skilled connectors, translators, and messengers, artists not only bring community together through the creative projects they lead, but they can also help bridge relationships between residents and elected officials, increasing public and municipal understanding of one another.

Artists are designing and leading some of our nation's most innovative and effective public engagement campaigns.

Whether the desired outcome is community input for a strategic plan or a deeper municipal connection with historically underserved populations, artists are building relationships and civic imagination in cities large and small.



CASE STUDY: RHINELANDER, WI



POPULATION:

Appx. 8,000

NATURE OF PARTNERSHIP

City government contracted with local arts organization via Memorandum of Understanding (MOU); artists contracted through community-based arts organization.

FUNDING

City and philanthropic, directly to the community-based organization (CBO).

Funding Level: -20,000 for initial study, \$100,000+ for total project

HEALTH GOAL

Reduce social isolation and increase social connection.

PROGRAM GOAL

Reduce stigma around mental illness.
Uplift youth working on suicide prevention.
Create youth development opportunities.

At the urging of teenagers and young adults in 2021, the City of Rhinelander, Wisconsin partnered with local arts organization ArtStart to **reduce social isolation and improve community mental health by focusing on opportunities for youth development and social connection**. Specifically, the youth – a skateboarding group called Over It! – asked for the city to develop a new skatepark. ArtStart engaged Over It! and provided professional development and mentorship as the youth clarified their goal and began to seek community support.

The City, the youth group Over It!, and ArtStart partnered to conduct a feasibility study and public engagement for the new skatepark. ArtStart entered into an MOU with the City of Rhinelander to lead the engagement process. **ArtStart was responsible for:**

- ◆ Forming a steering committee for the skatepark project
- ◆ Conducting three community listening sessions to evaluate community need
- ◆ Collecting data regarding community opinions and needs (community survey)
- ◆ Creating pop-up skateparks for community engagement and to test potential permanent skatepark locations
- ◆ Identifying pros and cons for the proposed skatepark sites
- ◆ Supporting Over It! in their organizational development
- ◆ Identifying opportunities for funding and project sustainability

ArtStart also formed a Mental Health Steering Committee which included local officials, parents, mental and public health professionals, and community members.

TRANSLATION TOOL

Establish “community agreements” early and revisit often to ensure the process has a foundation of agreed-upon guidelines on how communication will happen, how challenges will be addressed, and how the groups would like to equitably share responsibilities.



Elements of Success

Partnership from the city was led by an Alderperson on the City Council. Community engagement and project elements were carried out by ArtStart, while the city moved forward site studies and developer contracting for the skatepark in consultation with ArtStart and the steering committee.

- ◆ The City of Rhinelander and ArtStart formalized their relationship and working expectations through an MOU, which was drafted jointly.
- ◆ The partners identified types of community engagement activities (community listening sessions, pop-up skate parks, etc.), but allowed flexibility as to how they would be carried out.
- ◆ Funding for the community engagement activities was obtained through grants from arts philanthropies. The total cost of the work provided by ArtStart was estimated to be \$22,000, with two staff compensated at about \$40 per hour¹¹ for 124 hours of work. The budget for the skatepark is still in development, but fundraising efforts will be supported by the city and ArtStart.

Leaning on community organizations like ArtStart, with existing relationships with those most affected (in this case, youth), is an effective method for bringing the affected population into project decision-making within local government.

ArtStart successfully designed an arts-based engagement process that centered the affected youth, incorporated their opinions, and involved them in every step of the process. The result was not only a skatepark that will provide more opportunities for social cohesion, but a process that built community connection along the way and demonstrated the power of the arts to activate populations, places, civic imagination, and public dialogue.





PRACTICE CONSIDERATION

The Power of Relationships

With a population of about 8,000 people, the City of Rhinelander operates with limited staff. In small cities, projects like the skatepark are undertaken with the support of community organizations like ArtStart holding the bulk of the programmatic and personnel needs. The skatepark project gained traction because of existing relationships within the community and due to the ability of the city council to productively work together. Staff turnover within the city at times slowed down the administrative pieces of the project, but the vision shared by the community and the city council kept the project moving forward. City ways of working, as defined by existing policy, benefited from a deeper attention to relationship, iteration, and co-design on this project.

While no new city policies came out of this work, it is worthwhile to note the commitment shown to the project by the city council, based on a shared vision for community improvement. Using city general funds, the council paid for ArtStart to conduct the feasibility study and to hire a designer and engineer to provide further expertise. The MOU between the city and ArtStart can be found in Resources for Further Learning at the end of this guide.



TRANSLATION TOOL

“My takeaway from all this is you absolutely need either an organization or a paid position to liaise with the artist(s) who can advocate on their behalf and for the projects. While the city and council are supportive, they have so much on their plates that art can be lower on their priority list and needs an advocate. That art liaison also needs to be experienced in the processes and politics of working with local government. In my case, I had experience with public art consulting at my former job.”

MELINDA CHILDS, ArtStart, Rhinelander, WI

CASE STUDY: PROVIDENCE, RI



POPULATION: Appx. 189,500

Carroll Tower: Appx. 200

Chad Brown: Appx. 1000

NATURE OF PARTNERSHIP

Intra-departmental coordination within local government; quasi-governmental partner; artists-in-residence.

FUNDING

Philanthropic, directly to City; American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF).

Funding Level: ~\$300,000 (additional \$300,000 for CHW funding)

HEALTH GOAL

- Reduce social isolation.
- Enhance social cohesion.
- Public engagement.
- Beautification through the arts.

