



CREATIVE PLACEMAKING 101

Improving public spaces in Kansas to encourage physical activity, beautify communities and revitalize the local economy!



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WHAT IS CREATIVE PLACEMAKING?

A term coined in 2010, [creative placemaking](#) is the shaping of a place by creatively applying arts, culture and social context to jump-start economic development, promote community pride and morale and encourage people to be physically active.



Placemaking starts with a **physical place to improve**—a building, a lot, a block, a neighborhood, a district or a town.



It partners **diverse people and diverse interests**—residents, businesses, faith communities, government, non-profits, interest groups, arts councils, visitors and more!



It **involves artists**—musicians, painters, muralists, sculptors, architects, writers, actors, dancers and others.



It **attracts people**—and in doing so improves the economy, social attitudes and people's health through physical activity.

CREATIVE PLACEMAKING IS A WIN-WIN-WIN

EXAMPLES OF CREATIVE PLACEMAKING



Wichita, Kansas

Placemaking in an urban setting:

Like most modern cities, Wichita has a car-centric culture. A coalition of community partners formed Open Streets ICT, an energized committee working to promote healthy, active living and to encourage Wichita citizens to discover active transportation. The national open streets movement calls for opening up streets to pedestrian activities by temporarily closing them to cars. Wichita's first Open Streets event was held along a four-mile stretch of downtown on a Sunday afternoon, complete with vendors, pop-up murals, bicyclists, pedestrians and people reconnecting with their environment and with one another. Open Streets ICT is now set to hold its fourth event in three years, and Wichita has already seen the positive economic impact for local businesses and in people's re-energized desire for active transportation.

Placemaking in a rural setting:

Iola's downtown has transitioned from empty storefronts to new stores filling vacant spots in recent years, but the downtown square still lacked an area to relax, enjoy company or have small events. Partnering with a local boutique that owned a vacant lot, Thrive Allen County created an inviting community park, complete with a stage, seating, landscaping and a central fountain. The park has brought beauty, activity and increased purchasing to downtown Iola, including music and dancing, story-telling for children, hosting a farmers market and allowing visitors to use the space for all different needs.



Iola, Kansas

“Placemaking inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community.”
—[Project for Public Spaces](#)

WHY DOES CREATIVE PLACEMAKING MATTER?

We all physically engage with our communities—it only makes sense that public spaces should be accessible and promote good living.

The “what” of creative placemaking is also “why” communities do it:

- It can [beautify and honor](#) the community,
- It can increase [community physical activity and mental well being](#).
- It can [strengthen or revitalize](#) the local economy (helps the bottom line) and
- It can set communities apart by emphasizing their unique qualities.

“Creative placemaking can be used to engage residents locally, enhance public space, contribute to healthy sustainable communities, improve wellbeing and prosperity while fostering conditions for cities to distinguish themselves.”

—[DIY Creative Placemaking](#)



WHO LEADS AND BENEFITS FROM CREATIVE PLACEMAKING?

Effective creative placemaking is led by the community itself, since you are your own experts! A placemaking vision is generally started by one person or a small team with an innovative drive.

The entire community benefits—the **private sector** from increased profits; the **public sector** from increased revenues and good use of city spaces; and **citizens** from an increase in physical activity, mental well-being, and civic pride.

[Consider involving the following groups](#) that may have a stake in your community:



Businesses

Agriculture, construction, grocery stores, finance, health care, manufacturing



Creative Industries

Advertising, architecture, entertainment, landscaping, print, radio and TV media



Cultural, Civic and Professional Organizations
Chambers of commerce, clubs, museums, societies



Education and Community

Colleges, faith community, libraries, schools, workforce development



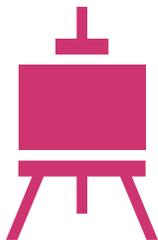
Government

City Council, county commission, economic development, law enforcement, mayor, parks and recreation



Hospitality Industry

Bed & breakfasts, campgrounds, food trucks, hotels, restaurants, street vendors



Individual Artisans

Metal workers, painters, photographers, potters, quilters, woodworkers



Performance Groups

Choirs, dancers, orchestras, professional musicians, school groups, theater troupes



Transportation and Parking

Buses, parking facilities, rail, rideshare, taxis

WHEN & WHERE SHOULD CREATIVE PLACEMAKING HAPPEN?

When? Now! Creative placemaking doesn't have to be expensive or complicated. [“Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper” \(LQC\) projects](#) can be the best way to start.

Where? In your community! You have many options to choose from, including:

- Alleyways
- Billboards
- Bicycle infrastructure
- Bridges
- Brownfields
- Buildings
- Bus stops and networks
- Crosswalks and other crossings
- Downtowns
- Intersections
- Parking lots and spaces
- Parks
- Playgrounds
- Rooftops
- Sidewalks
- Signage
- Streetlights
- Traffic circles/ roundabouts
- Trails
- Undeveloped land
- Vacant lots
- And much more!



HOW CAN I ENGAGE IN CREATIVE PLACEMAKING?

