

# Arts + Social Impact Explorer Fact Sheet

## ARTS + PLANNING

## IMPACT POINTS

### 20% MORE PARTICIPATION

Research shows that 20 percent of people who engaged in participatory arts felt differently about their rights after participating.<sup>1</sup>

### THE ARTS MAKE PEOPLE MORE AWARE OF THEIR RIGHTS AND THEIR COMMUNITY

A study in the United Kingdom found that 20 percent of people who engaged in participatory arts felt differently about their rights after participating.<sup>2</sup>

### COMMUNITY-ENGAGED DESIGN CREATES INCREASED OWNERSHIP

Arts-based community design processes make people feel more ownership over what happens. When people have a sense of ownership of the places they frequent, their communities become better places to live, work, and visit.<sup>3</sup>

### ARTS AND CULTURE BREAKS DOWN BARRIERS

According to the American Planning Association, integrating arts and culture into planning processes places community identity at the fore, engages participants more fully, and breaks down barriers to communication across demographic and socioeconomic lines.<sup>4</sup>

### ARTS PARTICIPATION UNITES GENERATIONS, REDUCES FEAR, AND EMPOWERS CITIZENS

Arts participation has a positive effect on social cohesion by bringing generations together, encouraging partnerships and intercultural understanding, reducing fear of crime, and fostering organizational skills. People report feeling more in control of their lives and more activated as citizens after participating in an arts and culture event.<sup>5</sup>

### THE ARTS FOSTER PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS TO STRENGTHEN INFRASTRUCTURE

In towns of all sizes, city councils and local government agencies often transcend traditional turfs and training specifically to foster arts-driven downtown revitalization.<sup>6</sup>

### ART EMPOWERS COMMUNITIES TO CREATIVELY IMAGINE THEIR INFRASTRUCTURE

Certain forms of public art can empower communities by opening up a dialogue and inviting critical as well as creative imagining to take place.<sup>7</sup>

## OVERVIEW

The arts can provide creative tools to help planning and urban design professionals engage with communities affected by their projects. Using storytelling, visual arts, and technology tools, community members can play a significant role in designing safe, beautiful, and useful spaces that reflect community needs and desires.

Collaborative planning toward a common goal helps communities develop a sense of social cohesion. Design processes that engage the community create ownership among residents. There is a significant correlation between how attached people feel to the place they live and GDP growth. And arts districts help retain vernacular culture, helping to arrest the homogenization that makes cities less livable.

All in all, integrating the arts into the planning of our spaces and places can make them more human, more accessible, and more innovative over time.

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# EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE

## Department of Play, Boston, MA



Department of Play creates temporary play zones in public spaces. Participants envision alternative futures, share experiences, and collaboratively create artifacts. It seeks to frame the city as a malleable, ongoing construction that any resident can experiment with and impact.

[deptofplay.com](http://deptofplay.com)  
[hello@deptofplay.com](mailto:hello@deptofplay.com)

**image:** Boxtopia, Codman Square, Boston, June 2015. Courtesy of Department of Play.

## GO TO 2040, Chicago, IL



GO TO 2040 is a regional transportation plan that was created with creative public engagement. Nearly 20,000 participants were

engaged through public workshops, online tools, kiosks, and fairs and festivals.

[cmap.illinois.gov/about/2040](http://cmap.illinois.gov/about/2040)  
[tgarritano@cmap.illinois.gov](mailto:tgarritano@cmap.illinois.gov)

**image:** Courtesy of Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP).

## Market Street Prototyping Festival, San Francisco, CA



The Festival believes in collaboration and experimentation and was born to make Market Street a more vibrant, connected destination.

The City has committed to redesigned sidewalks and Street Life Zones, which are reimaged and activated during the Festival.