PROGRAM GOAL

- Enhance resident connectedness and support post COVID-19.
- Understand resident needs, experience, and wellness goals.
- Advance goals for Providence's 2031 Cultural Plan, particularly those at intersection of Art and Wellbeing.

In response to ONOP and the NLC's [Improving Community Health and Resilience through the Arts RFP](#), the City of Providence's Department of Housing and Human Services (HHS), Department of Arts, Culture, and Tourism (ACT), and the Providence Housing Authority (PHA) partnered to embed artists and Community Health Workers into PHA sites to **improve public engagement, social connection, and wellbeing through the arts**. The City additionally leveraged their American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) to support this initiative. ARPA SLFRF funds, made directly to every city, town and village in the United States, supported municipalities in their response and recovery from COVID-19, as well as provided a once-in-a-generation opportunity to direct flexible funding towards local public health.¹²

Through a rigorous open call selection process guided by resident input, the Department of Housing and Human Services (formerly the Healthy Communities Office) identified two artists to operate in residence at two PHA sites: elder-only housing site Carroll Tower and Chad Brown, which houses youth and families.¹³ Residents were engaged as co-decision makers and designers at every level:

- ◆ To begin, PHA and HHS met with community members on a regular basis to learn about resident concerns and interests.
- ◆ Residents immediately identified visual arts (a mural) and theater as disciplines of interest.
- ◆ Residents were deeply involved in the artist selection process, from developing application questions to participating in the final review. This was carried out by a program manager within the Department of Housing and Human Services, in partnership with a resident coordinator at PHA.
- ◆ Selected artists-in-residence provided weekly arts classes, increasing resident wellness and social connection, and later co-designing with residents a final artistic project that brought in the surrounding Providence communities.
- ◆ Through this partnership, the City of Providence was able to meet its ARPA objective of reaching the communities most isolated and hardest hit by COVID-19, bringing them back into the “public square” and reviving social connection and wellbeing.



American Rescue Plan Act

ARPA SLFRF funds, made directly to every city, town and village in the United States, supported municipalities in their response and recovery from COVID-19, as well as provided a once-in-a-generation opportunity to direct flexible funding towards local public health



Community Mapmakers Groups

were local community advisory groups created at the invitation of the Arts for EveryBody initiative. Named after specialists who guide exploration, Mapmakers were enlisted as experts in the local context to help chart the project's path forward, providing strategic input on research topics, methods, questions, and priorities, as well as working alongside the project site team responsible for coordinating activities and advocating for the needs of the community.

At the core of the Providence initiative were two community advisory groups (known within the ONOP cohort as Community Mapmakers Groups). Both the Carroll Tower and Chad Brown housing sites had a group consisting of 6-12 individuals. These groups met regularly to engage in art activities that identified and addressed the distinct needs of each community. From Medicaid redetermination requirements to wellness information addressing burnout, stress and anxiety, these groups worked together to address the impacts of COVID-19 on the city's housing authority residents and their families. Additionally, Community Health Workers employed by PHA were present at each arts engagement, directly connecting residents to existing health and wellbeing resources and/or advocating for the need for additional resources.



Elements of Success

- ◆ Assessed resident health needs and connected them to resources, such as behavioral health specialists and more wellness opportunities through arts and culture.
- ◆ Reduced social isolation among residents via weekly interactions, creating strong bonds between residents and the city agencies involved.
- ◆ Centered resident voice and leadership and provided space for their agency as decision makers, building trust and promoting further public engagement.
- ◆ Enhanced efforts of PHA's Resident Services Department (which provides support such as workforce readiness, employment development, community safety, and substance use disorder prevention).
- ◆ Combined community health and the arts at every level – programmatically at PHA host sites and at the interagency level through collaborative program oversight.
- ◆ Maintained trust with residents through consistent and clear communication around activities, dates, and outcomes.
- ◆ Deepened existing, interagency collaborations between the Department of Arts, Culture, and Tourism, the Department of Housing and Human Services, and Providence Public Housing Authority.

This City of Providence project is an example of how the arts can foster greater social connection, healing, and beauty on the other side of community-wide loss, in this case from the COVID-19 pandemic and local gun violence. It's also an example of how the arts can help to create new pathways of collaboration between those who are impacted by our systems and those who create (and manage) them. As natural connectors and translators, artists can be called upon not only as transformers of public space, but as effective facilitators of civic space, helping to build stronger relationships and trust between city agencies and their residents.



 **ADVOCACY POINT**

“Art-making is an easy way to be in creative space together; to dismantle traditional boundaries [in a way] that support[s] knowledge sharing and expedites solutions.”

Dr. Micah Salkind, Providence, RI

 **TRANSLATION TOOL****Collaborating with artists:**

Be clear on what type of artist you’re looking to engage and what makes for a strong “fit” with the population you’re working to serve. Some artists or disciplines may require more experimentation, while others may be more concrete in nature. Be clear about what you can and cannot support in the beginning, and be sure to include this information in your call or application.

Communicating with staff:

“When planning a collaboration with an artist, be as clear as possible with city staff who are likely to be brought into the work. What is the ask of their time? What is the priority of this project versus their other responsibilities? What is the benefit to working in a different way? There are so many staff implicated when we do a project like this, and they don’t always feel like they have consent.” - Dr. Micah Salkind, Providence, RI

Coordinating arts engagement across all partners:

“Start by getting to know the community you are working with. Meet with them consistently - without rushing - and listen to understand their needs and perspectives. Once you know what times work best for all parties involved, create a schedule of activities before any work is performed. Remain flexible but insist, when possible, on a regular day and time of the week. It helps all parties remember and makes it easy to promote. When coordinating with staff, artists, and residents, make sure to use multiple forms of communication. Put it in writing, say it verbally, and confirm the understood takeaways are the same for everyone. Don’t assume!” - Sussy Santana, Project Coordinator; former Arts & Health Program Manager, Department of Housing and Human Services, Providence, RI



POLICY CONSIDERATION

Cities may find it complex to hire artists for facilitation work because of policies requiring that contracts over a certain compensation level be put out for open bid. These policies are often in place to ensure equitable access to municipal opportunities.