Conduct [asset mapping](#) if you're unsure how to get started.

Assess what [organizations and facilities](#) your community has that you can leverage.

Reach Out to partner with people and organizations and engage your community.

Gather support, advocates and involvement from the public and private sectors.

Consider some of the [Best Practices for Creative Placemaking](#) and [Principles for Creating Great Community Places](#).

Find external funding and technical assistance resources.

Adapt your project to [local culture and context](#)—creative placemaking is imaginative and draws inspiration from the community itself.

Maintain upkeep on your project! Ensure that plans are in place to regularly address litter mitigation, children's amenities, good lighting and greenery.

Evaluate [your projects](#) to determine effectiveness and what to tweak.

RESOURCES TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

Basics:

1. [Approaches to Creative Placemaking](#), *D.I.Y. Creative Placemaking*
2. [Breaking Down Creative Placemaking](#), *spire + base*
3. [Creative Placemaking](#), *Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa, National Endowment for the Arts*
4. [Creative Placemaking Knowledgebase Collection](#), *American Planning Association*
5. [Eleven Principles for Creating Great Community Places](#), *Project for Public Spaces*
6. [How to do Creative Placemaking](#), *Local Initiatives Support Corporation*
7. [What is “Creative Placemaking”?](#), *Reconnecting to Our Waterways*
8. [What is Placemaking?](#), *Project for Public Spaces*

Funding:

1. [John S. and James L. Knight Foundation](#)
2. [Chronic Disease Risk Reduction](#), *Kansas Department of Health and Environment*
3. [Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission](#), *Kansas Department of Commerce*
4. [Our Town](#), *National Endowment for the Arts*
5. [Innovative Funding Programs for Placemaking](#), *Project for Public Spaces*
6. [Place-Based Initiatives](#), *The Kresge Foundation*

Ideas:

1. [Active Design Guidelines: Promoting Physical Activity and Health in Design](#), *City of New York (see Chapter 2, Urban Design: Creating an Active City)*
2. [Building Healthy Places Toolkit](#), *Center for Active Design (see Chapter 2, Physical Activity)*
3. [The Case for Healthy Places](#), *Project for Public Spaces (see Taking Action: Play & Active Recreation, pg. 26; Green & Natural Environments, pg. 36; Healthy Food, pg. 45; Walking & Biking, pg. 56)*
4. [A Community Guide to Repurposing Vacant and Underutilized Historic Buildings](#), *Michigan Historic Preservation Network*
5. [Creative Assets Inventory Guide](#), *Kentucky Arts Council*
6. [The Field Guide for Parks and Creative Placemaking](#), *The Trust for Public Land & City Parks Alliance*
7. [How to Do Creative Placemaking](#), *National Endowment for the Arts (see pg. 106-108 & 126-129)*
8. [“How To” Recipes](#), *Better Block Foundation—downloadable “recipes” for simple, quick and cheap creative placemaking projects*
9. [Interim Design Strategies](#), *National Association of City Transportation Officials*
10. [Kansas Brownfields Program](#), *Kansas Department of Health and Environment*
11. [Resource Index](#), *Center for Community Progress*
12. [Small Town and Rural Design Guide: Facilities for Walking and Biking](#)
13. [Urban Design Checklist](#), *Center for Active Design*
14. [Walk Your City](#)

Measurement and Evaluation:

1. [Assessing a Set of Indicators for Creative Placemaking: Reflections from the Field](#), *Community Development Investment Review*, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco (see Table 1, page 51)
2. [Crafting an Evaluation Plan & Measuring Impact](#), Local Initiatives Support Corporation
3. [Guidebook for Developing Pedestrian & Bicycle Performance Measures](#), Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation
4. [How to Evaluate Creative Placemaking](#), Medium
5. [Measuring Creative Placemaking](#), The Urban Institute (see Analysis section, pg. 18-32)
6. [Measuring the Outcomes of Creative Placemaking](#), *Social Impact of the Arts Project*, University of Pennsylvania (see pg. 87-88)
7. [What Makes a Successful Place?](#), Project for Public Spaces

Technical Assistance and Organizations:

1. [8 80 Cities](#)
2. [AARP Livable Communities](#)
3. [A Blade of Grass](#)
4. [Americans for the Arts](#)
5. [Art of the Rural](#)
6. [ArtSpace: How Art Spaces Benefit Artists and Communities](#)
7. [Citizens' Institute on Rural Design](#)
8. [Creative Capital](#)
9. [Forecast Public Art](#)
10. [The Knight Foundation: Public Spaces](#)
11. [Local Initiatives Support Corporation](#)
12. [National Consortium for Creative Placemaking](#)
13. [National Endowment for the Arts](#)
14. [PolicyLink: Arts, Culture, and Equitable Development Initiative](#)
15. [Project for Public Spaces](#)
16. [Smart Growth America](#)
17. [Springboard for the Arts](#)
18. [State of Place](#)
19. [Technical Assistance to Brownfields Communities](#), Kansas State University
20. [Trust for Public Land: Creative Placemaking](#)