[marketstreetprototyping.org](http://marketstreetprototyping.org)  
[info@marketstreetprototyping.org](mailto:info@marketstreetprototyping.org)

**image:** Common Ground prototype at MSPF 2016, Cloud Arch Studio, courtesy of Market Street Prototyping Festival.

## Imagine Fergus Falls, Fergus Falls, MN



This collaborative, community-wide planning effort, developed by Springboard for the Arts and a variety of local partners, re-envisioned a rural community through the arts.

<https://springboardforthearts.org/programs/imagine-fergus-falls/>  
[laura@springboardforthearts.org](mailto:laura@springboardforthearts.org)

**image:** courtesy of Springboard for the Arts

**top image:** Portal of Tomorrow. Transforming a neighborhood parking lot into a youth-led temporary play zone in, Fields Corner, Boston. January–June 2016. Courtesy of Department of Play.

### REFERENCES

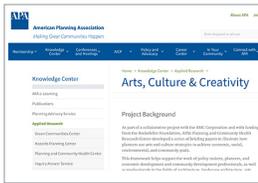
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# READING LIST

## American Planning Association Arts Briefing Papers



APA's Planning and Community Health Research Center has developed a series of briefing papers on how planners use strategies including arts and culture to achieve economic, social, environmental, and community goals.

[planning.org/research/arts](https://planning.org/research/arts)

## The Role of the Arts and Culture in Planning Practice



This is one of several briefing papers created by the APA's Planning and Community Health Research Center on how planners use arts and culture to achieve economic, social, environmental, and community goals.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/100909>

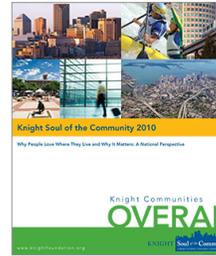
## How Creativity and Culture Can Contribute to Community Planning



This paper from the National Endowment for the Arts, written by Springboard for the Arts' Laura Zabel, explores different strategies and techniques for integrating the arts into planning.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/100975>

## Soul of the Community



Soul of the Community is a Knight Foundation study of 26 creative placemaking projects across the country that determine the factors that attach residents to their communities and the role of attachment to an area's economic growth and well-being.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/100974>

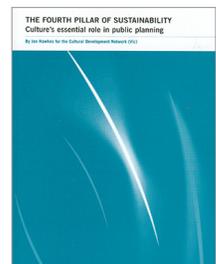
## Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods



The project reports on the importance of collective efficacy, or social cohesion, in the health of a neighborhood. The linked article specifically discusses arts-relevant results.

[pps.org/reference/artsprojects/](https://pps.org/reference/artsprojects/)

## The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: Culture's Essential Role in Public Planning



The Fourth Pillar provides a clear definition of culture, analyses its function within the emerging new planning paradigms, and proposes practical measures for the integration of a cultural perspective into the public sphere.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/84226>



# ORGANIZATIONS

## ArtPlace America

ArtPlace is a creative placemaking hub that includes public safety as one of its key areas of focus.

<http://www.artplaceamerica.org>

## American Planning Association

The APA has events, research, and resources available on arts-based planning, and is also the national service organization for planners.

[planning.org](http://planning.org)

## Project for Public Spaces (PPS)

PPS is a nonprofit planning, design, and educational organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities.

[pps.org](http://pps.org)

## Springboard for the Arts

Springboard for the Arts offers resources, workshops, and tool kits for artists of all disciplines to thrive and for communities to connect to artists. It also has a set of projects that intersect with planning, including Imagine Fergus Falls and the Irrigate project.

[springboardforthearts.org](http://springboardforthearts.org)

## Metropolitan Area Planning Council

This organization, based in Massachusetts, is a planning body that has developed a comprehensive resource for integrating the arts.

<https://www.mapc.org/>

top image: Common Ground prototype at MSPF 2016, Cloud Arch Studio, courtesy of Market Street Prototyping Festival.

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



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**LEARN MORE**  
[AMERICANSFORHEARTS.ORG/SOCIALIMPACT](http://AMERICANSFORHEARTS.ORG/SOCIALIMPACT)

Americans for the Arts developed this Fact Sheet as part of the Arts + Social Impact Explorer.

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