Yet, the city may have developed a project in dialogue with a specific artist or arts organization who is the obvious choice for collaboration and the contract. To approach this challenge:

- ◆ Break down the project into smaller tasks that each can be contracted for smaller fees.
- ◆ Bid it out on a timeline that does not compromise the work and trajectory you may have already begun, and make certain any artists you are already co-designing with have ample support to put in a strong application.
 - Work with a local arts agency / small business association to support potential applicants.

The City of Providence navigates these realities with a two-step RFQ to RFP process. Providence benefits from a state ordinance that allows them to go outside of the traditional bidding process to procure public art services. The city also has its own policy to ensure that processes are equitable.

1. Applying artists submit qualifications or resumes before taking time to prepare for an interview. Artists are paid a design fee for a final proposal.
2. All final selections are made by an Art Selection Panel and approved by an appointed City Commission that meets per state guidelines which require open meetings for these decisions.





Public Engagement CHECKLIST

This worksheet is geared towards building a community engagement process that is **developed in partnership** with an artist(s).

PHASE 1: Establishing Structure

- Identify the goals of engaging the community for this project, and what kind of information you are interested in learning and/or communicating.
 - Are you hoping for qualitative or quantitative data, or both? Do you have any specific metrics in mind?
- Identify policy, funding, communications, or relationship **constraints** that the community engagement process needs to be responsive to.
 - **What is your budget for engaging an artist(s)?** How much can you offer for both planning time AND implementation?
 - **What is the most flexible compensation arrangement for your artist(s)?** Can they be a contractor or part-time employee? What is the length of engagement from planning to presenting findings? *Consult city procurement policy to understand if you will need to put this opportunity out for bid, and have exploratory conversations with municipal general council if necessary.*
 - **Can you pay community members for their participation?** Can the activities only occur during certain hours? Can you offer food at events? Can you offer childcare for attendees? Can you offer assistance with transportation to events for attendees?

PHASE 2: Scope of Work

- Approach an artist or arts organization and discuss the possibility of collaborating on public engagement. Based on the identified constraints and areas of flexibility, openly discuss goals and possible challenges, timeline, and compensation.
- Identify programmatic considerations.
 - Are you open to a variety of ways an artist might act as a convener/gatherer, or are you looking for an artist to creatively facilitate events that you plan and market?
 - Where and when do residents already spend time, and does that overlap with an artist's practice/set of existing relationships?

- With the artist, co-develop a set of goals and desired outcomes for the collaborative work, and clarify the artist's / arts organization's responsibilities within that scope of work.
 - Define where on the [Spectrum of Public Participation or Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership](#) (or a similar tool) this engagement strategy falls.
 - What are you aiming for, and how does that define what your process looks like?
 - Consider how this process can help build longer-term relationships between local government and community members. *For example: how will the artist help build relationships between government staff / officials and community members? Does this work live within one city department or multiple? How will city leadership be involved?*
- Build a contract for the work that the artist or arts organization will do that includes:
 - A timeline that allows for iteration as the process evolves.
 - A clear, timely, and equitable payment structure that pays the artist for the preliminary planning and co-design work necessary to create the public engagement strategy.

□ PHASE 3: Management Practices

- Prepare collaborators for some distinctive aspects of working with an artist in this way by widely sharing (across departments and partner organizations) the fact that the work is happening, and by sharing examples (such as the ones in this resource) of successful artist-led municipal projects. *Note that in this work, iteration and process will be centered alongside the more accustomed municipal priority of results-driven projects.*
- Once contracts are signed, engage in an orientation or onboarding for the artist(s). A creative, iterative process requires discussions on communication, project and partnership expectations, shared values, and goals.
- Build into your process consistent check-ins between your internal leadership team and the artist(s) with whom you are partnering. Work towards transparency of communication and a shared commitment to building a practice of feedback and co-design. Refer often to your previously agreed upon shared values and goals, and revisit your timeline and action steps with clarity and openness.



Practice 2:

Coalition Building for Collective Impact

The term “collective impact” was coined in 2011 in a Stanford Social Innovation Review article in which the authors describe a process where multiple stakeholders in a community all contribute to a shared goal by integrating different strategies as part of an agreed-upon and overarching plan of action.¹⁴ Collective impact as a framework requires local government to work in coalition with community members, organizations, and associations. It also offers opportunities for cross-sector collaboration and meaningful outcomes at the systems and individual levels.



CASE STUDY: UTICA, MS



POPULATION:

Appx. 966

NATURE OF PARTNERSHIP

Coalition between CBO and town leadership; artist engaged as cultural strategist.

FUNDING

Philanthropic, directly to CBO; CBO direct contribution.

Funding Level: \$250,000

HEALTH GOAL

Healthy food access.

Business development and economic self-determination.

Build capacity of the CBO and County public health system to originate and collaborate on local Utica initiatives.

PROGRAM GOAL

Establish and fortify working relationships among community, key stakeholders, businesses, and sectors.

Drive access to healthy foods and sustainable growth within the town.



The loss of the Sunflower Grocery in Utica removed an anchor for community connectivity and has increased the time and money required to secure groceries. This has been an especially acute challenge for elderly residents and others on fixed incomes.

DANIEL JOHNSON
Artist-in-Residence and Cultural Strategist
Sipp Culture

Artist-led processes and projects can act as the invitation and the glue for coalition-building and collective impact efforts. Artists bring deep experience as listeners, as synthesizers, and as communicators. They also often bring with them deep, authentic relationships with the very residents necessary for successful group efforts. Creative Placemaking, a field full of municipal and artist collaborations over the last decade, has demonstrated, again and again, the powerful potential of placing culture at the epicenter of large, complex initiatives tackling community challenges and working towards community visions.

In Utica, Mississippi, **the Mississippi Center for Cultural Production** (*Sipp Culture*), the *Town of Utica*, *Jackson Hinds Comprehensive Health Center*, the local school system, the local library, independent artists, and a **Community Advisory Group (CAG)** came together **to address a lack of access to healthy foods as well as the need to increase utilization of businesses, services, and public spaces.** Due to the small and dwindling population, Utica was left without a grocery store in 2014, forcing residents to drive tens of miles for grocery staples and supplies. *Sipp Culture*, a highly respected community development organization working on food security, emerged as the driver of efforts to organize community members and local institutions. *Sipp Culture* first completed a research project in partnership with *Imagining America, Equitable Food Futures*. This mixed methods community participatory action research study was designed to analyze arts-based descriptive and survey research and better understand the community assets in Utica. This research, as well as *Sipp Culture*'s deeply rooted position within the community, made *Sipp Culture* a logical key player to drive the work of addressing the major food access challenges facing the Utica community.



TRANSLATION TOOL

“Move at the speed of trust.”

adrienne maree brown

The values of how you work will exist in what you create. Don't skip equity in the process of pursuing equitable outcomes.

Elements of Success:

- ◆ As a small town with limited resources, this strategic artistic engagement supported alignment between cross-sector entities and facilitated a clear community vision towards community food initiatives
- ◆ Local community members from a variety of sectors were empowered through participation in the Community Advisory Group (CAG), also known in the ONOP cohort as a Mapmakers Group.
- ◆ A Sipp Culture artist-in-residence was identified as a “cultural strategist” to support and facilitate arts-based stakeholder engagement.
- ◆ Clear identification of the root problem enabled residents to build community-driven solutions for sustainable fresh food access.
- ◆ Community members identified and achieved the core goal of creating sustainable working relationships to drive major desired outcomes.
- ◆ Early opportunities for collaboration between artists and Jackson Hinds Comprehensive Health Clinic helped to identify clinic and community needs, such as wayfinding for greater clinic access.

As community needs became clearer, two sustainable initiatives emerged from the CAG, including the Utica Food Club and Homegrown Utica Fest Committee.



TRANSLATION TOOL

“The participation by local officials in the Food Club and other initiatives brings institutional knowledge of town leaders into these conversations while they are unfolding and creates opportunities for collaboration where the town can be of assistance.”

daniel johnson, Artist-in-Residence and Cultural Strategist, Sipp Culture, Utica, MS



Downtown Utica, Mississippi



The Town of Utica is a great example of a small town creating collective power through clear leadership, shared visioning, and local empowerment. The artistic practice of this group is both literal, with examples like expressions of culinary and visual arts, and figurative, through the creative weaving of a strong coalition with a pattern of engagement from a multigenerational, multisector, focused, and passionate community. Initiatives such as the Food Club and Homegrown Utica Fest have become the key mechanisms to creating greater food access, artistic engagement, and healthy community connection in Utica, providing the town government with sustainable collaborators to support local goals.



Coalition Building CHECKLIST

This worksheet is geared towards developing and deepening relationships with partner organizations and individuals around a common issue and collective impact. The artist serves to facilitate this process.

PHASE 1: Establishing Structure

- Identify the challenge or vision that you hope to build coalition and collective impact around.
- Determine if an artist or arts organization is already doing some of this work and is an appropriate part of the coalition to be built, or if you are seeking an artist to help build a coalition as an outside consultant / collaborator.

PHASE 2: Scope of Work

- Approach the artist or arts organization and discuss the possibility of collaborating on coalition building.
 - Identifying the right artist or arts organization to work with involves searching for a potential partner with some blend of the following core capacities or experiences: **1)** they have existing relationships with residents and issue-aligned community partners; **2)** they have a collaborative creative practice that shows evidence of work with community members who don't self-identify as artists; **3)** they are experienced in and demonstrate a willingness to co-design, iterate, and operate through ongoing dialogue.

- Co-develop a set of goals and desired outcomes for the collaborative work, and clarify the artist or arts organization's responsibilities within that scope of work.
- Based on procurement needs, build a contract for the work that the artist or arts organization will do that includes:
 - **A timeline that allows for iteration as the process evolves.** What is your budget for engaging an artist(s)? How much can you offer for both planning time AND implementation?
 - **A clear, timely, and equitable payment structure.** What is the most flexible compensation arrangement for your artist(s)? Can they be a contractor or part-time employee? What is the length of engagement from planning to presenting findings?

□ PHASE 3: Management Practices

- Socialize the project activities across departments / organizations in advance, seeking input on who to introduce the artist to within each department. Share examples (such as the ones in this resource) of successful artist-led municipal and coalition-building projects. *Note that in this work, iteration and process will be centered alongside results-driven projects.*
- Once contracts are signed, engage in an orientation or onboarding for the artist(s). Any collaborative process requires socialization of new people into existing teams and organizational culture. A creative, iterative process requires discussions on communication, project and partnership expectations, shared values, and goals.
- Build into your process consistent check-ins between your internal leadership team and the artist(s) with whom you are partnering and the community you seek to serve. Work towards transparency of communication and a shared commitment to building a practice of feedback and co-design. Refer often to your previously agreed upon shared values and goals, and revisit your timeline and action steps with clarity and openness.



Practice 3:

Problem-Solving

When faced with a municipal problem, municipal staff often turn to previously tested solutions. Even when a problem seems new or highly complex, time is limited and efficiency is prized. Systems rely on habits and well-trodden paths to continue functioning. Artists can bring new ideas and practices to the work of problem-solving. Whether they are producing creative work in community or collaborating with municipal workers on creative process, they can provide the fuel and space for the key to tackling a challenge: discovery. They can facilitate a collision of ideas and perspectives, produce new approaches and strategies, and sometimes, re-imagine obstacles into crucial opportunities for impact.



CASE STUDY: CHICAGO, IL



POPULATION:

Appx. 2.6 million

NATURE OF PARTNERSHIP

Cross-sector collaboration between government agencies and City College; artist apprenticeships.

FUNDING

The pilot is primarily funded through ARPA SLFRF, through which all funds will be spent by 2026.

Funding Level: \$705,000 (ARPA);
\$357,750 (additional funding)

Total Funding Level: \$1,062,750

HEALTH GOAL

Expand the mental health workforce.

Expand mental health options for clients of city-run mental health clinics through arts engagement opportunities.

Expand knowledge of arts participation as a health behavior.

PROGRAM GOAL

Build the health workforce.

Validate artists within the workforce.

Expand artist capacity in the health sector.

Facing needs in the behavioral health and workforce development fields across Chicago, the city's **Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE)**, **Department of Public Health (CDPH)**, and **City Colleges Chicago** partnered for the first time to launch the [Chicago Arts & Health Pilot for Creative Workers](#). The program recruited and employed 10 Chicago artists of varied disciplines who received training and certification to be Community Health Workers through City Colleges Chicago, and who were then employed in five mental health clinics operated by DPH located in the West, South, and Northwest side neighborhoods of the city. Programming offered through this pilot is called [Healing Arts Chicago](#).

Artists participating in Healing Arts Chicago were apprentices with the city and considered part of the municipal workforce. Artists were selected via a competitive application and interview process. Local arts and culture and community health partners helped promote the opportunity. The application and selection process was managed by DCASE, and CDPH and City Colleges participated in the selection process. **Apprentices had a defined scope of work and deliverables.** The full program structure and details can be found on the [program website](#).



Elements of Success

- ◆ Relationships between DCASE and CDPH have deepened, and they continue to look for ways to partner, including but not limited to extending this pilot into an ongoing, growing program.
- ◆ DCASE and CDPH exhibited patience and resilience as they worked through funding and bureaucratic delays.
- ◆ As part of the program model, DCASE and CDPH hired a cohort coordinator and created an advisory council to support the pilot program's development and implementation as well as to provide support to the artist cohort.

Initial Outcomes

- ◆ Ten Chicago artists have new skills and are contributing to the health needs of Chicago area residents in historically underserved neighborhoods, helping to increase the scale of the “wellness workforce” across Chicago.
- ◆ Behavioral health clinicians are seeing up-close the impact artists can have on health at an individual and community level.
- ◆ Stakeholders in Chicago's arts and culture communities are hearing the story of this program and expanding their notions of how creative practices can be deployed in new contexts and within new employment opportunities.



Case Study Detail: Artist Scope of Work

Scope of work

- ◆ Completion of a yearlong community health worker certification program including a Department of Labor registered apprenticeship
- ◆ Apprenticeship placement at one of five city mental health clinics
- ◆ Community engagement to share mental health and wellness resources with residents
- ◆ Participation in planning, research, evaluation, and execution of collective creative response as part of the ONOP cohort
- ◆ Compliance with data collection, documentation, and reporting requirements

Deliverables

- ◆ Completion of community health worker certification through City Colleges plus 2000 hours for additional apprenticeship credential
- ◆ Preparation and implementation of arts service plans with city clinicians as part of field placement
- ◆ Attendance at monthly cohort and site team meetings during placement
- ◆ Documentation and reporting for ARPA compliance

Chicago residents need more behavioral health services and Chicago artists need more publicly legible, structurally supported employment opportunities.

The thinking that led to Healing Arts Chicago demonstrates a powerful model of cross-sector collaboration. Senior-level staff in DCASE, CDPH, and City Colleges designed and managed this collaboration, working together at each phase from ideation to implementation. As ‘social prescribing’ gains traction within governmental, healthcare and philanthropic sectors, Chicago’s cross-agency, neighborhood focused work on this project becomes a national exemplar of what’s possible, laying the groundwork for new ideas and possibilities.



Problem-Solving **CHECKLIST**

This worksheet is geared towards developing and deepening the capacities and system flexibilities necessary to support artists bringing new ideas and practices to the work of problem-solving in municipal settings.

PHASE 1: Establishing Structure

- Identify the challenge or problem that you hope to address. Does the issue:
 - Need different people at the table?
 - Need more listening?
 - Need generative ideation?
 - Have a clear, understood need to move forward into problem-solving, or is it in need of system mapping and diagnosis?
- Use the above guiding questions to draft a role or area of collaboration for an artist or arts organization.
- Discuss the level of autonomy and decision-making power the artist will need to successfully fulfill their role. Set them up for success by:
 - Empowering the artist to engage in a discovery process, recognizing that this may point to the need to redefine the problem and shift approaches.
 - Planning feedback mechanisms to allow for adjustments in process or policy based on artist feedback.



□ PHASE 2: Scope of Work

- Approach an artist or arts organization and discuss the possibility of collaborating for problem solving.
- With the artist, co-develop a set of goals and desired outcomes for the collaborative work, and clarify the artist's or arts organization's responsibilities within that scope of work.
- Build a contract for the work that an artist or arts organization will do that includes:
 - **A timeline that allows for iteration as the process evolves.** What is your budget for engaging an artist(s)? What is the timeline of the issue at hand? How can you plan to make space for multiple approaches or strategies?
 - **A clear, timely, and equitable payment structure.** What is the most flexible compensation arrangement for your artist(s)? Can they be a contractor or part-time employee?



□ PHASE 3: Management Practices

- Prepare collaborators for some distinctive aspects of working with an artist in this way by widely sharing (across departments and partner organizations) the fact that the work is happening, and by sharing examples (such as the ones in this resource) of successful artist-led municipal projects. *Note that in this work, iteration and process will be centered alongside the more accustomed municipal priority of results-driven projects.*
- Once contracts are signed, engage in an orientation or onboarding for the artist(s). A creative, iterative process requires discussions on communication, project and partnership expectations, shared values, and goals.
- Build into your process consistent check-ins between your internal leadership team and the artist(s) with whom you are partnering. Work towards transparency of communication and a shared commitment to building a practice of feedback and co-design. Refer often to your previously agreed upon shared values and goals, and revisit your timeline and action steps with clarity and openness.





Common Challenges and Useful Strategies

for Addressing Them

Challenge:

Building a clear collaboration process

Potential Strategy:

Developing a co-design process with clear direction and momentum can be challenging, especially when managing multiple stakeholders and project partners. **It's important to take time at the beginning of a process to clarify roles, responsibilities, and shared objectives in order to build strong alignment and clear vision.** Consider using a [RACI matrix](#) as a resource to develop and document your decision-making model and clear steps forward. If working with artists, invite them into this process as early as possible. **Note:** as independent contractors, artists are often vulnerable within existing hierarchical structures. Discuss early on how you will share power and ensure your artist partners have an equitable voice in the room and equitable seat at the decision-making table. Consider revisiting the RACI matrix and other agreements throughout the process to ensure the agreed upon structures and values are being maintained by all collaborators.



Challenge:

Addressing translation gaps between sectors

Potential Strategy:

When working across sectors or with another agency, there may be gaps in your understanding of one another's way of working. Tensions from these gaps can take time away from your goals. **Anticipate these obstacles by developing shared values, practices, and desired outcomes at the outset.** Define a shared vocabulary, as different sectors may use different terms to describe their processes or practice. Review calendars and timelines pertaining to each entity to forecast the needs and shifts in organizational priorities throughout the year. Discuss your organizational capacities and risk tolerance. **Make time to return to these agreements and be open to reevaluation if necessary.**



Challenge:

Engaging historically underrepresented communities in public processes

Potential Strategy:

Partnering with community-based artists with a proven track record of engaging your desired community can be a useful resource when seeking to reach historically marginalized communities. Artists often have existing relationships and frameworks for engagement that can be leveraged by city agencies. They also are trusted community members who can translate key information and provide useful insights.

- ◆ **Grants:** In Gainesville, Florida, the Department of Parks and Recreation provided grants for local artists to [devise arts-based community listening workshops](#). These workshops were designed to collect initial data on what mattered to community members and to explore what potential solutions they'd want to see around the issue of youth gun violence.
- ◆ **Interactive tools:** BUILT is a [board game tool for creative community engagement](#). Designed by [Sojourn Theatre](#), the game was created as a civic dialogue project designed to bring residents and electeds together to address the challenges of housing, infrastructure, neighborhood cohesion, and equity in American cities.



Challenge:

“Where do we begin?”

Potential Strategy:

After clearly defining roles and responsibilities, develop a shared vision across your team, including desired outcomes. Be sure to include an assessment of your existing capacities, assets, and programs. Understand what is already working and successful. Identify the most urgent and manageable issue where quick wins can be clearly achieved. Don't be afraid to start small and target low-hanging fruit. Test your idea with a pilot.

Challenge:

Ensuring pay equity and equitable access for artists and arts organizations

Potential Strategy:

Often the procurement processes within city government can be an unintentional obstacle to equity. Make sure RFPs are shared broadly within your community to include arts organizations and independent artists that are commonly excluded. **Consider inviting an artist to co-develop your RFP and utilize them to help spread the word of your opportunity. In addition, clarify your funding structures and any limitations with your collaborators before you start.** Funding within local governments can be slow, and sometimes projects, materials, or work may be constrained by payment or procurement rules and timelines. This can present ethical concerns and equity issues when working with artists, who are commonly placed in working environments where pay is not prompt or who, as independent contractors, don't receive employee protections. Reimbursement models can additionally be particularly challenging for “gig workers.” Knowing your structural limitations, and communicating them transparently, can reveal creative solutions to support artists joining the project. For example, consider contracting with a partner organization who can house and distribute the funding to artists.

Challenge:

Navigating disruption

Potential Strategy:

Disruption can come in the form of staff turnover, administrative changes, policy shifts, or funding reallocation. Unforeseen distractions can make meeting your goals difficult. So, how do you ensure forward movement in the face of these challenges? How do you hold onto original intent and momentum?

- ◆ Track project goals and progress so that any work may be picked up again at a later date if necessary. (For example, you can use [arts-based methods](#) for process evaluation).
- ◆ Prepare. When possible, anticipate changes and challenges, and have solutions ready.
- ◆ Build relationships across departments and organizations not dependent on any single collaborator. Go deep, so change doesn't rupture possibility.
- ◆ Maintain clear, frequent, and timely communication.

It is important to acknowledge that failure, too, can be a disruption – one that often reveals necessary, helpful changes. In this way, failure can be generative for collaboration, and doesn't have to signal an ending. Failure can provide critical information on what needs to change, shift, or evolve in your next attempt. It can be an opportunity to reassess project goals and make adjustments.



Challenge:

Communicating “success”

Potential Strategy:

Communicating success can be critically important when developing new programs or initiatives, especially amidst slow wins or local reticence. Be sure to communicate what work is happening and why it’s important. Demonstrate public moments of success to build confidence that money is being spent in accountable ways and communicate the positive impact your work is having. Telling the story of your work as it’s happening may seem like an extra lift for your team – and it is – but it will pay off in the long run and is part of the work of developing greater trust, buy-in, and support from your internal and external partners.

Challenge:

Balancing creative process with the need for clear outcomes and timelines

Potential Strategy:

Working within new and innovative partnership space can bring with it a lot of discomfort. How do you balance room for discovery and expansion within rigid systems and structures? Additionally, artistic processes vary by artist and discipline; some are more traditional, while others are experimental. How do you balance different working styles and the varying levels of uncertainty they may bring? **Having clarity on your internal capacity, needs, and objectives can help determine the best fit for your partnership.** On the part of the city partner, flexibility and openness is also important. The artistic process inherently involves periods of not knowing. Factor in periods of discovery, experimentation, and group discussion into your timeline. In all things, clear communication and effective translation are key.



The artistic process inherently involves periods of not knowing. Factor in periods of discovery, experimentation, and group discussion into your timeline.



Where Do We Go From Here?

ITERATION. PATIENCE. TIME.
DISCOVERY. TRUST. SURPRISE.

This guide discusses the practices and benefits of a different sort of process - one focused on bringing creativity to building relationships and new ideas to serving your residents.

If you've come this far and you're feeling interested in the possibilities of working creatively (and with creatives) within your municipality, the patience that you demonstrate in relationship-building and co-design will pay off in terms of more equitable interactions with residents, more authentic public engagement, new partnerships across departments and agencies, and ultimately, more creative solutions and opportunities for bringing people together.





This guide presents innovative approaches to age-old challenges. We hope that as a result:

- ◆ You explore how your work can intersect with a community partner or a local artist
- ◆ You find a way to bring some creativity to the work that you're already doing
- ◆ When you personally have a cultural or artistic experience, you notice how it impacts your health and the health of the people around you

What do I say to people who aren't quite convinced to partner in this way?

This kind of work involves a kind of partnership that might be new to all of us. Just like any new practice, there's going to be a lot of learning, which means that the first time we do it, or the second, or the third, will not be as smooth as it will be after we have done it again. And again. But there will be a value-add from the beginning, both in terms of how we are learning to work together and in terms of simply bringing creativity and collaboration into spaces where they are not necessarily common. Good will occur. If we are intentional and attentive, we will practice, and we will grow stronger in our ability to do this kind of work. We may make some missteps, and there may be some moments that are challenging and messy. But if we're clear about our shared values, goals, and purpose, we'll be able to move forward, together, and our work will strengthen.



Just like any new practice, there's going to be a lot of learning



Resources

for Further Learning

[Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration](#)
(University of Florida and Artplace)

[Arts on Prescription: A Field Guide for US Communities](#)
(University of Florida)

[The Scenic Route: Guide to Arts, Culture, and Transportation](#)
(US Department of Transportation)

[Creative Placemaking Technical Assistance](#)
(National Endowment for the Arts)

[Creative Placemaking Research](#)
(Artplace America)

[Art & Creative Placemaking \(We-Making\) Repository](#)
(University of Florida)

- [We-Making Resources](#)

[Civic Imagination Stations Process Map](#)
(Rohd and Taylor)

[Centers for Disease Control Partnership Guide](#)
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)



Appendix

Sample City-CBO MOU

Feasibility of City Amenities Proposal

[CBO] Scope of Services Proposal to **[City]** and for facilitating a community feasibility study for a potential Skate Park in the **[City]**. This study will not include engineering or final design proposals or recommendations and will conclude after the presentation of the identified deliverables.

[CBO] is a 501c3 whose mission is **[mission]**.

The **[City]** is identified as the municipality in which the scope of services will be provided for.

[CBO] is uniquely qualified to offer these services as an arts and community development organization based out of **[City]**. Due to its collaborative nature, **[CBO]** has solid relationships with many potential partners and funders as well as contacts and connections across the region. In addition, **[CBO]** proposes to bring in subcontractors **[Artist 1]** and **[Artist 2]** (bios attached). **[Artist 1]** and **[Artist 2]** are both artists who have hands-on experience activating youth to participate in city design/build processes and community engagement practices.

[CBO] is approaching this project as a community connection space, infused with aesthetic and environmental components, public art, and activated programming for intergenerational audiences. These components are exciting and inspiring to our team and we have the expertise and network to inform this initial phase of identifying community need, initial and ongoing support and sustainability for future work.

The deliverables may include proposed amenities, dependent on information captured in the community discussion process. **[CBO]** agrees to perform this work initially and at the conclusion, determine future stages in which it makes organizational sense to be involved, with the identification of additional funds to support future work.

[CBO] will provide as part of this agreement the following deliverables:

- Form a steering committee that will guide the work of this agreement. The steering committee will consist of representatives of **[CBO]**, **[City]**, **[youth group]**, and community members.
- Facilitate 3 community wide listening sessions where we will gather data and feedback on the community need, components necessary, potential initial and ongoing funding sources and long-term options for collaborative partners.
- Create pop up skate park(s) to be used for place based community engagement sessions around town in parks and public space that are identified as possible future

locations.

- Support the **[youth group]** with resources, connections to other municipal skate parks and coordinate field trips and presentations related to the creation of skate parks and activated public plazas.
- An informal location assessment factoring potential skateable area, visibility, neighborhood qualities, and community feedback. This may include a list of perks and challenges about the proposed sites.
- Identify potential community partners where collaboration may exist
- Provide leads on possible initial funding sources based on community feedback gathered.
- Provide a list of multifunctional uses of the space including programming ideas generated by identified community partners and community desired uses expressed at listening sessions.
- Roughly outline the anticipated operating costs of like developments and recommendations on community organizations that may be engaged to move the initiative forward.
- Phase 2 recommendations on next steps based on captured information.
- A final report will be presented to the **[City Council]** and **[youth group]** with the deliverables identified above on or about **[date]** and conclude the work agreed upon in this agreement.

Proposed Estimated Timeline:

Month 1

Formation of Steering Committee (2 hr)
Steering Committee Meeting (3hr)
[Youth group] Committee Meeting (1hr)
Partner outreach (2 hrs)
Artist(s) onboarding (3 hrs)

Month 2

Community Listening Session 1 (information gathering) (8hr including prep and post)
Steering Committee Meeting (3hr)
[Youth group] Committee Meeting (1hr)
Site tour with Partners and **[City]** and other appropriate authorities (5hrs)
Artist(s) meet with **[youth group]** (presentation on work, introduction community engagement ideas, design exercises and brainstorm community engagement activities) (4 hrs)
Pop-up coordination (Obtain materials, tools, build space and trailer, and secure locations) (4 hrs)
Partner outreach (2 hrs)

Month 3

Community Listening Session 2 (information gathering) (8hrs including prep and post)
Steering Committee Meeting (3hr)
[Youth group] Committee Meeting (1hr)

Build Sessions for Pop Up Park (10+ hrs)
Partner outreach (2 hrs)

Month 4

Steering Committee Meeting (3hr)
[Youth group] Committee Meeting (1hr)
Pop Up Skate Park Events (2-3 events @ 2-3 hrs each) (8 hrs)
Partner outreach (2 hrs)

Month 5

Pop Up Skate Park Events (2-3 events @ 2-3 hrs each) (8 hrs)
Community Listening Session 3 (presentation of findings) (8 hrs including prep and post)
Steering Committee Meeting (3hr)
[Youth group] Committee Meeting (1hr)
Partner outreach (2 hrs)

Month 6

Compilation of research and recommendations for Phase 2 (20 hrs)
Steering Committee Meeting (3hr)
[Youth group] Committee Meeting (1hr)
Partner outreach (2 hrs)

Budget:

Service and staffing fees for **[CBO]** 2 person consulting team (124 hrs): \$10,000
Subcontractors (including mileage and lodging): \$6,500
Community Meetings & Materials: \$500
Field Trip Mileage and Speakers: \$2,000
Construction of Pop Up Skate Park and Insurance: \$3,500
Total: \$22,000



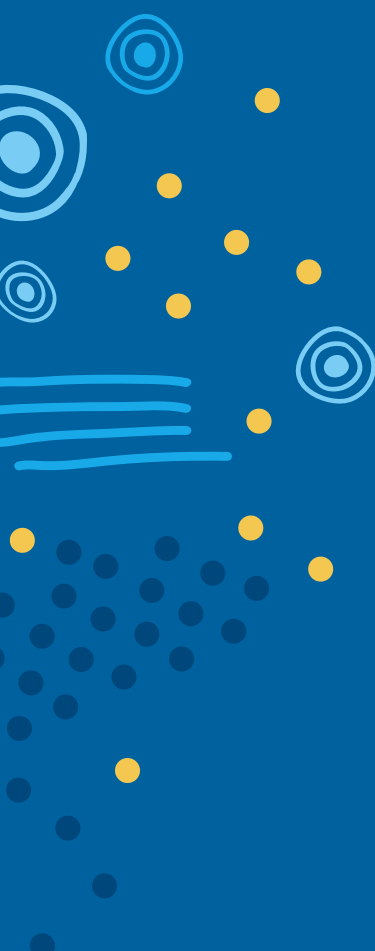
DOWNLOAD HERE
Sample city-CBO MOU



Endnotes

- 1 Learn more here: <https://www.oaklandfund.org/cultural-strategists-in-government-program>
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- 10 <https://www.who.int/about/governance/constitution>
- 11 The estimated hourly rate may vary depending on city size and the local average wage in your area. We suggest budgeting between \$50-\$100 per hour for similar work.
- 12 <https://www.nlc.org/article/2024/03/07/building-healthier-cities-through-public-health-investments-using-arpa-funds>
- 13 The City of Providence's open call process is available in their Art in City Life Plan (pages 46-48): https://artculturetourism.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/2018.09.21_Art-in-City-Life-Plan_Final2.pdf
- 14 Kania, J., & Kramer, M. (2011). Collective Impact. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 9(1), 36-41. <https://doi.org/10.48558/5900-KN19>





NLC NATIONAL
LEAGUE
OF CITIES

CITIES STRONG TOGETHER

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